

HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

May 9, 2022 at 6:30 PM

Central South Meeting Room – 2nd Floor of Town Hall
210 Central Street, Hingham, MA

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Kerry Ni

Members present: Chair Kerry Ni, Vice Chair Michelle Ayer, Liza O'Reilly, Carlos DaSilva, and Tim Dempsey

Members participating remotely: Jen Benham

Members absent: Secretary Nes Correnti

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

2. Adjourn to Executive Session:

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was **voted:** to enter into Executive Session and to reconvene in Open Session, for the purposes of:

- 2.1. To discuss a Director of Business and Support Services contract with Aisha Oppong
- 2.2 To discuss strategy related to hourly employees including interventionists

The public discussion of which would be detrimental to the Committee's bargaining position

Michelle Ayer – aye

Liza O'Reilly - aye

Carlos DaSilva - aye

Tim Dempsey – aye

Jen Benham- aye

Kerry Ni – aye

3. The Open Session reconvened and was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chair Kerry Ni.

Members present: Chair Kerry Ni, Vice Chair Michelle Ayer, Liza O'Reilly, Carlos DaSilva, and Tim Dempsey

Members participating remotely: Jen Benham

Members absent: Secretary Nes Correnti

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

Also present: Student Representative Elijah Webber, Media and Communications Specialist Heather Kashman.

Visitors Present: There were four members of the public presents, but they did not sign in.

2. Approval of minutes

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

It was **voted:** To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on April 25, 2022

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Carlos DaSilva - aye
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

- 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 April 30, 2022 which was attendance at Town Meeting

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham- aye
Carlos DaSilva - aye
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

3. Questions and Comments

Public Comments and Questions from the Community included:

- A question about a vaccination requirement for the grade 8 trip to Washington, D.C.

4. Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Gary Maestas stated that the COVID numbers in the district has seen a recent spike and that if any families need test kits, they are available to families. Dr. Maestas also reported that Amanda Donovan, who has been the Interim Principal at East Elementary, will be the Assistant Principal there next year. He acknowledged the work of the Human Resources Department in the work that has been done to get quality candidates and get them appointed. He also offered appreciation to School Committee members Liza O’Reilly and Carlos DaSilva, as this is their last meeting. Dr. Maestas noted there was a Sustainable Budget Task Force (SBTF) meeting earlier in the day in order to determine how to move forward with the recommendations coming out of the SBTF report.

5. Communications

Student Communications

Student Representative Elijah Webber stated that during the previous week on May 5th, a few members of the School Committee met with the Student Advisory Council. He reported that most of the things discussed were related to their elections and presence in the coming years. Chair Kerry Ni stated that she did check with the MASC about the Student Advisory Council and had some information for him.

Vice-Chair Michelle Ayer thanked Elijah Webber for his willingness to take on this role this year.

Other Communications

Michelle Ayer asked if the COVID dashboard is sent out, to which Dr. Maestas stated that it is updated on Fridays, and posted on the HPS website.

6. Unfinished Business

Memorandum of Understanding between the Hingham Public Schools and the Hingham Police Department

Chair Kerry Ni stated that this is the second read, and the Committee can vote tonight if they choose. She reviewed that this is an update to bring the MOU in compliance with Mass General Law. Vice-Chair Michelle Ayer noted that this should be done annually, and it would be a living document which will give Dr. Adams the ability to weigh in and

have a working relationship with Chief Jones.

- On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Michelle Ayer
It was **voted**: To approve the memorandum of understanding between the Hingham Public Schools and the Hingham Police Department, as presented

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

Letter of agreement regarding HPD comfort animals on HPS property

Chair Kerry Ni stated that this is also a second read, and can be voted on this evening if they choose to do so. Michelle Ayer asked about the language in the insurance policy.

