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Framingham Public Schools
Robert A. Tremblay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Adam Freudberg, Chair • Tiffanie Maskell, Vice Chair • Priscila Sousa, Clerk
Jessica Barnhill • Karen Dempsey • Geoffrey Epstein
Beverly Hugo • William LaBarge • Scott Wadland
Yvonne M. Spicer, Mayor

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: February 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Memorial Building-Blumer Room
150 Concord Street, Framingham

MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Adam Freudberg

PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill
Karen Dempsey*
Geoffrey Epstein
Adam Freudberg
Beverly Hugo
William LaBarge
Tiffanie Maskell
Priscila Sousa
Scott Wadland
Mayor Yvonne Spicer

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent
Nicholas Small, Student Advisory Committee Chair
Rose Bailey, Student Advisory Committee Member
Lincoln Lynch, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
Anne Ludes, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
Joseph Corazinni, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Diversity
and
Community Development
Dr. F. Javier Cevallos, President of Framingham State University

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Dr. David Podell, President of MassBay Community College
Rachel Erikson, College Career Counselor at Framingham High School
Carolyn Banach, Principal of Framingham High School
Brenda Maurao, Principal of Stapleton Elementary School

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. He noted that this meeting was being broadcast live on local cable, as well as for later playback, and on Facebook Live. He said that the Committee has gone paperless so members may be using their devices during the meeting.

Public Comment

Dhana Bianco said that she is a school bus driver, and spoke about how she almost gave her resignation due to not being able to do her job safely with the students' behaviors, but ended up staying when she was told that Durahm and the District were working together to correct the problem. She said that she asked that a few students have assigned seats, and in one instance has received pushback from a principal regarding this. She said that drivers' input is key to fixing this unending problem, and there should be more follow up and attention to the conduct slips that bus drivers fill out, as well as their voice heard in the morning meetings. The Chair asked Dr. Tremblay to follow up with the public speaker.

Brian Fanous said that he is speaking on behalf of the Stapleton PTO board, and they have been bringing up safety issues since September, and are still waiting for kids to be safe. He said although there has been some movement, this should have happened earlier, and programs need to be focused on today and not in a few months, and not only after parents demand it. He said there needs to be better followup and communication, and a greater sense of urgency. He said that not all assaults are in the data, as some kids do not want to report.

FTA President Christine Mulroney said that the FTA has been working in collaboration with the School Committee and administration in celebration and discussion on the Student Opportunity Act (SOA). She said that the SOA will provide a major infusion of new funding to schools, and is the most significant update of education state funding since the Reform Act of 1993. She said that the primary beneficiaries are low income students, students of color, and English Language Learners who have been left behind. She said that forum will be held for the public on March 4, 2020 starting at 6:15 p.m. in the Barbieri Elementary School and encouraged attendance.

Gerry Bloomfield said to imagine that we have all the time and money for all the needs of the schools, but we don't and that we are losing ground time and money, and problems are growing. He asked what can be done, and gave suggestions on changing the agenda, and items to be focused on such as student behaviors and building issues, among others.

Richard Baritz spoke about the February 6th meeting at the Woodrow Wilson school regarding the General Chemical cleanup which will be happening adjacent to the school. He said he suggested at the meeting closing the school for the summer, if it is feasible, to allay the concerns of the parents. He said that he was pleased the Superintendent and other members

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were there, but is disappointed that the District 9 School Committee member was not in attendance, since this school is in that District.

Announcements from the Chair

The Chair said that there is a SOA Forum on March 4, 2020 and a Framingham Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (F-SEPAC) meeting tomorrow night, which will include presentations from the current F-SEPAC Chair as well as the Special Education Department, and remarks from the committee's past and new liaisons. He said that there will be elections and volunteer opportunities to be scheduled shortly for F-SEPAC. He said that the next School Committee meeting is on Thursday, March 5, 2020 due to the domino effect of the Primary Elections and City Council meeting. He said that due to this, packets will be available to the members and public on Monday instead of Friday.

Report on Metrowest Early Start

Joseph Corazinni introduced the partnership with MassBay and Framingham State University (FSU), and said that the intentionality is for equity for all students. He added that the data shows significant issues and concerns in longevity and success of marginalized students, and this allows to problem solve strategies and opportunities for higher education for those students. FSU President Dr. F. Javier Cevallos and MassBay President Dr. David Podell spoke about the partnership; how it gives potential to make a difference for many students, and counts towards college degrees while they are in high school. They said there are four career tracks for students to pick from: Education, Business, Criminal Justice/Sociology and STEM. They said that Early College programs in other states have proven effective at closing achievement gaps. Principal Banach said this program will begin with students in the class of 2024. They have met with two of the three middle schools so far with the last one scheduled. She said they had written a grant about student perseverance rates in post secondary schools, looking to eliminate remedial classes for students going to post secondary education, and having all classes being credit bearing. She said that they have started a Parent Advisory Council and a College Collaborative Office at the high school. She said that they already have early college classes after school for high school students, but this opportunity will be during the school day, with high school teachers teaching alongside college professors. She said that this was made possible from a \$600,000 grant from the Smith Family Foundation. FHS College Career Counselor Rachel Erikson said that this will allow a cohort of students to travel together from 8th grade to graduation, makes college more accessible to students, and helps with a cohesive transition to go into higher education. She said that they have started with math as a pilot for one of the classes and will start sociology in the future.

