



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Priscila Sousa, Chair • Jessica Barnhill, Vice Chair • Richard A. Finlay, Clerk
 Adam Freudberg • Beverly Hugo • William LaBarge
 Tiffanie Maskell • Jennifer Moshe • Valerie Ottaviani
 Charlie Sisitsky, Mayor
 Farley Building, 19 Flagg Drive, Framingham, MA 01702
 Telephone: 508-626-9121 | www.framingham.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: February 16, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Remote
MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Priscila Sousa
PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill
 Richard A. Finlay
 Adam Freudberg
 Beverly Hugo
 William LaBarge
 Tiffanie Maskell
 Jennifer Moshe
 Valerie Ottaviani
 Priscila Sousa
 Mayor Charlie Sisitsky
ABSENT: None
ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent
 Nilufar Noorian, Student Advisory Committee Chair
 Lincoln Lynch, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
 Joanna Hastry, Executive Assistant for the School Committee

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and noted that this meeting was being held fully remotely in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Actions Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. She announced those in attendance and noted that School Committee member Tiffanie Maskell, Mayor Charlie Sisitsky, and Student Advisory Committee Chair Nilufar Noorian were joining remotely. She said that the meeting is being broadcast live on the Government Channel, can be viewed Live on Facebook on the Framingham Public Schools Facebook Page, and noted information on how to participate in public comment through Zoom. She said that Facebook comments are not the formal way to participate in public comment since there are voice options through Zoom. She asked for a

moment of silence to think about all those lost and who are suffering in our community, nation, state, nation, and world.

Public Comment

Reverend Dr. Deborah Clark said she has concerns with racial inequities in the schools. She spoke to having hope with the different efforts that are already taking place within the schools, such as training active bystanders and peer mentorship programs, among others, but in order to be effective they need to be prioritized, multiplied, and need funding, time, and staff from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. She asked that this be a top priority.

Karen Hennelly said that she is a teacher at Framingham High School and said that she has concerns about DESE lifting the mask mandate and hopes Dr. Tremblay and the School Committee are taking these into consideration. She said that her concerns include the children under 5 who cannot get vaccinated, including the preschool students at the high school, and the timing of the lift being around vacations where there are often spikes from people traveling or seeing others outside their household.

Bob Bolles spoke to the work that needs to be done in the City, the overburdened taxpayers, and said that the School Committee needs to vote to let taxpayers attend meetings.

Announcements from the Chair

The Chair noted that the School Committee met earlier tonight in Executive Session for discussion with Counsel Regarding Potential Litigation Relating to Durham School Services Contract Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) and Suffolk Construction v. DCAM, 449 Mass. 444 (2007), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declared pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) specifically for litigation strategy for a claim filed by Unit A, and for approval of Executive Session minutes pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) and G.L. c. 30A, s. 22(g)(1), specifically January 19, 2022.

Mayor's Update

Mayor Sisitsky spoke of his goal to have an open and transparent government and said they are beginning conversations with the School Department regarding the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. He said that he has requested that the Board of Health hold a special meeting to discuss the status of the mask mandate, with a potential decision to rescind the Executive Order in the near future.

Remarks from the Student Advisory Committee (SAC)

SAC Chair Nilufar Noorian spoke about attending the Massachusetts Association for School Committees (MASC) student representative event which she said was helpful, and spoke to the different seminars she attended including ones around communication and curriculum.

Superintendent's Update

COVID-19

Dr. Tremblay gave an update regarding COVID-19 which included that he will be sending out an announcement on Friday in regards to masking based on the Governor and Commission's recent decision, there were recent vaccination clinics at the high school for students and at Farley for families, and that test kits will be distributed to the students and staff who have enrolled in the program.

Second Reading And Vote to Finalize the FPS Proposed 2022-23 School Year Calendar

Dr. Tremblay said that they sent the first draft to Faith Partners and received positive feedback, and there were no substantive changes to this draft besides removing the Commencement date which was discussed at the last meeting.