- On a motion by Carlos DaSilva and seconded by Michelle Ayer
It was **voted**: To approve the letter of agreement between the Hingham Public Schools and the Hingham Police Department regarding the HPD comfort animals on HPS property

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

2022-2023 Calendar

Dr. Maestas discussed the proposed calendar and acknowledged the need to further discuss the elementary conference schedule, but that the calendar is otherwise ready for approval. Michelle Ayer noted the start and end dates for the 2022-2023 school year.

Liza O'Reilly read public questions submitted online. One question was about the kindergarten start date, which was answered, as Thursday, September 8th. The other question submitted was regarding the question during the public comment period about the grade 8 trip vaccination requirement, to which Chair Ni stated again that it was not on the agenda, and they would not be discussing it, and also noted that it was voted on back in the fall.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Lia O'Reilly
It was **voted**: To approve the 2022-2023 school year calendar as presented this evening, and in the packet

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

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Maestas stated that the committee has had two of five meetings, with another one this week. He stated that they will present the strategic plan to the School Committee on the meeting of June 6th.

New Business

Director of Business and Support Services

Chair Ni stated that Aisha Nelson Oppong will be the new Director of Business and Support Services, and that the terms were worked out during Executive Session. Liza O'Reilly stated that they are excited to have Aisha Nelson Oppong rejoin the district, as she had worked with John Ferris for four years previously, and is a Hingham resident who wants to come back and support the schools. The Committee also thanked Director of Human Resources Susan D'Amato for her efforts, noting that there is a lot of hiring being done.

- On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Michelle Ayer
It was **voted**: To approve the contract for the Director of Business and Support Services with Aisha Oppong for a three-year agreement beginning July 1, 2022.

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

Policies A-L

Chair Kerry Ni presented this item, as Jen Benham was participating remotely. She explained that this is an effort to ensure that all the policies use language that is gender inclusive, and that this is a first read. There were no questions.

Policy KBE/PTO Booster Relations

Chair Ni stated that the Policy subcommittee has reviewed policy KBE, which is the PTO Booster Relations, and that this is also a first read. She stated that after review, the subcommittee found the language wasn't specific enough with regard to documentation booster groups need to submit. There were no questions.

School Committee Appointment of Liaison to the Hingham Arts Alliance

After a discussion, the Committee decided to wait until the next meeting to appoint a member, after the election. Tim Dempsey stated that until then he would go to the meetings until a permanent liaison is appointed. Michelle Ayer stated she reached out to Hingham Sports Partnership to ask if they felt they needed a liaison as well, however they did not feel they needed a liaison at this time.

To Declare Items as Surplus

Director of Business and Support Services John Ferris explained the surplus items. He explained plans that the town has plans to auction surplus property, and the school had been invited to participate. He stated that there is a list in the packet compiled by the school maintenance department of surplus items, that could be given to the town for that auction.

He explained that the second item is building 12, that was used as a storage facility. He stated that useful items have been removed and what is left can be declared surplus to be sold off for salvage or disposed of.

Lastly, Mr. Ferris stated that outgoing member Carlos DaSilva would like to purchase his school issued Chrome Book and after checking with the IT Director Joe Andres, he recommends that Mr. DaSilva give a \$20 check payable to the Town of Hingham to purchase it.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O'Reilly
It was **voted**: To declare surplus all items on the attached list marked maintenance surplus May 2, 2022. The items are antiquated, not operational or no longer serve a purpose for the Hingham School Committee. All surplus items may be sold at action by the Town to the Highest bidders and all monies collected to be deposited into the Town's General Fund, and to further authorize the Director of Business and Support

Services to approve disposal of any unsold items at the least cost to Hingham

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Carlos DaSilva – aye
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O’Reilly
It was **voted**: to declare surplus all items currently stored in the decommissioned building 12. Such items include classroom and office furniture and fixtures, file cabinets, and non-working equipment and authorize the Director of Business and Support Services to approval disposal of any and all items for salvage value or at the least cost to Hingham. Any funds received for such disposal may be used to offset disposal costs, or otherwise be deposited into the Towns’ General Fund.

