



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: May 6, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Remote

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
Ann Mariano, Director of Technology
Nicholas Small, Student Advisory Committee Chair
Lincoln Lynch, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
Anne Ludes, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education

Amy Bright, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education
Joanna Hastry, Executive Assistant for the School Committee

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He noted that this meeting was being held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, and announced those in attendance. He said that the meeting is being broadcast live on The Government Channel, and can be viewed Live on Facebook on the Framingham Public Schools Facebook Page, although possibly a little later on Facebook due to some technical difficulties. He noted information on how to participate in public comment through emails sent before and during the meeting and through Zoom. He said that Facebook comments will be reviewed, but likely not responded to in real time since there is now a voice option for public comment. The Chair announced that due to schedules the agenda will be taken out of order to meet the Mayor and Student Advisory Chair's schedules as they have previously scheduled appointments. He asked for a moment of silence to reflect on all those who are suffering in our City, the Nation and the World.

Public Comment

FTA President Christine Mulrone read her statement which was submitted for the record. She thanked the teachers and spoke about the difficulties both parents and teachers are having due to remote learning including all the other aspects in their lives, and how remote learning can never replace in person learning.

Gerry Bloomfield said that we now know we are in dire straits and business as usual will not happen. He said that difficult decisions need to be made now to effect FY21 and beyond and to look at other communities as examples, such as looking at personnel. He said that one/fifth of the school year was shut down with limited school activities, and asked where 1/5th of the school budget is. He said that we can't afford the enrollment increased by the McKinney Vento Act for homeless students, and asked what the emergency plan is if covid19 comes back.

The Chair said he took offense at Mr. Bloomfield's comment, last night at both the City Council and tonight's meeting, that teachers and staff have not been doing anything for 1/5th of the school year. He said he is happy to talk to him and explain all the work employees are doing to support the community during the crisis.

Announcements from the Chair

The Chair recognized Teachers Appreciation Week and National Nurses Day. He said on May 19th there will be a joint meeting between the School Committee, City Council and Senate President Spilka who requested the meeting. He said the next meeting is on May 20th, and recently MASC sent out a resolution for communities to consider in regards budgeting, which he will add to the next agenda.

Superintendent's Update: COVID-19

Dr. Tremblay said that the Commissioners' guidance now is to work towards specific standards. He said that kids will be behind, and there will need a plan in place on who we reached well,

and who we didn't, and how to fill those gaps. Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Amy Bright said that content standards were released for math, ELA, science, social studies, and history. She said that teaching coaches have met to look at the scope and sequence and what was covered, partially covered, or not covered at all, and aligning it with DESE recommendations. She said that starting May 18th they will start forward learning. She said that they will look at all the resources given over the course of remote learning experience and will put them into one document that can be given to individuals as they leave school to be able to find resources to access over the summer. Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education Anne Ludes said at the secondary level DESE released prerequisite standards for core content areas: math, science/technology, history/social studies and ELA. She said that meetings and coordination have occurred so that all grade levels at all middle schools will be aligned. She said that although the other courses DESE did not give guidance on, Framingham is creating a level for determining score skills for standards that need to be learned. She said that they are keeping running records of what was taught, as well as can be used in the future to look back and see what students learned for future classes in the high school. She said that library media specialists have revamped the summer reading model for what is available in digital format through libraries. She said that beginning this week they started tracking student participation and engagement and developed a model that felt sustainable, supported by technology, and manageable for the teachers. She said that this will help identify students that principals may want to reach out to see if they can offer additional supports, as well as help with planning for curriculum, instruction and interventions. She said that this is in no way to put pressure on parents, and is more for internal planning processes.

*Ms. Maskell joined the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Mayor's Update

Mayor Spicer said that Framingham has over 1,100 cases of Coronavirus as of today, many due to care facilities and family members living together. She said that she presented her proposed budget to the City Council, and said that it is a fluid budget as there are unknowns, including state aid. She said that the number one goal is safety, and also need to see what services can continue. She said that things are going to look different when we start reopening. She said that the Student Opportunity Act may be deferred for many communities, the CARES Act money is slated but not here yet, and likely will be in next year's budget. She said that the budget presented to the City Council was based on information we have today which of course is changing, and is a collaborative effort.

*Mayor Spicer left the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Superintendent's Update: COVID-19

Director of Technology Ann Mariano said that as of this morning they distributed 3,239 chromebooks and 342 hotspots. She said that per the School Committee vote they made a shift a few weeks ago to go forward and offer chromebooks to any student requesting one, which allows more than one in a family. She said that requests come in from teachers or principals and put on a spreadsheet that gets linked to a bar code on the back of the chromebook and then to a mailing label, to keep track of where chromebooks are. Mr. Lynch said they are tracking any expense that is being made due to COVID-19 and school closures, including

postage. Ms. Mariano said that all chromebooks being sent out are ones that we already had for programs in schools., and in answer to a question from Ms. Sousa, said that we do have 1:1 capability without purchasing more, although they are continuing to refresh some older chromebooks.