Motion: To approve the FPS proposed 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Update on the Statement of Interest (SOI) Submission to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for a Possible Early Education Center & Elementary School South of Route 9

Dr. Tremblay said that the District was not invited into the capital pipeline with MSBA after the recent submission and they are waiting to get feedback from MSBA on what could strengthen the application for the next submission. He said that the District will be asking the School Committee to vote on this submission at an upcoming meeting in time for the April deadline. Ms. Barnhill spoke to equity issues including that there are no proximity benefits for families and students on the southside, the southside students' commutes are longer, and bussing issues are done at a substantial cost to the City. She said that acquiring land for a southside school would help strengthen the future SOI submission.

Motion: That we, as the School Committee, collectively state our interest and our support for purchasing property at Bethany and for construction of a southside elementary and potential Pre-K facility to the Mayor, City Council and City Solicitor. Also Request that the City Council authorize the Mayor to purchase this property and engage in any pertinent negotiations and/or discussions about the purchase of this property.

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

Discussion: Ms. Maskell said that she is concerned with specifically naming the Bethany property in the motion as unsure on where things stand with discussions with the owners. Discussion on if the motion could be amended to say a southside location over naming a specific property, with Ms. Barnhill's decision to keep the motion the same. Mr. Freudberg said that it was previously publicly released that Bethany was a priority, but would recommend that the School Committee meet with the Mayor and CFO in Executive Session in order to discuss the negotiations. He noted that ultimately the site for a new school would be decided upon by a School Building Committee.

Roll Call Vote: (8-0-1)

(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Barnhill, LaBarge. Abstained: Maskell)
Mr. Freudberg asked that when the vote for submitting the next SOI to MSBA there also be an agenda topic on creating a new School Building Committee as this can happen before MSBA approval and they can begin work on the design, funding, etc.

Framingham Earth Day Festival Booth

Dr. Tremblay spoke of partnering with the group Keep Framingham Beautiful and having schools participate in the Great Framingham Cleanup in April. He said that historically the High School's Environmental Club has had a table at the Earth Day Festival, and suggests this year having a joint table with the School Committee in order to work together. He said that if the School Committee agrees with this he can work with the Environmental Club on signing up for this and invite the School Committee. Members spoke to the importance of having students involved in the community cleanup and being environmentally friendly.

Motion: To support Dr. Tremblay's recommendation and work as a team to have a joint table at the Earth Day Festival.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Executive Director of Finance & Operations Update

Transportation Update

Mr. Lynch said that staff from NRT are not able to attend due to a personal matter, but there were two documents with updates in the packet that show data on drivers, late buses, and other requested information. He said that we continue to deal with a driver shortage due to both COVID-19 and the national driver shortage. Members asked questions including how many students are being affected by the late buses, what we can do to help mitigate the loss of learning time due to late buses, concerns with overcrowding on the buses and health issues, and if there should be monitors on the buses if they have over a certain number of students to help with behaviors. Members expressed concerns that the numbers of drivers in the pipeline have not seemed to increase over the months and asked for additional information on why, as well as if there is enough being done for recruiting for drivers and monitors, coordination with other agencies, and if additional funding, including federal funding, would be helpful. Mr. Lynch said that he will ask NRT to be present at the next meeting and will get information on these questions.

Discussion and Vote on School Committee Hybrid Meeting Procedures Due to the Pandemic

Ms. Ottaviani said that she asked for this topic to be on the agenda as City Hall is now open to the public and as part of the pandemic recovery we should be allowing constituents into our meetings.

Motion: To allow the public to attend full School Committee meetings in person for the entirety of the meeting.

Moved: Ms. Moshe **Seconded:** Mr. Finlay

Discussion: Ms. Maskell said that she still has concerns with having the public in person and the spread of COVID-19, especially for those who are immunocompromised, and said that she would like to continue to have the option for members to be remote via Zoom. Mr. Finlay said that he brought this up in the past, and since the School Committee meeting is made up of elected officials the community should be able to attend. Members spoke of continuing to use Zoom as it allowed for members to participate if they have concerns or they need to for personal reasons, as well as it had more people viewing than when meetings were just in person and allowed for more public comment options. Ms. Hugo said that she is concerned that people may attend who are not vaccinated and asked if there would be a way to make sure they were vaccinated or make it required that they have to wear a mask if unvaccinated. Mr.