Questions. Mr. Epstein asked how the grant was developed and if it involved the Grant Department. Principal Banach said the grant was written in collaboration with FSU and MassBay. Ms. Hugo asked if the grant was renewable and how many children are affected. Principal Banach said it currently involves 60 students in the high school and the grant is good for three years. She said that they will continue to assess how to continue to supplement the grant and if some items can be supported locally or through other opportunities. Ms. Dempsey asked about support services for students with disabilities. Principal Banach said students are beginning their college transcript through this, so they will have access to CASA services

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through FSU and other services, and students can get information on these services during the summer during field trips to the schools.

Student Advisory Committee Presentation on FHS Safety

Student Advisory Committee members Nicholas Small and Rose Bailey presented on Safety and Security in the high school which is a follow up from their previous presentation within the last year. They said the other member, Edie Basset, is not present as it is her birthday. They said that the data is trending in the right direction and show improvements over a similar report last year, even if the numbers are high.

Questions. Ms. Dempsey asked about the increase of students feeling safe, as it looks like it almost doubled, and wonders if they have thoughts on what has helped with the increase. Mr. Epstein asked if there was a difference between genders. Mr. Small said that the bathrooms have gotten better, there are cameras outside the bathrooms. He said in the past students may have avoided bathrooms when other students are vaping. Ms. Hugo said she is very concerned about why such a large percentage of students continue to report feeling unsafe in bathrooms, and would like follow up reports from Central Administration on this. Ms. Hugo asked why certain hallways were identified specifically in questions in the survey. Ms. Bailey said there are not as many teachers in those areas, and some areas are just storage. Ms. Hugo said that 1 in 4 kids reported that they do not feel like they have an adult in the school to talk to, and it is time to come up with something to make sure every child feels like they can go to someone. Ms. Bailey suggested that homeroom teachers check in with kids daily. Mr. Freudberg asked if it seems that vaping has gone down, as it was mentioned in the past survey and presentation, and have the open doors on the bathrooms and cameras outside the bathrooms helped. Mr. Small said he thinks it has gone down as the measures taken make it easier for students to get caught.

Report on Stapleton Elementary School

Stapleton Principal Brenda Mauraο acknowledged the other Stapleton staff and parents in the audience, introduced the new Assistant Principal Jessica Mandes, and said she knows there have been problems and there is a need to rebuild trust, which is not something that cannot be quantified or happen overnight. She shared updates on what has been happening at Stapleton to help rectify the problems. She said that she wanted to clarify that if a student is injured in any way the protocol is for them to go to the nurse, and this could affect the data, as it does not show if the injury is caused intentionally by another student or if accidental. She noted that the population of English Language Learners has almost doubled from last year.

Questions. Ms. Maskell asked who makes up the School Council. Ms. Mauraο said it includes a community representative, families, teachers and administration. She said that the monthly update is shared from the School Council to all stakeholders as a shared report. Mr. Epstein asked about receiving data reports to be able to see if there is improvement or not. He asked if the School Committee can get reports on a weekly basis regarding data on behavior from all elementary schools, as there are probably similar instances in others besides just Stapleton. Ms. Mauraο suggested that monthly is more accurate as it gives time to gather the data and make sure it is correct and capturing the data that would be useful. Ms. Hugo asked about bathrooms on floors with the younger students being used by older students. Ms. Mauraο said that the one bathroom that was closed was reopened to help rectify that from happening, and

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there is always an adult with a kindergartner in the bathroom. Ms. Sousa asked about how incidents are communicated to parents. Ms. Maura said emails are sent when it is related to classroom evacuations, a phone call is always made if their child was hurt or if it were a student specific issue. Ms. Barnhill asked if there is a way to identify through an incident report if it was a bullying incident. Ms. Maura says that bullying is reported a different way and involves follow up from the district and administration. Ms. Dempsey spoke about the need for consistency of a principal, and the importance of telling students and parents to speak up. Mr. Freudberg asked if for her views on the injury data and if there were ways to differentiate from accidental injury versus intentional. He noted that the data shows there are higher numbers of incidents in the fourth and fifth grade, and asked if there are items in place to help the transition for rising students before they go to middle schooler so teachers can understand the students' history. Ms. Maura said that there are files that are shared and social workers and guidance staff speak about individual student needs. Mr. Freudberg asked that when the School Improvement Plan is on the agenda later this year, that the past one is analyzed.