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Carlos DaSilva – aye
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Liza O’Reilly
It was **voted**: To declare as surplus a six-year-old Chromebook currently issued at outgoing School Committee member Carlos A. F. DaSilva, and to allow such Chromebook to be purchased by Mr. DaSilva as the current value as determined by HPS technology Director Joe Andrews, and that was \$20.

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Carlos DaSilva – abstained
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

To appoint Dr. Adams to Board at SSEC

Dr. Maestas discussed that he is on the Board of Directors at the South Shore Educational Collaborative, and that Dr. Adams will be taking over in July, and since we do have students there, the meetings are a good way to partner together.

- On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Tim Dempsey
It was **voted**: To appoint Dr. Margaret Adams to the Board of Directors at South Shore Educational Collaborative for the 2022-2023 school year

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Carlos DaSilva – aye
Tim Dempsey – aye
Liza O’Reilly - aye
Kerry Ni – aye

School Choice

Chair Kerry Ni explained that a state law passed in 1991 allows school districts to admit students from other communities. She explained that Hingham has not participated in this in the past, due to enrollment concerns. She explained that when a district allows a student to come in, they are able to stay in the district until graduation. The Committee discussed that a vote needs to be taken stating that Hingham chooses not to participate in the school choice program.

There was a question from the public asking why Hingham does not participate, in an effort to increase diversity. Liza O'Reilly explained that any students could apply if Hingham participated, and so it doesn't necessarily increase diversity, and that Hingham doesn't have the seats available. Dr. Maestas explained that the cost of tuition is \$5,000 per student, as well as the fact that parents would have to provide transportation.

- On a motion by Tim Dempsey and seconded by Michelle Ayer
It was **voted**: To withdraw from the school choice program for the 2022-2023 school year

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

Report from Wellness Subcommittee

Liza O'Reilly reviewed the report from the Wellness Subcommittee, of which she has been the Chair. She explained that this was the first year of the subcommittee and reviewed its goals which she stated were:

- To establish a District Wellness Committee
- To make recommendations regarding gender-neutral terms
- To identify the social-emotional status of students across the district
- To work with the Athletic Director to fulfill next steps of a department self-study to analyze budget programming and Title IX regulations to address equity

Liza O'Reilly went on to explain the details and recommendations of the report.

There was a question from the community about Title IX, which Liza O'Reilly clarified that the report is looking at equity in the roster and in fundraising efforts.

Recent Resignations or Retirements

Chair Kerry Ni noted the notification in the meeting packet and thanked those employees for their service to Hingham Public Schools.

Subcommittee and Project Reports/Warrants Signed

- Tim Dempsey reported that the Hingham Education Foundation recently had a successful fundraiser, and he described a new fundraising effort that will be coming out shortly, where people can send a "high-five" to a teacher. He stated that the Special Education Subcommittee will be meeting at the end of the month. He also noted that there will be School Committee office hours this week. He also noted that the Hingham Pride Project had a successful fundraiser.
- Liza O'Reilly noted the Wellness report she discussed earlier. The Middle School School Council is meeting May 23. She noted this is her last meeting. She reflected on her past nine years on the School Committee and offered advice to incoming members. The following were comments presented by Liza:

The past few weeks have led me to reflect on my nine years.

There was an open seat and I pulled papers four days before the deadline. I had served on a variety of school-related and town government committees, I had three children at each level of the schools, and my parents

were models of public service having been elected and appointed officials. I thought that I could contribute. Looking back on nine years in this role for Hingham Public Schools, lots was accomplished and we faced many challenges. So it led me to think about what I learned to pass on to my fellow committee members. Here are a few things:

For every action, there is a reaction. One must be prepared for responses whether you make a bold statement or small comment during a discussion. Someone will remember what you said. Your statement could help them understand or spark something in them to challenge you. You should listen, try to understand where they are coming from, and refine your position.

For all the goals and plans set each year, there will always be something completely unanticipated that happens.

Democracy is a slow process. It takes time and effort to inform people, get them on your side and make progress.

