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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Priscila Sousa, Chair • Jessica Barnhill, Vice Chair • Valerie Ottaviani, Clerk
Adam Freudberg • David Gordon • Beverly Hugo
William LaBarge • Tiffanie Maskell • Jennifer Moshe
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: December 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Memorial Building - Blumer Room
150 Concord Street, Framingham
Remote Option via Zoom
MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Priscila Sousa
PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill
Adam Freudberg
David Gordon*
Beverly Hugo
William LaBarge
Jennifer Moshe
Valerie Ottaviani
Priscila Sousa
ABSENT: Tiffanie Maskell
Mayor Charlie Sisitsky
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 7:06 p.m., noted all in attendance, and said that Student Advisory Chair Nilufar Noorian was joining remotely, gave condolences to Tiffanie Maskell who could not be in attendance due to a passing in the family, noted that School Committee member David Gordon should be joining remotely shortly, and Mayor Sisitsky would not be in attendance due to a conflicting appointment. She 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. She noted information on how to participate in public comment in person and 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.

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Public Comment

There were no participants for public comment.

Karen Spilka to present a Senate Citation for 2022 Latino Excellence Award from the Massachusetts Black & Latino Legislative Caucus (MBLLC) to Rosie Alvarez

Senate President Karen Spilka said that earlier this year she nominated Rosario Alvarez for this award which celebrates members of the Massachusetts Latino Legislative Community whose leadership has improved and given back to all communities all across the state. She said that in October there was an event where Ms. Alvarez was recognized for this award and for recognition of the unique and trailblazing impact she has made in education in Framingham, but she wanted to make sure her accomplishments were properly celebrated in this community and people were aware. She spoke to some of Ms. Alvarez's accomplishments which included transforming BLOCKs Pre-School into a cohesive community by breaking down barriers that separated non-English speakers and special needs students from the rest of the classmates, created a focus on the whole family, and how she was a driving force behind the creation of Framingham's first full day Kindergarten program where she managed curriculum, operations, and finances and remains focused on equity as an overarching value. She presented Ms. Alvarez with a Senate Citation.

*Mr. Gordon joined the meeting remotely at 7:14 p.m.

Ms. Alvarez expressed her gratitude and said that she shares this award with her family as it honors who they are as a family and what they believe is so important and her friends, colleagues, staff, and families who are unafraid to always do what they need to do to do right for our children.

Mayor's Update

There was no report as the Mayor was not in attendance due to a conflicting meeting.

Student Advisory Committee (SAC) Presentation

SAC Chair Nilufar Noorian said that it is spirit week at FHS which means students can dress up for the different themes. She said that the latest edition of The Hap, which is FHS' digital newspaper, was published a few days ago and encouraged all to read the articles. She said that the National Honor Society Holiday Drive is coming to a close this week and members helped to raise money and accumulate donations for 110 kids in need in Framingham this year.

Superintendent's Update

Transportation Update/MWRTA Partnership

Dr. Tremblay spoke to how transportation is still an issue so they are looking into leveraging resources that are available to us. He said that although MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) has different restrictions than bus companies they have been discussing different options available. MWRTA Manager of Community Relations Jon Fetherston said that they currently provide transportation to school to 12 students, but he thinks they can provide a lot more and are looking at data to see how they can do so, as well as create outreach so more families and schools are aware that it could be an option.

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Ms. Moshe asked the age of the students that are currently using the program and said that she does not think a lot of people know about it so communication should be increased. Dr. Tremblay said that MWRTA is not designed to be for pupil transportation, they would not transport students under the age of 12 years old to school, and it would not be door to door service as MWRTA is not permitted on school property. He said that they are in the process of identifying students that may need the service, where the concentrations are, and how MWRTA could design routes and stops that provide a level of support at least a couple of times a day. Manager of Wraparound Services Anthony Ortiz said that his team is getting ready to launch an outreach and communication plan that will be multifaceted as a start to educate the public more on how they can utilize these methods to get students to school. He said that this will include a professional development session for educators and staff to share resources and the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Community Engagement staff have offered to ride along the route with families who may have questions or concerns around logistics of riding the bus. Mr. Freudberg asked if there is a way to track the students that use the MWRTA to then open up seats on the buses for students on the waiting list for transportation. Dr. Tremblay said that the intent is to see how many seats they can free up, although there is limited capacity on how many MWRTA buses and how often they can run. Discussion on how all MWRTA rides are currently free, how this may change, and if it does change that there are already funds in the budget to offset the costs.

