

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting  
Thursday January 04, 2024  
7:00PM

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

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

I. Initial Business

a. Call to Order

Ms. Fox called the meeting to order at 7:01PM

b. Commendations

- Sarah Fox wants to commend the leadership team for always being willing to adapt and take on additional roles to help their colleagues during this time of transition

c. Public Comment

- Mary McCariston-46 Pine Cliff Drive
  - Ms. McCariston asks the School Committee to step down
  - She wishes Michelle and Theresa good luck on their future endeavors

II. District Updates-Dr. Theresa McGuinness

- Dan Richards will be stepping in as Principal at Glover School for the remainder of Hope Doran's leave
- Matt Fox will be going back to the Veterans Middle School starting Monday 01/08/24
- Michelle Cresta has accepted a role as the Director of Finance and Operations for Manchester Essex Regional School District
  - Michelle will be with Marblehead Public Schools through 03/22/24
- Dr. McGuinness announces that the Administrative Offices will be temporarily moving from the Mary Alley Building to the Brown School due to a water break
- Dr. McGuinness provides an update on the Student Services Department
  - The District, Dr. Paula Donnelley and Emily Dean have mutually agreed to end their employment relationship
  - The District will begin a search for the Interim Director of Student Services immediately
- Marblehead Public Schools hired two new Behavior analysts
  - Catherine Woods is at the Brown School and Emily Boutin will be at the Glover School
- There are two events on 01/10/24 for Students, Parents and Community members
  - Chris Herren, a former NBA Celtics player will be talking to the Students about his struggles with addiction during an assembly
  - There will be an event for the parents and community members in the evening
- Dr. McGuinness informs the District that she will not be seeking the permanent Superintendent position for Marblehead Public Schools
- School Calendar 2024/2025 Draft
  - The Leadership Team has begun discussions surrounding the 2024/2025 School Calendar

- Dr. McGuinness proposes two calendars with different Winter Breaks and asks for the School Committees input
  - Sarah Fox opens it up for discussion
    - Alison Taylor would like to suggest having the full day off on 12/23/24 rather than having it be a half day
    - Meaghan Taylor agrees due to attendance concerns for 12/23/24 if we do not
- FY25 Budget Status Update-Michelle Cresta
  - 01/02/24 there was a working budget meeting with Principals , Dr. McGuinness, Assistant Superintendent Julia Ferreira, Emma Puglisi and Michelle Cresta
  - They looked at additional staffing requests, they began to examine enrollment projections and staffing assignments, and they looked at additional funding sources
  - Next budget session will focus on those areas mentioned as well as working on the process of arriving at a level funded budget
  - The budget books were initially going to be available on 01/12/24 but this deadline will be pushed out due to changes still being made

### III. Consent Action and Agenda Items

#### a. Schedule of Bills (vote)

*Motion to approve the identified schedule of bills totaling \$996,685.92*

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Alison Taylor

Ms. Meaghan Taylor, Ms. Alison Taylor, Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

#### b. Approval of Minutes (vote)

- Sarah Fox would like to postpone the vote on the approval of minutes until the next meeting so that edits can be made

### IV. School Committee Communication and Discussion Items

#### a. Approval of Pan Mass Marblehead Club Creation (vote)

- The School Committee received an email from a student, Xaviar Grazado, requesting the creation of the Pan Mass Marblehead Club
- Xaviar explains that the club would be called Pan Mass MHD
- It would be a charity bike ride that would raise funds for cancer research at the Dana Farber Institute

*Ms. Fox asks for a motion to approve the creation of the Marblehead Pan Mass Club to create a Student Activity account*

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Alison Taylor

Opened up for Discussion

- None

Ms. Meaghan Taylor, Ms. Alison Taylor, Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

b. Superintendent-School Committee Communications

- Sarah Fox asks the School Committee to “make a commitment to stick to their operating protocols” and not rely on Dr. McGuinness as a go between

c. Interim Superintendent Goals Discussion (vote)

- A month and a half ago Dr. McGuinness outlined her goals
- Sarah Fox shares a memo with the Committee containing the updates made to Dr. McGuinness’s goals