Dr. Tremblay said that when schools closed students and teachers left items in the schools that are still there. He said that they are taking inventory of all the things that need to be wrapped up from the school closing and end of year events, and created a plan that was then split into chunks to work on. He said that a survey was sent out to the Class of 2020 and the overwhelming response is that students do not want a virtual graduation, and instead want in person graduation in the future. He said that a lot more work needs to be done to consider when this could happen with social distancing and guidelines, and he will continue to communicate on this.

Remarks from the Student Advisory Committee

Student Advisory Chair Nick Small gave an update on student life in the past month, as well as recognized teachers and nurses for Teacher Appreciation Week and National Nurses Day. He said that they polled students on how teachers are reaching out; such as through Canvas office hours or emails. Mr. Epstein asked if high school students are getting enough sleep now, since they can sleep in with remote learning, and asked how they are going to hold the Student Advisory Council upcoming elections. Mr. Small said they are going to hold remote elections, and are working on the details. He said that they can survey students regarding sleep. Ms. Barnhill said that while she knows the district is awaiting more state guidance, she thinks the senior class deserves something more than a virtual ceremony, and is glad that the senior class is on the radar.

*Nick Small left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Superintendent's Update: COVID-19

Dr. Tremblay said that in an abundance of caution they are going to be holding summer programming through remote learning. He said that it is not a hard no for in person programming, as he knows remote learning does present challenges, such as for students on IEPs, parents going to work, and others. He said if schools were to open and we had right guidance and PPE, they could look for those who could not be served in a remote environment, such as physical or occupational therapy as an example. He said that they don't want to rush into it, want to be more cautious, and adds that it is also late to hire summer staff.

*Ms. Barnhill disconnected from the meeting due to technical issues from 8:28-8:30 p.m.

Dr. Tremblay said that EF tour contracts have fine print that certain amounts can not be refunded, and instead they are providing vouchers, but the class of 2020 students cannot use any vouchers. He said that there is legislature directed at getting full refunds, and other vendors are giving full refunds. Mr. Lynch spoke about the memo on fees that was included in the packet, and said that the committee oversees transportation, parking, and athletic fees per policy. He said that refunding any amounts would be a lot of work, and they are working on not having families fill not have to fill out W9s with the city, but to do so they would have to pull information from many systems all together, and set up 1,000 vendors through manual entry.

Mr. Epstein said when these fees are paid they are not in the Munis system, and asked why Munis is involved at all. Mr. Lynch said City Hall systems are where they pay the fees, but refunds have to come out of city accounts through Munis, as they cannot make payments back through City Hall systems. Mr. Epstein suggested that the City look at this process.

*Mr. Wadland recused himself at 8:38 p.m.

Ms. Hugo said that some families have said that they would like to donate their refunds to food insecurity, and Ms. Maskell suggested asking parents if they want their bus fees to be applied to the following year rather than receiving refunds. Mr. Lynch said he would not recommend picking out certain families for refunds, and once they receive the refund they can donate it back if they want, as well as there is uncertainty on what next year will look like.

Motion: To table any reimbursement at this time, due to the uncertainty of revenues and to be fiscally responsible, to see how Covid 19 will impact budget.

Moved: Ms. Barnhill **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa

Discussion: Mr. Freudberg said that the refunds are for people who paid for a service, and are not getting that service.

Ms. Barnhill rescinded her motion.

Motion: To refund the parking lot fees to families at the prorated rate.

Moved: Ms. Dempsey **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 8-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

*Mr. Wadland returned to the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Motion: To accept the FPS recommendation on transportation bus fee refund on a prorated basis.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 9-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Mr. Lynch went over the BLOCKS Preschool tuition, afterschool programs, school lunch fees and how they are looking to refund these. Ms. Maskell confirmed, through asking, that the food services refunds are only for seniors, and that the others balances will transfer over to the next year. Mr. Wadland noted that some families could have a negative balance in food services, but still be getting refunded for parking or bus fees.

Mr. Freudberg said that both himself and Mr. Epstein will be joining City Councilors to discuss the deficit in the proposed school department's FY21 budget on May 14th. He said that they are asking the district to lower the amount of the budget, and we are looking to not lose any staff we have, have level services and abide by some legal services we have, such as adding some positions. Mr. Lynch said that reserves can be used to offset the budget, but they can only be used for so long. He said a second option would be to look at the expense side of the budget. He said the budget needs to get under a 3 percent increase, and there is a \$3 million budget gap, from what we proposed, to work on based on the mayor's submission at this time. Mr. Epstein asked about the retirement savings and if that had changed, as well as suggested looking at the paper and copier budget and what may change due to circumstances now. Mr. Lynch said that the retirement savings may be less than anticipated, as some staff have reversed their decisions on retiring.