FY21 Capital Plan Revisions

Mr. Wadland said that the District's Capital Plan that was originally approved by the School Committee and sent to the Mayor and CFO, was changed when presented to the City Council by the Mayor, in regards to the amount being lowered and the projects reorganized than what had originally been prioritized. He said that the Building and Grounds Subcommittee met on this and voted to base the amounts on the number the Mayor through the CFO at our winter meeting gave by pairing back some of the projects, as well as reordering the priority of the projects. He said they also voted on having the remaining security work that they deferred out of the first vote, to be requested as a supplemental item.

Motion: To accept the Building and Grounds Subcommittee's recommendation to reprioritize the list of four capital projects totalling \$3,390,200 for \$2M for exterior envelope improvements, \$955K for Brophy Paving/Stormwater, \$200K for Barbieri HVAC, and \$235,200 for Security, and submit this new request to the Mayor and City Council as discussed with the CFO.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill

Discussion was held regarding making sure that solar canopies were looked at when the Brophy Paving/Stormwater project is being completed. It was confirmed that the project's intent is to add canopies at Brophy, and would require a municipal energy agreement through a separate vote at a later date.

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Motion: To concur with the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee recommendation to request a supplemental capital appropriation of \$214,800K to fund the remaining request for security the School Committee and FPS Director of Safety and Security originally requested in October of 2019.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

Mr. Wadland outlined the need for this funding in relation to the other amount for security in the original motion. He said that this funding will support additional cameras, provide security reports for all middle schools instead of one, and provide for barriers at certain schools to prevent cars from driving near playgrounds and/or around entire buildings.

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FY21 Budget Discussions

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Lincoln Lynch went over the table of contents for the FY21 Budget Book which is still in draft form. He said that the budget drivers are mostly salaries, including the negotiation contract increases, as well as transportation, but within the budget can also see how grants and revolving accounts offset them. He said that the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) will be a big piece on how we are using and deepening current initiatives. He said that they will be adding the number of students and full time employees to the book.

Mr. Freudberg went over the upcoming timeline of budget meetings such as the annual hearing on the budget March 18th and vote to send the request to the Mayor April 1, and added that they will be added to the committee's website and should also be included within the budget book. He also suggested that information on what the SOA is, what it will do for Framingham, criteria and recommendations for how it can be used, and what is new money in SOA versus what is new money in general State Aid all be included to make it clear, as this is a brand new reform being implemented for the first time. Mr. Epstein suggested creating a document with questions and answers on the budget broken down by category. Discussion was held on the possible amount of Chapter 70 State aid Framingham would be getting, which is \$7 million higher than the previous year for a total around \$59 million, which includes within that amount the SOA funds.

Mr. Lynch said that he recommends no changes to the athletic, bus, or high school parking lot fees from the previous year.

Motion: To approve the recommendation of no changes to the fees, per policies EEAA, JQ, and regulation JQ-R-3.

Moved: Mr. Wadland Seconded: Ms. Sousa

Discussion: Mr. Wadland said that the policies themselves have not been updated in many years and have outdated years, and suggested that these be referred to the Policy Subcommittee in the future.

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Additional Public Comment Opportunity on the Student Opportunity Act

No public comment, the Chair said this will be offered again at the meeting next week as well as at the SOA Forum.

Superintendent's Update

Mr. Freudberg said that Policy IHCA requires the Committee to review summer programming annually, and it was scheduled earlier this year in case there any questions before the programming plans are finalized and starts. Mr. Wadland commented that some of the programs hire students as staff members, and suggested continuing to make sure students that we hire have the appropriate supports.

Motion: To accept summer programming as presented in the document.

Moved: Ms. Hugo Seconded: Mr. LaBarge Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Dr. Tremblay read a statement developed with inputs from Dr. Wong from the Department of Public Health on Coronavirus that was also shared with families, on the website and through

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social media including that it is low risk in Framingham and gave recommendations on how to not spread it. He said that Framingham Public Schools received a \$100,000 earmark from Karen Spilka for culturally competent mental health supports. He said they are currently planning on how to use these funds, including the possibility of developing safety development teams.

Mr. Freudberg said that the City Council referred the proposed five year lease of Perini to the School Committee who then referred it to the Building and Grounds Subcommittee. He said that there was a productive meeting with Perini with the Mayor, the City Solicitor and many City and District staff, and Perini agreed via a letter that the District is no longer a month to month tenant in sufferance that has to pay higher rent. He said that Perini gave the District stability by indicating in writing that FPS could remain in the building until the end of June, and they made it clear in the meeting that they are willing to negotiate a shorter year lease than a five year. He said that the City Solicitor is looking to see if the length and rate on the current RFP can be negotiated. He added that the current rate per square foot in the lease is around \$16, the FY20 budgeted amount is \$18, but the proposed new lease amount from Perini was \$23.90. Mr. Wadland went over the vote that was approved unanimously in the Building and Grounds Subcommittee regarding the lease to recommend the following motion.