Freudberg suggested listing the local mask guidance on the agenda and asked that the Policy Subcommittee review the Hybrid Meeting Policy he previously drafted and referred to them. Discussion on not being able to legally require members of the public to be vaccinated or wear masks unless it is the local mask guidance.

Roll Call Vote: (8-1-0)

(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Barnhill, LaBarge. No: Maskell)

Overview of the FPS and Policy Subcommittee's Policy Development Process

Ms. Maskell, as the Policy Subcommittee Chair, spoke to the policy development process and how to initiate a review of the policy, including the work flow sheet that was included in the packets. She said that the Policy Subcommittee has been working on a full policy review with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and were up to Section F from last term. She spoke to the online policy manual that is hosted on the MASC website and where all current policies can be found.

Initial Conversation on the School Committee's Goals for the 2022-23 Term

Ms. Sousa said that she recommends that each subcommittee take their pertinent part of the goals document from last term, review the goals and progress towards them, and create new goals. Discussion on a deadline for subcommittees to have new goals to bring to the full School Committee for discussion, with a decision of a deadline for the end of April vacation.

Motion: To make the recommendation that each subcommittee review their goals and come up with new goals with a deadline of April vacation to then discuss at a full School Committee meeting.

Motion: Mr. Finlay **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Discussion and Vote of School Committee Representation on the Welcoming Immigrant Ordinance Task Force

Ms. Sousa said that the City Council is working on scheduling a Welcoming Immigrant Ordinance Task Force meeting, and per the ordinance to create the group that was passed in 2019, there should be one School Committee representative. City Council Adam Steiner spoke about this task force and the Mayor's and City Council's strong desire to complete the work. Ms. Sousa said that as an immigrant she would be very interested in being considered for this task force.

Motion: To appoint Priscila Sousa as the School Committee representative on the Welcoming Immigrant Ordinance Task Force.

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

Discussion: Mr. Freudberg suggested looking into the work that the former Assistant Superintendent and School Committee representative completed on this task force in the past, including their feedback on the ordinance.

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

(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. LaBarge said that the warrants were signed with a total of \$\$1,743,552.89 and a payroll total of \$5,045,791.76 on the dates of January 31st and February 7, 2022.

Mr. Freudberg, as the Finance and Operations Subcommittee Chair, said that they will have their first meeting tomorrow and the agenda will include discussion on the scope of the subcommittee, transportation and food services issues, an introduction to the City's new CFO, planning for the Joint Meeting on the 22nd for the annual meeting on the budget development process, the communication plan around budget, and the role of PTO liaison coordination within the budget.

Ms. Maskell, as the Policy Subcommittee Chair, said that their first meeting will be on March 17th and will be looking at subcommittee goals.

Mr. Finlay, as the Building and Grounds Subcommittee Chair, said that their first meeting will be on March 10th where they will discuss the Capital Budget that they can then report on in a full School Committee meeting.

Ms. Barnhill, as the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee Chair, said that they do not have a meeting scheduled yet, but will be sending out dates to consider soon.

Ms. Moshe, as the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee Chair, said that an email has been sent out to set a date for the first meeting.

Ms. Ottaviani, as the Health and Wellness Subcommittee Chair, said that their first meeting will be on February 28th and she has met with the Director of Health and Wellness to come up with topics to be discussed.

Ms. Hugo, as the Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee said that they are looking to schedule a meeting in mid March and they will be looking at the Climate Policy to then be sent to the Policy Subcommittee.

Approval of Minutes and Adjournment

Motion: To approve the Open Session minutes of December 15, 2021 and January 5, 2022 and the Executive Session minutes of January 19, 2022 and adjourn.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Mr. Finlay **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Vaccination Update Memo

Policy IC/ICA: School Year/School Calendar

Draft 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

MSBA Core Program Statement of Interest Process Overview

Framingham Core Program SOI Status Letter

Transportation Update

NRT Transportation Presentation Sheet

FY22 YTD
Policy Development and Review Process
Policy Process Reference Memo
Most Recent Updated School Committee's Goals for 2022-23
Order of Welcoming Immigrant Ordinance Task Force
Warrants
Draft December 15, 2021 Minutes
Draft January 5, 2022 Minutes

These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee in Open Session on March 30, 2022.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on March 31, 2022.