*Dr. Tremblay was disconnected from the meeting due to technical issues from 8:57-9:03 p.m.
Central Office Lease - Vote to Recommend Action on the Proposed three year lease by the Perini Corporation for 73 Mount Wayte Avenue

Mr. Wadland went over the proposed Perini lease and the items suggested, he said that it shows paying less per square foot, but the district will also have more square footage, so the total bill will be higher. He said that this lease was voted unanimously at Building and Grounds to be referred to be accepted to the full committee. Mr. Lynch said that the current extended lease ends on June 30th.

Motion: To support the proposal of the 3 year lease with the option of additional 2 year extension for the Perini Building

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Wadland **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 9-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Mr. Freudberg said he will let the City Council know the results of this vote so they may put it on their next agenda.

City Council and Planning Board's Upcoming Review of the Proposed Moratorium on Apartments

Mr. Freudberg said that the City Council is having a public hearing on the apartment moratorium on May 19th, and at the next School Committee they are having a demographer come talk about enrollment planning. Dr. Tremblay said that he has been working with the City's Planning and Community Development department and they are working on drafting a MOU to ensure future conversations before developments are considered and what potential impacts there will be on the school department and how to help mitigate. Mr. Wadland asked to be included, as the Building and Grounds Chair, on discussions regarding capacity for projected enrollment.

Set Process to Annually Evaluate the Superintendent by the End of June

Mr. Freudberg said there are two more meetings until members draft their assessment that will then go into a summative one, which will then be voted on on June 17th. He said Dr. Tremblay already presented a review of his long term goals, and the second review will be in an upcoming meeting. He said that as this is the last year in his current contract, there is no performance bonus on this evaluation. Dr. Tremblay spoke about how there have been folders created to gather his evidence of the work he has done on all the DESE standards and his goals for members to review. Ms. Hugo suggested that the attendance goal may not be as relevant right now due to remote learning, and Mr. Epstein suggested he could still report out on attendance during remote learning. Dr. Tremblay said he will report out on attendance up until the last day of school being opened, and will use data on remote learning that just started.

Motion: To adopt the DESE evaluation tool for the annual Superintendent's Evaluation

Moved: Mr. Wadland **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 9-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Process for Nominations for the MA Association of School Committee's (MASC) Awards and Resolutions - Vote on What to Submit to MASC is Scheduled May 20th

Mr. Freudberg said that the information for MASC nominations was included in packets, and will be voted on at the next meeting, if members have nominations they should send them to

the Executive Assistant to be included in the next packet for review. Ms. Hugo said all of the School Committee's nominations from last year were given awards and will be presented next meeting.

Advertising for One Strategic Initiatives and Financial Oversight Committee Appointment, for the Local Business Community Seat, for the Term Expiring June 30, 2020

Mr. Freudberg said that the School Committee has appointing power for 1/3 of SIFOC. He said that all members are given staggered terms, two are still continuing on, but one seat is ending. That seat is currently held by Darlene Umina until June 30th who does not intend to reapply.

Motion: To advertise the vacancy of the seat on the SIFOC.

Moved: Mr. Epstein **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 9-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Subcommittee Reports

Finance and Operations. Mr. Epstein said that the warrants were signed without invoice review.

Teaching and Learning. Ms. Hugo said that the next meeting is May 18th at 6:00 and will include updates on Phase 3 of remote learning due to COVID, and post secondary choices.

Health and Wellness. Ms. Barnhill said that they had their first meeting last week and went over the scope and goals, as well as heard from Director of Health and Wellness Judy Styer. She said that there is a tentative meeting scheduled for mid-May to revisit attendance and how remote learning is affecting students and engagement. She said that this year there will be another MetroWest Health Adolescent Survey which will provide new data to go through.

Policy. Ms. Maskell said that the contract was signed to start policy review with MASC, and they are working on setting up a date to meet.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve all minutes listed on the agenda (Open Session April 1, 2020 and April 13th, and Executive Session previously approved in Executive Session with redactions of February 5, 2020 and February 12, 2020.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous 9-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Adjournment

The Chair said that the next meeting is a Joint Meeting on May 19th, and Open Session on May 20th.

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

DESE Remote Learning Guidance

Memo on Payments and Fees Impacted by COVID-19
FY20 YTD
Mayor's FY21 Budget Memo
FY21 Revenue Expenditures Summary
Request for Proposals for Lease for School Administration
Perini School Administration Space Proposal
MASC Superintendent Evaluation Information
DESE Superintendent Evaluation Form
MASC Nomination Forms
Draft April 1, 2020 Open Session Minutes
Draft April 13, 2020 Open Session Minutes
Summary and Vote from Building and Grounds Subcommittee
Public Comment

These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee in Open Session on June 3, 2020.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on June 9, 2020.