Public Comment

The Chair allowed public comment during a different section of the agenda due to a request. Bob Bolles spoke of how in the past they were able to get bus passes to go downtown and it worked out fine so thinks this should be an easy win.

Mid-Year Report on the Superintendent's 2022-23 School Year Goals

Dr. Tremblay shared a presentation with the progress towards his 2022-23 School Year Goals that include the District Improvement Goal: Superintendent Residency & District Strategic Plan Development, Professional Practice Goal: Portuguese Language & Brazilian Cultural Studies, and Student Learning Goal: School Start Times Study. Updates included information on his school residencies, how he has been able to practice his Portuguese within his residencies with students and families which provides meaningful and models how it is ok to make mistakes, the start of a School Start Time Study Group and that he will be working with the Student Advisory Committee to look at start times as well. Mr. Freudberg spoke to how the level of detail and information through hyperlinks Dr. Tremblay provides is unique, as he has heard that other Districts do not receive the same, and how it helps School Committee members complete his evaluation, and provides transparency and trust.

Announcements

Dr. Tremblay said that they received information today that the Hemenway Elementary School Statement of Interest (SOI) will not be invited into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)'s Eligibility Period this year. He said that the MSBA received 54 Statements of Interest from 46 different school districts for consideration in 2022, the District can submit a SOI again starting on January 13, 2023, and he will be meeting with Mayor Sisitsky and others from the

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school department and municipality on Friday morning to discuss options and next steps and we will report back at the next meeting on January 4, 2023.

Mr. Freudberg said that there are many viruses currently going around and asked if there are any opportunities for free COVID-19 tests or recommendations to staff and families before going into and coming back from the winter break. Dr. Tremblay said they are seeing absences of staff and students and the flu seems to be competing with COVID-19. He said that as resources become available, such as from the state, they will make them available to everyone. Ms. Ottaviani spoke of how there is an option to be able to receive COVID-19 tests at no cost through some insurances and that families should be encouraged to do their due diligence in testing before coming back.

Executive Director of Finance & Operations Update

FY23 Operating and Capital Budget

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Lincoln Lynch said that FY22 is now officially closed with the City. He said that the FY23 YTD shows 45.19% spent or encumbered, they continue to work with Principals and Directors on current spending to stay in budget, and they are looking at projected spending early on to be able to report out in coming months. Mr. Freudberg asked if in the future there are costs for the MWRTA fares would it be a FY23 change that needs to be made or one to be included in FY24, and could the cost be sent to NRT to pay based on Article 6 of their contract. Mr. Lynch said that it would be in both fiscal years and they would be using the savings in FY23 from not having the full 77 buses running and will put a line item in for FY24. He said that he will look into whether we can have NRT pay for the cost.

FY24 Operating and Capital Budget

Mr. Lynch said that they are working on the FY24 Budget through meetings with Principals and Directors to review requests and new positions and they changed the process a bit and are also meeting in person with high school and middle school department heads to get into further detail of the needs of our students. He said that in the future they will be collaborating with the Finance Subcommittee, the School Committee, the City Council, and Mayor and will be presenting the first pass of the budget in the next month or so.

Update on the Tennis Court Replacement Project at Framingham High School

Director of Building and Grounds Matt Torti shared the document showing the tennis court project. He said that 50% of property is owned by the School Department and the other half is owned by the Parks and Recreation Department and this project has been a Capital Budget request that has been deferred for several years, but now has the support of the Mayor and CFO as well as Framingham High School, FPS athletics, and youth sports organizations. He said that this would include the removal of the existing tennis court area and replacing it with the same footprint as what exists now and said that if it were made bigger there would have to be consideration of drainage issues based on stormwater regulations. He said that they will be using reinforced concrete to make sure it will last many years to come and they have planned so it will not impede traffic flow, bus routes, or pedestrians. In response to a question from Mr. Gordon, he said that depending upon bids they are trying to get the majority of the work done before the summer, but this is also dependent on materials being available. The Chair said that

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there is no requirement for a motion, but administration thinks it would be helpful to have the committee's support to move it forward.