Opened for Discussion

- Jen Schaeffner asks Dr. McGuinness about her first goal which focuses on administrator evaluations
- She asks how the School Committee will be able to see that the evaluations have been completed
- Dr. McGuinness explains how the Committee will be able to confirm this
- Jen Schaeffner states that the goal she would like to see added is the “staff accountability” study
- They will be adding staff accountability to Dr. McGuinness’s second goal

*Ms. Fox asks for a motion to approve Dr. McGuinness’s goals as presented with one edit to goal 2*

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Ms. Alison Taylor

Opened up for Discussion

- None

Ms. Meaghan Taylor, Ms. Alison Taylor, Mr. Ota, Ms. Schaeffner, and Ms. Fox-All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

d. Superintendent Search Process Discussion

- A slide outlining the search process for the new Superintendent is shared by Sarah Fox
  - She differentiates between the private recruiting firm and the consulting associations
  - cost will be a deciding factor in which one Marblehead will go with when going through the search process
  - Sarah outlines the three associations that we have requested quotes from
    - NASDAQ, MASC and The Collins Center
  - Sarah explains what the process looks like from each of these different associations

Opened for Discussion

- Meaghan Taylor supports having a consultant lead this process and believes it is extremely important
- Jennifer Schaeffner states that the consultant does not recruit the candidates
  - Jennifer suggests that they use a combination of a consultant and Kelley to mitigate some of the cost
- Alison Taylor is concerned that without a recruiter they will get the same candidates they have gotten in the past search processes
- Brian Ota believes that having a third party be a part of the process would eliminate some of the errors that have been identified

*Ms. Fox asks for a motion to proceed with Kelley acting as our facilitator*

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

Opened up for Discussion

- Brian Ota is concerned with the additional open positions that it will be a lot of work for Kelley to facilitate this search
- Meaghan Taylor states that we should listen to the guidance from Dr. McGuinness
  - She points out that “legitimacy is an important part of this process for the community”
- Alison Taylor asks Kelley what she believes the additional work would entail and if she believes she could handle it in conjunction with her normal job responsibilities
  - Kelley states that with the support of the business office she would be able to help facilitate this search

*Motion to start moving through the process with Kelley as our facilitator while also asking Michelle at the same time to request bids*

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

Ms. Meaghan Taylor-No

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 4-1

- Student Services Search Committee
  - Meaghan Taylor and Brian Ota will be the School Committee representatives for the Student Services Search Committee
- Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Search Committee
  - Michelle is asked for a list of everything that falls under her purview
  - This will be discussed further at the meeting on 01/18/24
  - The committee members for the Search Committee will be selected on 01/18/24
- Superintendent Search Committee
  - The School Committee members that will be on this search committee will be decided at the meeting on 01/18/24

e. Engagement of Legal Council (vote)

*Motion to affirm retaining Valerio, Dominello and Hillman as our legal council*

Moved by Ms. Schaeffner, Seconded by Mr. Alison Taylor

Opened up for Discussion

- Meaghan Taylor states that she does not believe they have done their due diligence prior to signing this firm

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

Ms. Meaghan Taylor-No

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 4-1

f. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates and Discussion

- Sarah Fox-Facilities Subcommittee
  - Sustainable Marblehead reached out regarding the utilization of electric buses
  - They looked into a grant that is available through the end of February 2024 that will give districts \$200,000 to purchase an electric bus
- Jennifer Schaeffner-Policy Subcommittee
  - Students reached out to the School Committee via email wanting to have input in the Flag Policy
  - There was a meeting held today during “Magic Block” with Julia Ferreira, Dr. Carlson, Jennifer Schaeffner, and Sarah Fox
    - They heard from students regarding the flag policy that is being worked on
    - There will be another session on 01/12/24

V. Closing Business

a. New Business-School Committee Announcements and Requests

- Brian Ota asks where the Special Education Audit is at in the process and when the School Committee will have that RFP

b. Correspondence

- None

c. Adjournment

Meeting is adjourned at 9:00 PM by School Committee Chair Ms. Fox

Respectfully Submitted,  
Allison McMahan, Secretary  
Marblehead School Committee