

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 6, 2020

School Department Conference Room, 220 Central Street, Hingham, MA 02043

- 1. Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Michelle Ayer. She announced that the meeting is being recorded.

Members Present: Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Carlos Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Kerry Ni, Liza O'Reilly and Ed Schreier.

Central Office Present: Paul Austin, Suzanne Vinnes and John Ferris.

Visitors Present: Gary Spartos, June Gustafson, Elizabeth Wilcox, Paul Pawlowski, George Danis, Katie Roberts, Emma Quilty, Raymond Estes.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on December 10, 2019.

2.2 On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on December 16, 2019 with three amendments to the language in Items 6.1, 6.2 and 8.

2.3 On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on December 18, 2019

3. Questions and Comments

Paul Pawloski, Hingham High School teacher, spoke about the TRACES program's move to shared space in the woodshop at HHS after Building 12 was declared unsafe for occupancy. They are getting by, but need more space to fully run the program. The TRACES program serves 19 students this year, including 3 girls. They have worked with the DPW and Police Department. They now share space in the high school woodshop. He asked that the School Committee continue to work to find a more permanent space for their program. He mentioned that the Robotics Club is using the auto shop temporarily. He was asked what the square footage was close to 3000 square feet and would need 1200 – 1500 square feet more for Robotics. Michelle Ayer thanked Paul Pawlowski and the student in attendance

4. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Austin reported he has started to put data together for his entry report and has started to write the report itself. The original timeline was aggressive, so his report may be delayed. He will let the Committee know. Additionally, January 1 enrollment is the same as December 1.

5. Communications

- 5.1 Communications Received by the Superintendent: Dr. Austin explained that delayed starts and cancellations due to weather are now being communicated with families by telephone. Although text messages might be preferable, current software does not support that. He mentioned that if a family wants to remove a phone number, this would impact all emergency calls to that number.
- 5.2 Student Communications: Emma Quilty reported that the DECA club went to the District competition last week and four students will be moving on to the state competition. There was a pop up art show last week. The orchestra performed in the front lobby before the holiday break and that night, they and the band put on a wonderful winter concert. Tomorrow night is a college kickoff night. Boys basketball had a big win over Brighton. Hingham's own Lily Reale is training with the National Soccer Team. The Student Council continues to raise money for the Hingham Food Pantry and the Allison Clarke Memorial Foundation.

6. New Business

- 6.1 The Committee discussed a possible Warrant Article for a revision to or additional funds for the feasibility study for Foster Elementary School. John Ferris gave an overview of all the warrants. He provided research showing the feasibility study amounts used recently by other towns. In 2017 Hingham Town Meeting appropriated \$750,000 for a feasibility study, but costs have risen. Increasing the amount of money allocated for the feasibility study would answer more questions and get a better estimate to present to the community when it comes time for a vote for the funding for Foster. A Warrant Article cannot be amended so the Committee could need to have a supplemental amount. Any extra money allocated to the feasibility study would go toward the project and spending it up front would allow us to get better information. John Ferris shared the vote language with the MSBA and they approved. It would be prudent to ask the Town for a supplement to the \$750,000. The Long Range Planning Subcommittee is in full support because they are concerned that the \$750,000 isn't enough. The Committee inquired whether the proposed Warrant articles have been vetted by legal counsel and whether we could lose the \$750,000 if this doesn't pass. Dr. Ed Schreier suggested an amount up to \$1.5 million for a potential article depending on legal counsel. Ray Estes of the School Building Committee spoke that the article could either rescind and replace the 2017 vote or be a supplement. It would be easiest to craft a supplement. He also opined that more money will not buy us more answers. On April 1, 2020, they will start the process of hiring an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) and then an architect/ designer would be hired. If the original amount is not supplemented and the School Building Committee finds the money is not sufficient, they could work with the team and make up the costs during construction.
- 6.2 The Committee discussed a possible Warrant Article for feasibility funds in consideration of submitting a Statement of Interest to the MSBA Accelerated Repair Program for replacing Plymouth River School windows. John Ferris looked at comps for design and construction bidding. If accepted, the MSBA would require that we receive funding within nine months. The overall project would cost between \$2.6 and \$3.2 million. Given the \$1 million dedicated to this project from the Alliance development project, it may be appropriate to get a warrant article for about \$450,000. It was noted that to use the money in the Alliance account, a Town vote is required. The timeline was discussed with the SOI opening on January 8, 2020 and closing on February 15, 2020. The SOI would require votes by the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen. The MSBA would respond during the summer of 2020. Carlos Da Silva stated that the Long Range Planning Subcommittee supports this warrant article. Nes Correnti stated that replacing the windows should not be contingent on an invitation into the Accelerated Repair Program by the MSBA. Ed. Schreier commented that the project is long overdue. The work would probably be done in the summer of 2021 and there is another Town Meeting prior to that date. The first vote would be for an SOI and feasibility money, the second would be for the Capital