Motion: To support the tennis court replacement project at Framingham High School.

Moved: Ms. Ottaviani **Seconded:** Ms. Moshe **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Gordon, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Barnhill, LaBarge)

School Committee's Long Term Agenda for 2023

The Chair said that the draft 2023 long term agenda was included in packets and has been reviewed by Senior Leaders and School Committee leadership and the dates have been checked with the Government Channel and Blumer Room. Mr. Freudberg asked if the data dashboard was listed under Finance and Operations as it is finance specific or if it's just a general district initiative and if there should be a placeholder for an agenda item on the MassBay lease before it expires in June. Mr. Lynch said that the data dashboard is already in place and does not need extra funding or any action. He said that MassBay does have a proposed cost and change to the current lease that also needs to be discussed in a future meeting. Mr. Freudberg suggested moving the data dashboard item out of the Finance and Operations section and creating a placeholder in May for an agenda item on the MassBay lease.

Motion: To approve the School Committee's Long Term Agenda for 2023 with Mr. Freudberg's suggestions included.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Moshe **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Gordon, Moshe, Freudberg, Sousa, Ottaviani, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. LaBarge said that the warrants were signed for a total of \$2,834,045.78 and a payroll total of \$5,301,786.35 on the dates of December 5th and 12, 2022.

Mr. Freudberg, as the Chair of the Finance and Operations Subcommittee, said that the next meeting is scheduled for January 10th and the agenda will include FY23 current status, FY24 current planning, a legal services discussion, the School Committee department budget, and a transportation check in. He noted that there will also need to be a meeting in February.

Ms. Barnhill, as the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee, said that they met on December 14th with an update on MCAS including strengths, weakness, and next steps, and an update on the program of studies.

Ms. Hugo gave updates from organizations she is a liaison to. She said that the Director of the The Education Collaborative has retired and this past week they hired the Superintendent of Westwood Public Schools Dr. Emily Parks who will start by July 1st. She said that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) approved the nominations for the awards that the School Committee voted on and a representative from MASC can attend a future meeting to present the awards and the MASC Statewide Board is now taking recommendations from people for suggestions on what to have as legislative priorities.

Ms. Hugo, as the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee said that they met on December 13th and went over the new policy on electric vehicle charging

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stations and voted to recommend favorably to refer the policy to the School Committee to refer this policy to the Policy Subcommittee. Dr. Tremblay spoke to this policy being a collaboration with the City's Sustainability Coordinator and how it is the first policy like it in the state.

Motion: To refer the policy on electric vehicle charging stations to the Policy Subcommittee.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

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

Ms. Hugo said that the meeting also included updates on reduced paper usage which is trending in the right direction as well as fully compostable meal trays which was a subcommittee goal and Meatless Mondays which was so successful in the high school they want to expand to five days a week.

Ms. Ottaviani, as the Chair of the Health and Wellness Subcommittee, said that they will be meeting on January 11th; with the District Wide Committee at 3:00 p.m. and the subcommittee at 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Moshe, as the Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee, said that the third and final Equity Workshop for School Committee members will be on January 18th.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair said that a member submitted edits to the minutes for a correction to a name and to add two packet documents, those edits have been made and reflected in the packet.

Motion: To approve the Open Session minutes of November 30, 2022 including the mentioned edits.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

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

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Email on Statewide Award for Rosie Alvarez

Mid-Year Report on the Superintendent's 2022-23 School Year Goals

FY23 YTD

Update on the Tennis Court Replacement Project at Framingham High School

Draft School Committee Long Term Agenda for 2023

Warrants

Memo on Draft Electric Vehicle Charging Policy

Draft November 30, 2022 Minutes

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