Hingham can always learn from others. There are many ways to accomplish a task. I have been fortunate to meet School Committee members from other towns to share information about Hingham and they were in awe of our programs. At other times, I sought their expertise and feedback to provide us guidance and inspiration. Every conversation delivered inspiration and confidence, and made me a better school committee member.

Attend Graduation. Our mission is to support students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for success as local and global citizens. Graduation is the acknowledgement that students achieved these goals and launches them into the world as productive citizens. It is also where you will witness Hingham's diverse student body by seeing young people, hearing names and meeting families for the first time. Yes, you will hear the names of the stars of the musical, captains of sports teams and children of friends but they will be a minority of the class. My first in-person graduation ceremony stayed with me all nine years. I thought I knew lots of families in town and had met more during my campaign but watching all those students receive their diplomas made me realize there were so many more families who call Hingham home. Plus this was only one grade in the district. These were all the children I was responsible for and it changed my view of my role.

My personal journey with Hingham Public Schools is coming to a close with my youngest child graduating next month and the end of my School Committee role which provided the privilege of knowing a little more about how it all gets done than the average Hinghamite. I believe it is the responsibility of all citizens to support every Hingham child to succeed beyond their expectations. You have my commitment that I will continue to advocate for Hingham Public Schools as a Hingham citizen.

Thank you to my girls and my husband for supporting this effort and to everyone - here today and along the way – for an awesome experience!

- Michelle Ayer reported that there was a recent METCO Families meeting. The School Building Committee held an open house at Foster Elementary to show design photos. She stated that the architects were there and she thanked all those involved in this project.
- Carlos DaSilva reported that he attended the South School Council meeting on the 27th. He also attended the 5th graders versus the teachers in a floor hockey game at the High School. He also reported that the Climate Action Committee continues to meet and is doing a great job. Mr. DaSilva then reflected on his time on the School Committee, as this is his last meeting. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of the changes made during his time on the Committee and also thanked the community for voting for him twice.
- Jen Benham reported that there will be a Policy Subcommittee meeting on Wednesday and that she would be attending the Foster School Council meeting on the 11th.

- Kerry Ni reported that she recently attended the Plymouth River School Council meeting, and that the PRS PTO will have a meeting this Wednesday. She mentioned that the town election is this week and that there are three open seats on the School Committee. She recognized the amount of work Nes Correnti has done on behalf of the committee and town. Kerry also thanked outgoing members Liza O'Reilly and Carlos DaSilva for their time and support on the School Committee.
- Members of the Committee took time to thank both Liza O'Reilly and Carlos DaSilva for their service to the School Committee and to the Community.

Other items as may not reasonably be known 48 hours in advance of the meeting: none

- On a motion by Carlos DaSilva and seconded by Liza O'Reilly

It was **voted**: To adjourn at 8:40 PM

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

Respectfully Submitted By:
Nes Correnti

Documents Included:

Name ↑



Item 6.2 Opry Training Certificates



04.25.2022 Minutes.pdf



5:9:22 Agenda AMENDED.docx



05.09.2022 Agenda.pdf



Item 2.2 Minutes Town Meeting 4.30.22.pdf



Item 6.1 2022 SRO MOU DRAFT 11.5 public input draft.docx (1).pdf



Item 6.2 DRAFT - LETTER OF AGREEMENT REGARDING HINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT COMFORT ANIMALS IN HINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1).pdf



Item 6.2 Opry Vaccine vet records.pdf



Item 6.3 DRAFT 2022-2023 Calendar- Option B (Monthly PD - conference releases).pdf



Item 7.2 _School Committee Policies A-L to ensure that policies incorporate gender inclusivity.pdf



Item 7.3 draft KBE - SCHOOL PARENT_BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS_EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS.pdf



Item 7.5 SURPLUS 5-2-22.pdf



Item 7.5 Surplus Language May 2022.pdf



Item 7.7 School Choice Participation.pdf



Item 8 Warrants Signed.pdf