expense.

- 6.3 The Committee discussed a possible Warrant Article for repairs to Building 12 and 179. John Ferris explained that TRACES program has been relocated because Building 12 is not suitable for occupancy. There is an engineer studying the building to assess what needs to be done to get the building into compliance. That plan will then go in front of the building Commissioner for a review. It may also be possible to use Building 179, but that building also requires repairs and renovations to be suitable for occupancy. It was noted that repairs to both buildings will cost in the hundreds of thousands. The Committee discussed whether or not to submit a placeholder Warrant Article and to later determine the exact amount after receiving the engineer's report. Liza O'Reilly stated that the Town Master Plan was looking at these two buildings as part of the whole complex for usage by multiple departments. She inquired whether we should be looking at an article for leasing space as this needs to be addressed quickly. Nes Correnti asked if there are restrictions that prevent demolishing Building 179. Paul Pawlowski stated that locating suitable space for the TRACES program is an immediate need. Katie Roberts, Science Department Director, noted that the robotics season has begun. She expressed appreciation to everyone for moving the equipment and to the teachers who made room for the season. The club uses the space after school so it is not interfering with classes. They will be getting a trailer to store equipment. Michelle Ayer commented that the role of the School Committee is to meet the needs of all students. She stated that we need to find an immediate way to support this program. She emphasized that despite comments that we are not appropriately spending the money that is allocated to the School Committee, the department has not received appropriate funds to maintain facilities from the town. The School Department has been requesting funds to repair Buildings 12 and 179 for at least 12 years. Other possible locations for the TRACES program were discussed. The bus barn has a lot of square footage but it may not be usable for people. The Committee agreed that this is an urgent situation and that these students need space right now. Libby Lewiecki thanked Paul Pawlowski and student Gary Spartos for coming and acknowledged that the space they are using is tiny. Nes Correnti asked how quickly we could get a modular classroom. That may not be appropriate as it may not accommodate the equipment. Dr. Austin commented that he will attempt to contact Tom Mayo again.
- 6.4 The Committee discussed a possible Warrant Article for reimbursement from the insurance account of over \$150,000 for the fire at Hingham High School. John Ferris noted that this item and the next (warrant article for East School flood) were housekeeping items. Massachusetts law requires that insurance claims greater than \$150,000 require a vote to be transferred back to the School Department budget. For the fire at Hingham High School, this amount will be between \$700,000 and \$800,000. For the flood at East School, it will be about \$400,000. Kerry Ni asked if the Town could pay for the repairs up front instead of the School Department. The vote would need to be taken either way. The law is set up to ensure that the Town spends money on buildings it wants to maintain.

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Libby Lewiecki,

It was

Voted: To authorize the Director of Business and Support Services to draft and submit a warrant article to seek reimbursement of insurance funds greater than \$150,000 for the fire at Hingham High School.

- 6.5 The Committee discussed a possible Warrant Article for reimbursement from the insurance account of over \$150,000 for the flood at East School.

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Libby Lewiecki,

It was

Voted: To authorize the Director of Business and Support Services to draft and submit a warrant article to seek reimbursement of insurance funds greater than \$150,00 for the flood at East School.

- 6.6 The Committee received an update on Capital requests for FY'21. Carlos Da Silva provided a handout and explained that the Long Range Planning Subcommittee met tonight to discuss capital needs. They are recommending that we submit \$2.2 million to the Capital Outlay Committee on January 22, 2020. He noted that the school department has not received the amounts requested in the past, so many projects have been deferred. A discussion about whether to move the technology request to the operating budget ensued. John Ferris stated that it does belong there as buying computers is a foreseeable, recurring expense. The Committee decided to vote on this at the January 16, 2020 meeting. Michelle Ayer stated that we have to invest in safety and security as well. She stated that the Town should look at how to raise enough revenue to cover all expenses.
- 6.7 The Committee received the homeschool application from the Halvorson family. Dr. Austin supports this application.

