

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting
Thursday January 18, 2024
7:00PM

Members Present: Sarah Fox, Brian Ota, Jennifer Schaeffner, Alison Taylor

Also Present: Dr. Theresa McGuinness-Interim Superintendent, Michelle Cresta-Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Julia Ferreira-Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

I. Initial Business

a. Call to Order

Ms. Fox called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

b. Commendations

- Sarah Fox reads portions of a letter of commendation received by the School Committee and Matt Fox for Molly Hauptman an art teacher at the Veterans Middle School
 - The commendation was also for her students for their art exhibit at the MMA

c. Public Comment

- Mary McCarriston-46 Pine Cliff Drive Marblehead
 - Mary would like to commend the students at Marblehead High School for putting on two listening sessions to ensure their fellow students are heard
- Nyla Dubois-37 Green Street Marblehead
 - Nyla states that what she is seeing with the flag policy debate is quite scary
 - There are arguments being made about “keeping black people safe”
 - Nyla goes on to state that “that is not what I learned growing up”
 - She states that there is a lot of “dumbing things down here” using the students report cards and the need for “a flag to feel safe” as examples
 - Nyla goes on to say that we need to “double down” on viewpoint diversity
 - She would like to see parents feel safe to come out and speak their mind regarding the flag policy and other policies without feeling like they are going to offend someone
 - “We need to teach our kids not to be fragile and how to have constructive dialogue”
 - She closes her statement by stating that the draft policy looks as though it is from the “district’s point of view” which is not fair to every person because that “is not viewpoint diversity”

d. Student Representative-Kat Piper

- It is the week before midterms
- There have been study still seminars to advise students on test taking skills and study habits
- The exam schedule is two 90 minute exams per day with extended lunch hours and extra help time with teachers before and after the tests
- 01/10/24 NBA Player Chris Herren came to Marblehead High School to tell his story of addiction
- The High School has recently developed and released the manufacturing and engineering technology pathway
 - A program that prepares students for careers utilizing problem solving situations

- The National Green School Society held a clothing drive to reduce the amount of clothing that ends up in landfills
- Marblehead's Got Talent put up audition requests for students to try out for scholarships that total over \$15,000
- Senior Show is on 01/28/24
- Winter Sports Championships begin in a few weeks

II. District Updates-Dr. Theresa McGuinness

- Staffing Updates
 - Glover School Leadership Update
 - Principal Doran has resigned effective 01/19/24
 - Dan Richards will remain in the role as Interim Principal through the end of the School Year
 - The Glover School Principal position will be posted for a 07/01/24 start date
 - Michele Carlson will be interviewing next week to fill the vacant Assistant Principal role at the High School
 - Interim Director of Student Services search is under way and interviews will begin in two weeks
 - The Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations position will be posted next week for a March 2024 start
 - Veterans Middle School Team Chair Ashlee Liebman will work with the administrative staff as the Student Services Transitional Coordinator until we are able to hire an interim Student Services Director
 - Notable dates:
 - 02/01/24 next School Committee Meeting
 - 02/19/24 No School for Presidents Day
 - 02/20/24-02/23/24 February Break
 - Sarah asks Dr. McGuinness the status of the independent report for the incident at Glover
 - We will receive the report on 02/01/24
- FY25 Budget Status Update-Michelle Cresta
 - Michelle Cresta shares slides on the budgets that are being considered for FY25
 - Level Services Budget
 - Needs Based Budget
 - Reduced Services Budget
 - Budget Books will be ready for distribution next week
 - The slides are available on the Marblehead Schools website under the School Committee meeting and Agenda Items
 - Jennifer Schaeffner requests a "deep dive" into all of the costs in each of the buildings and a thorough review of services in the District
 - Sarah Fox encourages everyone to attend the State of the Town next Wednesday
 - Sarah asks Michelle Cresta to go over what a "Balanced Budget" is
 - We are not able to go into the State of the Town meeting next week and present a Budget that is higher than what the town is able to afford

III. Consent Action and Agenda Items

a. Schedule of Bills (vote)

Motion to approve the identified schedule of bills totaling \$304,667.24

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

IV. School Committee Communication and Discussion Items

a. Articles for Annual Town Meeting Warrant (vote)

Motion to establish a warrant article to re-authorize Special Education Revolving Fund under Mass General Law Chapter 44 Section 53 e 1/2 in the amount of \$500,000 in anticipated expenditures in FY 2025 for the use of the School Committee authorized expenses within the scope and conditions pertaining to this fund. Revenue sources into this fund are from tuition collected from the attendance of our out of district students placed in the Marblehead Public Schools Special Education programming. Said funds are being expended on costs directly related to the Marblehead Public Schools Special Education programming serving Marblehead Students