Motion: To concur with the recommendation of the Building and Grounds subcommittee to reject the 5 year lease referred by the City Council, and begin a dual approach to #1: pursue negotiating under the original RFP over a three year lease with a lower per square foot rental rate (if the Inspector General's Office says this negotiation process is ok), and #2 at the same time issue a new RFP for rental options in case the Perini Building doesn't work out.

Moved: Mr. Wadland Seconded: Ms. Maskell Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Mr. Lynch went over the Food Services Negative Balance Report and said that they were down \$11,000 from last year on the same date, but there are also two less schools included in the report since they are on the Community Eligibility Program and receive free meals. Ms. Maskell asked for data on where the schools who are now in CEP were last year, in order to be able to compare better.

Mayors Report

Mayor Spicer said she was on a national phone call today about the CoVid outbreak and preparedness. She added that there is information posted on the City's website regarding the Coronavirus. She said that at the monthly meeting of all Mayors including they spoke about the initiatives of the SOA and how extra funds will get spent and delineated, as well as looking at careers in technical institutes and build pipeline of workforce for the future. She said that she went to the essay contest where students were asked to write an essay about what they love about Framingham and what they want to see changed in Framingham. She said that the Perini purchase included an inspection and negotiating of the price, and said that there are other areas that are more of a concern environmentally than the Perini building. She said that they evaluated what issues will it solve for us holistically as a city, being able to co locate some of the City and district locations, and solve some of the space and ADA Compliance issues.

Subcommittee Reports

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Mr. Epstein said that warrants were signed. He said that the Finance Subcommittee will be meeting next week and preparing for the joint meeting with the City Council's Finance Subcommittee. Mr. Freudberg added that the School Committee Department Budget is on the next agenda, for what tweaks to make going forward, and to discuss the Executive Assistant role expansion.

Ms. Maskell said that there will be a Policy Subcommittee tomorrow night at 4:30 before the F-SEPAC forum. She said that two policy referrals came in from Attorney Phil Benjamin regarding revisions to comply with State Regulations and Title IX.

Motion: To refer Policy JICFB: Bullying and KBE: Relations with Parent/Booster Organizations to the Policy Subcommittee.

Moved: Ms. Hugo

Seconded: Mr. Epstein

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Ms. Hugo and Ms. Barnhill said they are looking to schedule the respective subcommittees they Chair of Teaching and Learning and Health and Wellness. Mr. Epstein said that the Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee met this week, and are focusing on first on gathering information and connecting with other bodies who are focusing on the same issue. He said that the only concern is any money within the budget that is needed to support in that area since the FY21 Budget is being voted on soon. Mr. Freudberg said that Earth Day has invited FPS, FHS, and the committee to have a joint table on April 25, 2020.

*Ms. Dempsey left the meeting.

Approval of Minutes, Gifts, and Scholarships

The Chair asked if members would like to take one blanket motion for minutes, field trips and scholarships. No objection.

Motion: To approve the January 29, 2020 and February 5, 2020 Open Session minutes, to accept the field trip for Walsh Middle School Robotics Club to the 13th Annual VEX Robotics World Championship in Louisville, KY from April 21-26, 2020, and to approve the Creation of an account for \$1,000 for a North Framingham High School Class of 1969 50th Reunion Scholarship

Moved: Mr. LaBarge

Seconded: Mr. Wadland

Vote: Unanimous (8-0-0)

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Ms. Maskell

Seconded: Mr. Epstein

Vote: Unanimous (8-0-0)

Meeting adjourned at 10: 32 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Report on Metrowest Early Start

Student Advisory Committee Presentation on FHS Safety

Report on Stapleton Elementary School

FY21 Capital Plan Revisions

RFP for Central Office

5 Year Lease Proposal from Perini

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Letter from Perini
Building and Grounds Subcommittee Votes on Capital Budget and Perini Lease
Draft FY21 Budget Book
MASC Memo on Student Opportunity Act
Annual Fee Reviews: Bus Fees, Athletic Fees, and FHS Parking Fees
Summer Programming Review
FY20 YTD Budget
Food Services Statistics
Warrants
Referral of Policy JICFB and KBE to Policy Subcommittee
Draft January 29, 2020 Open Session Minutes
Draft February 5, 2020 Open Session Minutes
Walsh Middle School Robotics Club Field Trip Proposal
\$1,000 North Framingham High School Class of 1969 50th Reunion Scholarship Form