On a motion by Kerry Ni and seconded by Liza O'Reilly,

It was

Voted: To approve the home school application of Troy (grade 3) and Isak (grade 2) for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

- 6.8 The Committee received notification of the appointment of Alisa Zimmerman, paraeducator at PRS.
- 6.9 The Committee received notification of the retirement of bus driver Jan Bickford. Liza O'Reilly thanked Ms. Bickford for her service and noted that she was a beloved member of the school community who took great care of our children.

7. 48 Hour Items: The School Committee meeting scheduled for January 21, 2020 is cancelled.

8. Subcommittee reports:

- Nes Correnti reported that the Long Range Planning Subcommittee met today. The next East School meeting will be on January 22, 2020. METCO members met with the director and some teachers to debrief on the METCO Educators Conference.
- Libby Lewiecki reported that she will be attending the HEF meeting on January 21, 2020. The next South School Council meeting will be on January 29, 2020. The next Community Outreach Subcommittee meeting will be held on January 7, 2020. They will start working on FAQs for Foster School and the MSBA process.
- Liza O'Reilly reported that the Town Master Plan Committee will meet again on January 15, 2020. At the December meeting they debriefed on all of the visioning sessions. Foster School PTO meeting will be held on February 3, 2020 and the School Council will meet on January 15, 2020.
- Ed Schreier attended the Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting.
- Kerry Ni reported that the Policy Subcommittee will be scheduling a meeting soon. She will contact MASC about the Policy Manual development. The Committee is aware of a petition circulating the high school regarding the chemical health policy. The Policy Subcommittee will address this and other policies as the Committee reviews and revises the entire HPS Policy Manual. HMS School Council will meet on January 21,

2020. The HMS PTO is sponsoring a speaker, Joanie Geltman, to discuss adolescent psychology on January 22, 2020. The next HMS PTO meeting will be on February 10, 2020. SNAP winter sports have started: basketball and swimming. Pizza Palooza will be held on March 25, 2020.

- Carlos DaSilva noted that the HHS School Council will meet on January 8, 2020. Long Range Planning will meet on January 13, 2020.
- Michelle Ayer reported that the Special Education Subcommittee will meet on January 15, 2020 with a focus on the budget workshop. Dr. Ed Schreier will attend the All Town PTO meeting on January 17, 2020.

9. Adjournment

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Libby Lewiecki,

It was

Voted: To adjourn to Executive Session at 8:58PM, not to return to Open Session, for the purpose of:

- a. Approval of the minutes of the Executive Session of the School Committee held on December 16, 2019;
- b. Discussing matters related to the current HEA Unit A collective bargaining contract, the public discussion of which may be detrimental to the Committee's bargaining position, and act as appropriate
- c. Discussing matters related to the collective bargaining negotiations with the HEA Unit A for the 2020-2023 contract, the public discussion of which may be detrimental to the Committee's bargaining position.

M. Ayer – aye
C. DaSilva – aye
K. Ni – aye
E. Schreier – aye
L. O'Reilly – aye
L. Lewiecki – aye
N. Correnti – aye

Respectfully Submitted by:
Kerry Ni

Documents Included:

	1-6-20 Agenda.pdf 	
	1-6-20 Annotated Agenda.pdf 	
	Item 2.1 12-10-19 Minutes.pdf 	
	Item 2.2 12-16-19 Minutes.pdf 	
	Item 2.3 12-18-19 Minutes.pdf 	
	Item 4 1-1-20 Enrollment.pdf 	
	Item 6.1 2017 School Building Comm Added la... 	
	Item 6.1 Added Feasibility Dollars TM 2020 - Fo... 	
	Item 6.4 and 6.5 Article - Insurance Proceeds i... 	
	Item 6.7 Homeschool Application.pdf 	
	Item 8 Warrants Signed.pdf 	
	Item 9a 12-16-19 Executive Session Minutes.pdf 	
	SC FYI Budget Message FY 21.docx 	
	SC FYI Facility Dept December 2019 & January ... 	