

## MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

November 1, 2021

### Remote meeting via Zoom Webinar

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Kerry Ni at which time she read the following statement regarding remote meetings.

CHAIR COMMENT: This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 temporarily amending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording.

Members participating remotely: Chair Kerry Ni, Vice-Chair Michelle Ayer, Secretary Nes Correnti, Liza O'Reilly Carlos DaSilva, Jen Benham, and Tim Dempsey

Central Office Members participating remotely: Interim Superintendent Dr. Gary Maestas, Assistant Superintendent James LaBillois, Director of Business and Support Services John Ferris, Executive Director of Student Services Suzanne Vinnes, and Director of Human Resources Susan D'Amato.

Guests: Members of the press present remotely were Jenna Manto and Carol Meyer. Also present remotely were Hingham Middle School Principal, Derek Smith and middle school teacher Mark McCulloch.

Visitors: There was no sign in as this was a remote meeting.

### Approval of Minutes

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O'Reilly  
It was **voted**: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on October 18, 2021

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Nes Correnti – aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O'Reilly - aye  
Kerry Ni – aye

### Questions and Comments from the Community

There were no comments or questions at this time.

### Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Dr. Gary Maestas gave a report that included:

- Recent COVID-19 data of the number of positive cases in the schools within the past week, noting that there were zero reported cases for the week of October 25-29th

- An update regarding the status of working with the state database to obtain vaccination information for students and teachers

Assistant Superintendent Dr. James LaBillois informed the Committee that so far this year there have been 1,085 COVID tests given with a total of 8 positive results

### **Communications**

Vice-Chair Michelle Ayer thanked Food Services Director Kim Smyth and for her efforts during this time dealing with supply chain issues. Michelle also thanked the HPS custodial and maintenance staff for all of their work after last week's storm and recognized and appreciated the fact that when schools have a weather-related closure, the custodial staff are in the buildings making them safe for the return of staff and students.

Chair Kerry Ni thanked the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant and the Hingham DPW, and Tim Dempsey thanked Transportation Director Pdraig Cunningham for their efforts during the recent storm.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Superintendent Search Process**

Liza O'Reilly updated the Committee, listing the members of the Screening Committee that has been formed, and stated that they received 5 applications for the spot of member-at-large to be on the committee. For the draft Successful Candidate Profile, over 50 responses were provided from staff, parents and the community. She stated that the Salary and Negotiations Subcommittee with the full School Committee will choose the at-large screening committee member and finalize the Successful Candidate Profile at their next meeting.

#### **Strategic Plan Process**

Interim Superintendent Dr. Gary Maestas stated that after placing an RFP on the state's website, the Teaching/Learning Alliance has been chosen to be the facilitator for the development of the strategic plan. Dr. Maestas stated that there will be community sessions and surveys during the process and that there will be updates at each School Committee meeting.

### **New Business**

#### **Acceptance of donation of new sign for Chase Field at PRS**

Dr. Maestas described the proposal that was presented to him by community member Bill Quinn. Mr. Quinn attended Hingham High School, graduating in 1961. Mr. Quinn and his classmates would like to raise money to purchase a new sign for Chase Field at the Plymouth River Elementary School. The field is named after Mr. Quinn's friend Lieutenant Curt Chase, who was killed in action during the Vietnam War. Mr. Quinn had submitted two versions of the proposed sign, which Dr. Maestas shared on the screen. The Committee discussed the proposal and asked questions about the proposed location of the sign, and expressed gratitude at the generosity of the proposed donation.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Nes Correnti

It was **voted**: To accept the gift of a donation of a proposed sign naming Plymouth River School Chase Field

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Nes Correnti – aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O’Reilly - aye  
Kerry Ni – aye

### **Proposed Model UN Field Trip**

Model UN Club Advisor Kathryn Black was present remotely to explain the trip. Ms. Black stated that the trip will be in January 2022, and that it is one that the club has done in years past. She stated that it is for three nights and will include about twenty-four students.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Nes Correnti  
It was **voted**: To approve the Model UN Field trip to Boston in January of 2022

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Nes Correnti – aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O’Reilly - aye  
Kerry Ni – aye

### **Proposed Grade 8 field trip to Washington, DC**

Principal Derek Smith and middle school teacher Mark McCulloch described the proposed trip to take place at the end of May and the beginning of June of 2022. They explained that this is a trip that has been done many times in the past with the eighth-grade class. Mr. McCulloch described details of the trip noting that the destinations coincided with curriculum.