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Opened up for Discussion

- None

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

Motion to sponsor a warrant article for the re-authorization of a Transportation Revolving Fund under Mass General Law under Mass General Law Chapter 44 Section 53 e 1/2

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Opened up for Discussion

- None

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

Motion to sponsor a School Building Capital Needs article

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Opened up for Discussion

- Brian Ota asks Michelle if this is supplemental in addition to our regular capital
 - Michelle states this is an opportunity for supplemental capital
 - If we do not add it to the warrant now there will not be an opportunity to add it
- Jennifer Schaeffner states that this conversation is premature because there has not been discussion surrounding this article

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

Motion for a motion to sponsor an article for School Department Capital Needs

Moved by Mr. Ota, Seconded by Ms. Schaeffner

Opened up for Discussion

- Jennifer Schaeffner states that we should not be asking for place holders when the financial side of these articles have not been discussed

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

Motion for the School Committee to Sponsor a warrant article for School Committee Supplemental Appropriation

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Opened up for Discussion

- Jennifer Schaeffner is not in a position to support this article until she has the numbers she has requested
- Brian Ota also feels it is hard to support this however he does think the placeholder is needed
- Sarah asks if we have any further information that has been requested on the insurance line items from the town
 - We do not have that information at this time

Mr. Ota and Ms. Fox- Yes

Ms. Schaeffner abstained from the vote

Sarah Fox is going to seek legal counsel as to whether or not there will need to be a re-vote to mee the quorum of voting

b. Superintendent Search Update

- Sarah Fox presents Policy BDE which is a policy surrounding Subcommittees of the School Committee
 - “The Committee Chair subject to approval by the committee will appoint he Subcommittee Chair and its members”
- Opened up for Discussion
 - Jennifer Schaeffner points out that an additional committee will be needed to appoint the Glover School Principal
 - Sarah Fox makes a recommendation that the representatives for the Superintendent Search Committee be Sarah Fox and Jennifer Schaeffner

Jennifer Schaeffner presents a motion for the School Committee representatives for the Superintendent Search Committee be School Committee Chair Sarah Fox and Assistant School Committee Chair Jennifer Schaeffner

Moved by Mr. Ota, Seconded by Ms. Schaeffner

Opened up for Discussion

- Brian Ota states that he should be on the committee
- Jennifer Schaeffner states that without Alison Taylor they should not vote on this motion

Brian Ota makes a motion to postpone the vote until 02/01/24

Mr. Ota and Ms. Schaeffner- Yes

Ms. Fox-No

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 2-1

c. Student Services Audit Discussion

- Opened for Discussion
 - Brian Ota makes suggestions on items he would like to see added to the audit:
 - To ensure that our de-escalation and restraint protocols are adequate and that the staff has been properly trained
 - To look at our Therapeutic Programs to ensure they are adequately trained and staffed
 - To review the case loads and work conditions of the Special Education Chairs
 - Jennifer Schaeffner makes suggestions on items she would like to see added to the audit:
 - She would like to see something surrounding the parent and guardians experience with the evaluation and IEP Processes

d. School Committee Vacancy (vote)

- Meghan Taylor has resigned from the School Committee effective immediately

Motion for the Chair to write to the Select Board to initiate the process to fill the vacancy in accordance with Mass General Law Chapter 41 Section 11

Moved by Mr. Ota, Seconded by Ms. Schaeffner

Opened up for Discussion

- Sarah goes through what this process looks like to select and appoint a new School Committee member

Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

e. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates and Discussion

- SEPAC Subcommittee-Brian Ota
 - Brian Ota has taken over the SEPAC Subcommittee
- Policy Subcommittee-Jennifer Schaeffner
 - There have been three sessions at the high school to discuss the Flag Policy
- Sarah Fox discusses the METCO Subcommittee and indicates that she would like to ensure all School Committee Members are available to Caja going forward to make sure her concerns are being heard

- Sarah would also like to ensure that our teaching staff and educators know that they are supported
 - “Our Teachers work very hard to provide inclusive environments for our students”

V. Closing Business

a. New Business-School Committee Announcements and Requests

- Jennifer Schaeffner would like to discuss at a future meeting whether or not they want to think about expanding the School Committee from 5 seats to seven for future school years

b. Correspondence

- None

Motion and Vote to meet in Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) for the following purpose:

- *Purpose (3) to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with the Marblehead Education Association Unit A, Unit Permeant Substitutes, Unit Tutors, Unit Paraprofessionals and Unit Custodians because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee*
- *Purpose (7) to review, approve and consider the release of executive session minutes from the following meeting(s): 12.7.23 and 12.21.23 with intent not to return to open session*

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Brian Ota

Ms. Schaeffner, Mr. Ota, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passes 3-0

Executive Session

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison McMahon, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee