

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting

Tuesday July 28, 2020 10:30am

Zoom Conference Call- <https://zoom.us/j/91581446326?pwd=NWJSZ1Yxc3FaSTA1L2pCTkVQTnZFz09>

Meeting ID: 915 8144 6326

Password: 316828

OR Dial In (415) 762-9988 and follow the prompts

Members Present: Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Emily Barron, David Harris and Sarah Fox

Also: Dr. John J. Buckey-Superintendent
Michelle Cresta-Director of Finance

I. Initial Business

a. Call to Order

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 10:33am.

Ms. Taylor requested switching agenda items number V. and II. so that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) representative Ms. Presser could participate before moving on with the rest of the agenda items.

Ms. Gold made motion to take the agenda out of order. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes

Ms. Fox-Yes

Ms. Barron-Yes

Mr. Harris-Yes

Ms. Taylor-Yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

II. School Communication and/or Discussion Items

Ms. Gold shared that MASC representative Ms. Dorothy Presser was in attendance to guide the school committee through the specific communication and discussion items on the agenda for that day.

a. District Council Discussion

Ms. Gold explained that welcoming a new Superintendent was a good time to revisit and discuss such items as legal counsel. Ms. Taylor recommended discussing questions regarding school committee roles and responsibilities prior to moving forward with discussing the options for potential requests for proposals for legal counsel. There were no member questions.

Ms. Gold clarified whether a RFP, request for proposal was needed to which Ms. Presser confirmed that it was not as the individual that could be brought on would be hired as a consultant. She further explained that there is an organization named the Council of School Attorneys that is usually used as a resource to send out letters for soliciting services. Ms. Presser

shared that it was a common process to inquire about legal representation when there were changes in the administrative team.

The committee members shared their concerns along with the benefits of seeking requests for proposals for legal representation. Topics discussed included institutional knowledge, the level of services being provided, looking into the budgetary aspect of services and the importance of knowledge of collective bargaining agreements.

Superintendent Buckey mentioned that the timing for exploration was right and Ms. Presser noted that it would be good practice to inform the district's current firm of the committee's intentions prior to moving forward with reaching out to other attorneys. Superintendent Buckey updated the committee on the attorneys he has had experience working with and informed the committee of a firm in Boston he may like to reach out to.

Ms. Gold made a motion to have herself and Ms. Taylor work with the Superintendent to write up a letter to send to legal firms on the MASC list of recommendations. The motion was moved by Mr. Harris and seconded by Ms. Taylor. Ms. Taylor inquired whether there was a need to receive committee approval on the letter that would be sent to which Ms. Gold noted that there was not and that the letter would be brought back to the committee once sent. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes
Ms. Barron-Yes
Ms. Fox-No
Mr. Harris-Yes
Ms. Taylor-Yes

The motion passes, 4-1.

b. School Committee Internal Communication

Ms. Gold mentioned that the committee normally goes over the operating protocols of how the committee is governed each year. She further shared that Superintendent Buckey had added some additional operating protocols to be reviewed.

Ms. Presser explained that when turnover within the committee takes place it is a good idea to have a discussion to determine how the committee will work together so that the committee can do so effectively. She shared a PowerPoint engaging the members to discuss what they felt the overarching mission of the school committee may be. Ms. Presser informed the committee that continuous improvement in student achievement remained a primary focus.

Ms. Presser noted that both the committee and the Superintendent have leadership roles; the committee as a governing unit and the Superintendent from a management standpoint. She further discussed the roles and responsibilities of each leadership position and how the operating protocols that are determined could be used as a guide for what is expected of each member along with serving as a self-evaluation tool.

A conversation regarding specific protocols took place and concerns and clarifications were discussed. Although no formal vote was taken, it was decided that the protocols would be revisited at the next meeting to be confirmed for a vote.

III. Superintendent Report

Re-entry Planning Update

Superintendent Buckey discussed the plan for the reopening of schools sharing that the subcommittees were working on plans for all options of reopening including; in-person, full remote and a hybrid plan. He shared that DESE has stressed that the primary focus for districts should be how to return to school safely. He noted that he did not see a path to return to all in person instruction safely and encouraged the community to visit the new Back Together MHD website for regular updates. It was noted although the option to return with three foot social distancing could be considered that it would not be considered the responsible and safest choice. It was explained that classrooms were being measured and rooms repurposed to accommodate for changes.

Dr. Buckey informed the community that a memo would be going out later that same day with updates regarding the plan for community and staff listening sessions. He explained that given recent survey results that a hybrid plan model seemed to make the most sense and commended Assistant Superintendent, Nan Murphy for her work in creating cohorts for students to safely return to the classrooms.

Scheduling and instructional time for each building was discussed and the idea for the in-person versus the remote portion of learning for each day was explained. It was shared that the Teaching and Learning subcommittees were meeting regularly and that the hybrid model would allow for an easier transition to full remote should that be necessary at any time during the year.

Mr. Harris inquired about next steps to which Superintendent Buckey explained that the draft plan would be submitted by Friday after taking staff and community feedback into consideration. He further shared that there would be time for an additional non-anonymous survey stating the intention for returning prior to submitting the final plan which would be due by August 10th.

A series of questions and answers took place. Concerns regarding remote teaching instruction, alternating cohort days, the option to switch between models, calendar concerns and budgetary implications was discussed. Professional development training for remote teaching and overall staffing concerns were also mentioned.

IV. Finance Organizational Support

a. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Gold made a motion to accept the above identified schedule of bills totaling \$486,460.27. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. Ms. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes
Ms. Baron-Yes
Ms. Fox-Yes
Ms. Taylor-Yes
Mr. Harris-Yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

Ms. Cresta was also asked to provide an update on COVID related expenditures. She shared that the town was granted \$1.8million in COVID relief funds and that the school department was

provided \$454k to be used towards COVID related expenditures sharing that a majority of the expenditures would be budgeted towards personal protective equipment and signage. Ms. Cresta informed the committee that the Elementary Schools and Secondary Relief Grant in the amount of \$91k will be able to be spent over a two year period. She further mentioned that an application on how the funds will be spent will be submitted. Ms. Cresta also discussed the School Reopening Grant based on \$225 per student and the Remote Learning Technologies Essential Grant that was based on need. It was mentioned that that a budget line item of \$168k was budgeted to be used for any COVID related expenditure which could also be used to adjust shortfalls if needed.

A conversation regarding additional expenses related to bussing for METCO students, cleaning staff and technology needs was discussed and Ms. Cresta reminded the committee that additional funds from the town would be available if there was a need.

b. Service and Maintenance Agreement Contracts

Ms. Cresta explained that the joint contract with the Town for City Elevators was expiring on June 30th. She shared that bids opened on June 24th and that three bids were received. It was noted that the lowest bidder was Embry Elevator in the amount of \$51,400. She recommended awarding a one year contract to Embry Elevators with the option for two one year extensions of contract. It was mentioned that references had already been checked and that Town was in agreement with the decision.

Ms. Gold made a motion to award a one year contract of the elevator maintenance contract to Embry Elevator of Woburn Massachusetts in amount of \$51,400 and to authorize the chair to sign the contract on behalf of the committee. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. A question about requirements for accepting the lowest bidder and concerns regarding rate increases was clarified. Ms. Gold noted prior to the roll call vote that Mr. Harris was no longer present for the vote. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes

Ms. Fox-Yes

Ms. Barron-Yes

Ms. Taylor-Yes

Mr. Harris-abstention

The motion passes 4-0.

V. Consent Action Agenda Items

a. Acceptance of Donations

Ms. Cresta thanked parent Ms. Rosato for raising funds to cover the cost of continuing the summer meal program sharing that Ms. Rosato raised a total of \$3,004.75 which covered the projected shortfall of around \$2,900. Ms. Gold made a motion to accept donations totaling \$3,004.75 from various individuals to be used for the summer meal program. The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes

Ms. Barron-Yes

Ms. Taylor-Yes

Ms. Fox-Yes

Mr. Harris-abstention
The motion passes, 4-0.

b. District Letterhead Logo Discussion

Ms. Gold explained that a new logo and business cards were recently created for incoming Superintendent Buckey and that the committee would provide their input for approval.

Ms. Gold made a motion to accept the business card template. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold
Ms. Barron
Ms. Taylor
Ms. Fox
Mr. Harris-abstention

The motion passes, 4-0.

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the letterhead option number one. The motion was moved by and seconded by. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-Yes
Ms. Baron-Yes
Ms. Taylor-Yes
Ms. Fox-Yes
Mr. Harris-abstention

The motion passes, 4-0.

VI. Adjournment

Prior to adjourning Ms. Taylor inquired whether the committee needed to meet to approve the plan prior to submitting it. Ms. Gold confirmed and held a meeting time for Thursday the 6th at 7pm. Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 1:24pm.

*Respectfully Submitted
Sarah Fox, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee*

Approved October 1, 2020