The School Committee discussed the fact that the other overnight field trips had a COVID-19 vaccination requirement, and debated if that should be a requirement of this trip.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O’Reilly  
It was **voted**: To approve the proposed grade 8 field trip with the requirement that students attending the trip be vaccinated against COVID-19

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Nes Correnti – aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O’Reilly - aye

Kerry Ni – aye

### **Homeschool Application**

Dr. Maestas stated that he had reviewed the homeschool application for a fourth-grade student and recommended approval, stating that it meets the necessary requirements.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Nes Correnti  
It was **voted**: To approve the homeschool application for a grade four student for the 2021-2022 school year

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jen Benham- aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye

Tim Dempsey – aye

Liza O'Reilly - aye

Kerry Ni – aye

### **Subcommittee and Project Reports/Warrants Signed**

- Michelle Ayer reported that the School Building Committee is meeting Wednesday for the Foster School and she thanked Dr. LaBillois for his work developing the Education Plan for Foster School. She stated that the website will be rolled out soon to keep the community updated. She also reported that the monthly meeting for METCO families is this week and that SEPAC had met recently to hear a presentation on Dyslexia. In addition, she stated that the Student Advisory Committee is being formed and the chair of that committee will be the student representative to the School Committee.
- Jen Benham reported that the Policy Subcommittee met recently and discussed developing a therapy animal policy.
- Nes Correnti reported that there are recently signed warrants in the packet, and that the East School Council meeting had to be postponed. She also reviewed materials from the Sustainable Budget Taskforce meeting.
- Carlos DaSilva reported that the Climate Action Committee meeting had to be cancelled last week due to the storm, but will be meeting this week. He also reported that he would be attending the 2021 Massachusetts Association of School Committees/Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Conference at the end of the week.
- Liza O'Reilly reported that the Wellness Subcommittee will be meeting this week. She also reported that the Salary and Negotiations Subcommittee will be meeting this week to negotiate with HEA Unit A. Liza O'Reilly also reported that there was a recent Middle School Council meeting.
- Kerry Ni reported that the Plymouth River School Council will be meeting this week and that she will also be attending the 2021 Massachusetts Association of School Committees/Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Conference.

**Other items as may not reasonably be known 48 hours in advance of the meeting**

- Nes Correnti recused herself at this time.

### **Purchase of a Bus**

Director of Business John Ferris explained that the Transportation Department needs another bus, and that there is an opportunity to purchase one from a company that is partially owned by School Committee member Nes Correnti. Liza O'Reilly asked why this is a 48 hours item. John Ferris explained that while they have been trying to find another bus, this one required him to seek advice from Town Counsel John Coughlin. Kerry Ni stated that she had spoken to the State Ethics Commission as well. Mr. Ferris also stated that by putting this on this meeting agenda tonight, the Select Board would be able to discuss it at their meeting tomorrow. The Committee asked questions about the price of the bus and how long the bus would be expected to last.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Carlos DaSilva

It was **voted**: To approve the purchase by the Town of Hingham School Department of a used bus (2008 GMC 20 Passenger Bus) from Feetfirst, Inc in the amount of \$7,000.00 subject to and contingent upon a vote of the Select Board approving the filed Disclosure by Special Municipal Employee of a Financial Interest in a Municipal Contract as required under M.G.L. c. 268A, § 20(d)

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O'Reilly - aye  
Kerry Ni – aye

- Nes Correnti rejoined the meeting at this time.

### **Adjourn:**

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O'Reilly  
It was **voted**: To adjourn at 8:28 PM

Michelle Ayer – aye  
Jen Benham- aye  
Nes Correnti – aye  
Carlos A.F. DaSilva - aye  
Tim Dempsey – aye  
Liza O'Reilly - aye  
Kerry Ni – aye

Respectfully Submitted  
By:  
Nes Correnti

Documents Included:

- [PDF Warrants Signed.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 9 \(48 hours\) Vote for Bus.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 8 Subcommittee Reports Sustainable Budget Task Force.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 8 Subcommittee Reports SBTF 10.19.21 Update to SB.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 7.4 Homeschool Application.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 7.3 Proposed Grade 8 Trip to DC.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 7.2 Proposed Model UN trip.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 7.1 Proposed New Sign at PRS Chase Field.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF Item 2.1 10\\_18\\_21 Minutes.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF 11.01.2021 Agenda.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF 11.01.2021 Agenda revised.pdf](#) 

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- [PDF 11.01.2021 Agenda 2nd revision.pdf](#) 

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