



Framingham PUBLIC SCHOOLS School Committee

Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee

Remote

April 28, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

Open Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Chair Beverly Hugo, Tiffanie Maskell, William LaBarge, Priscila Sousa

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Director of Building and Grounds Matt Torti, Assistant Director of Building and Grounds Thomas Begin, Executive Assistant to the School Committee Joanna Hastry

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. She noted all in attendance and said that the meeting was being held remotely, being broadcasted live on Facebook, and being recorded.

Public Comment

There were no participants for public comment.

Updates on Completed and Ongoing Energy Sustainability Initiatives at FPS

Director of Building and Grounds Matt Torti spoke to the document that was provided on sustainability initiatives including coordination on Green Communities Competitive Grant projects, Retrocommissioning Scoping Studies of School Facilities, electric vehicle charging stations, renewable energy projects at the Fuller Middle School and Brophy Elementary School, energy resiliency with Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (CLEAR) studies, demand response at four eligible schools, and energy management system upgrades.

Ms. Maskell asked if there is an internal policy on the electric vehicle charging stations, such as how we determine how people can use it and for how long, and if we know what the actual usage is. Mr. Torti said they are metered and are listed on a separate electric bill and Dr. Tremblay has been looking at policies in other districts and will likely have a proposed policy in the future to possibly include payment for using the ports. He said that they buy energy with a consortium with the City and other towns for supply and purchase and pay a rate of .22 cents in addition to insurance. He said that it is also possible to add additional ports and expand on the existing systems. Members asked about the offset costs on electricity for the solar canopies and how easy it is to maintain them. Mr. Torti said that he hesitates to give a savings number until they have been in place for a year and spoke to how there were many factors to consider such as snow amounts and how much sunlight the location receives. He spoke to how the canopies help reduce the carbon footprint, but you would also have to factor in the geotech aspect, the carbon emissions when delivering the materials and installing them, and what happens to the materials after their life cycle. He said that the Power Purchase Agreement includes maintenance of the panels and drainage systems for the length of the agreement.

Ms. Hugo asked how likely the geothermal project with Eversource for the Farley Building and McCarthy Elementary School is to happen and asked for an update on air conditioning projects with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Mr. Torti said that Eversource has not yet begun the process for the project, that it would be unlikely to happen at McCarthy Elementary School due to timing, but if there were enough residents to start the program it could happen at the Farley Building with coordination with MassBay with access to the parking lots. He said that there is an Extreme Heat Task Force Committee with the FTA and the current plan is to add portable units to address the second floor of McCarthy with the hottest classrooms. He said that the air conditioning in the high school is 100% complete and operational with the new cooling tower upgrade and independent rooftop units in other areas. He said that they are looking at a plan to use ARPA funds to try and be equitable across the District for additional air conditioning, but issues such as steam systems in Stapleton Elementary School and Walsh Middle School can make it more difficult, and they would recommend addressing as many schools as they can. He noted that it is difficult to complete projects due to summer programming making buildings less accessible. Ms. Maskell said that to be equitable the hottest buildings should be addressed first. Mr. Torti said that some areas of schools are hotter than others, which is why they have been using portable units in the hottest rooms, and said that they will share the extreme heat data they have.

Discussion on Projects and Timelines for Items Listed in Proposed Policy EBACA: Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Policy

Policy EBACA: Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Policy was shared on the screen with updates given to the items, such as needing to look further into switching from gas powered to electric powered equipment, working with the City on safe drinking water, working with the Framingham High School Environmental Club for Meatless Mondays and how there is a subgroup with that club, the Food Services Director, and Custodial Service Director to address issues in the high school such as recycling and styrofoam trays, and determining with the Food Services Director if dishwashers would be beneficial in schools, among other items.

Vote on Two-Year Strategic Plan/Goal Setting for Subcommittee

Ms. Hugo said that she spoke with Dr. Tremblay and some items that could be focused on this year would include reducing paper usage, elimination of styrofoam trays, and starting Meatless Mondays.

Motion: To work on these goals first as the School Committee as advice to the District.

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

Discussion: Discussion on the paper usage goal as that has already been worked on in the past with the agreement to word it as reducing it further.

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous (4-0-0) (Yes: Hugo, Sousa, Maskell, LaBarge)

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Ms. Maskell **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Sousa, Maskell, LaBarge)

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

List of Sustainability Initiatives for Schools

Last Updated Draft Policy EBACA: Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability

Extreme Heat Data

These minutes were approved by the School Committee Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee on October 18, 2022.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on October 20, 2022.