

**Brockton, Massachusetts Regular School Committee Meeting May 5, 2020
Live Stream'**

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening, at six o'clock. These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion.

Mayor Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Mayor Sullivan asked for a moment of silence in memory of former Interim Superintendent Mr. John Jerome a great public servant and a great friend who cared about the Brockton Public school system, students and staff, our thoughts and prayers goes out to his family.

Mayor Sullivan, Chair read the following information for the record.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and State of Emergency, on March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order Temporarily Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20. Pursuant to the Order, public bodies are temporarily relieved from the Open Meeting Law's requirement that meetings be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public, so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means."

This meeting will be held and will be accessible to the public via Brockton Community Access, Brockton Public Schools website, www.bpsma.org, YouTube and Comcast channel 12

The public can access this meeting via this link: www.youtube.com/TheBrocktonChannels

Mayor Sullivan, Chair took a roll call vote under the revised open meeting law.

Mayor Sullivan, Chair – yes	Mr. D'Agostino, Vice-Chair – yes	Ms. Asack – yes
Ms. Mendes – yes	Mr. Minichiello – yes	Mr. Rodrigues – yes
Ms. Sullivan – yes	Mr. Sullivan – yes	
Superintendent Thomas – yes (non-voting)		

Mayor Sullivan took a roll call to establish a quorum.

Mayor Sullivan, Chair – yes	Mr. D'Agostino, Vice-Chair – yes	Ms. Asack – yes
Ms. Mendes – yes	Mr. Minichiello – yes	Mr. Rodrigues – yes
Ms. Sullivan – yes	Mr. Sullivan – yes	
Superintendent Thomas – yes (non-voting)		

Mayor Sullivan thanked Mike Simmons and the Brockton Community Access for all their efforts in facilitating our zoom meetings and Malinda Campbell, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and all her efforts compiling the agenda's.

Also Present: Executive Team Members, Kim Gibson BEA President, Richard Bath

Mayor Sullivan gave an updated report on the COVID-19 cases in Brockton. As of today, we have a total of 159 lives lost, 2,500 confirmed positive cases and over 3,000 lives impacted. Our thoughts and prayers go to the departed and their surviving families.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Sullivan explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda and asked members if they would like to remove any items for further discussion. Mr. D'Agostino asked to remove Item B, *Approval of April 16, 2020 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes*, giving an overview report on the following consent agenda items.

Item B, Approval of April 16, 2020 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes discussing the agenda items:

1. FY2021 budget
2. SOA extension
3. MOA discussion

4. MSBA-SOI Brockton High School
5. Other business

Mr. Minichiello moved to approve Item B, Approval of April 16, 2020 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Ms. Asack.

Mayor Sullivan took a roll call vote to approve Item B, Approval of April 16, 2020 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

Mayor Sullivan, Chair – yes	Mr. D’Agostino, Vice-Chair – yes	Ms. Asack – yes
Ms. Mendes – yes	Mr. Minichiello – yes	Mr. Rodrigues – yes
Ms. Sullivan – yes	Mr. Sullivan – yes	

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Mr. Sullivan moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve the remainder Consent Agenda items, seconded by Ms. Sullivan.

- A. Approval of April 7, 2020 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes
- C. Authorization to Submit Application to the FY20 U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, STOP School Violence Grant - \$750,000.00
- D. Authorization to Submit Proposal to American Student Assistance (ASA) for Grant to Assist with Emergency Meal Service - \$10,000.00
- E. Authorization to Submit FY20 Safer Schools and Communities Local Equipment and Technology Grant Application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security - \$47,380.00
- F. Authorization to Submit FY20 Summer Food Service Program EATS (Expansion, Access, Training and Start-up) Grant to Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE), FC 542 - \$14,855.00
- G. Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Appointments: Non-Certified
- H. Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements

Mayor Sullivan took a roll call vote to approve the remainder Consent Agenda items:

Mayor Sullivan, Chair – yes	Mr. D’Agostino, Vice-Chair – yes	Ms. Asack – yes
Ms. Mendes – yes	Mr. Minichiello – yes	Mr. Rodrigues – yes
Ms. Sullivan – yes	Mr. Sullivan – yes	

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Communication

None

Superintendent’s Report

Mayor Sullivan thanked Superintendent Thomas, School Committee members, Dr. Cobbs and staff at Central. We are doing an onsite drive up testing facility for COVID-19 at Brockton High School, it’s a collaborative approach with the City, Brockton Neighborhood Health Center and Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital. The state has given increase testing capability, thank you School Committee Members, Superintendent and School Police for all their efforts working together.

Superintendent Thomas expressed his thoughts and prayers to all families who have suffered losses due to COVID-19.

Superintendent Thomas spoke about his mentor John Jerome, having the honor and privilege to work directly with him from 2010 to 2014, he was always willing to lend a hand, give advice or just listen. Mr. Jerome was a true gentleman; our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Sharon and family.

Community Outreach Services Update

Superintendent Thomas invited Janice Johnson-Plumer BPS Community Outreach Specialists to discuss outreach services that help families that are in need, benefits that are available and offered by the state and federal government.

Ms. Johnson-Plumer discussed initiatives offered by the Department of Transitional Assistance to parents and families that attend BPS. In 2018 BPS became a SNAP outreach partner where we can provide food stamp assistance to families. Due to the DTA office being closed we have relied on Janice and Barbara Alicea as a SNAP outreach partner to assist parents and families remotely through the computer and over the phone. The second initiative is that the DTA has granted households to get the maximum benefits that they would have not received prior to COVID-19. The third initiative is due to Brockton being a national school lunch program and a participant DEP we can provide free lunch and breakfast to families. The DTA will issue PEBT which is the Pandemic EBT for all families that are qualified and are submitted to DESE, a PEBT card will be sent to them. A card will be mailed to the house with the child's name with benefits added to them, families that may have not qualified in the beginning may also receive a card prior to Covid-19 may have been eligible for SNAP. The first phase for those who already receive SNAP assistance will receive \$199.00 and the second phase is those who receive free and reduced lunch made in two payments. If you know of someone in need please feel free to reach out to Janice.

Superintendent Thomas mentioned Janice also works with Dr. Soraya deBarros, Marcia Andrade-Serpa and Dr. Soraya Presume, they are able to contact families in their native language to provide assistance and support.

Superintendent Thomas mentioned that Janice is working with Dr. Ethan Cancell and Dan Vigeant to resolve free internet issues that families maybe experiencing with Comcast.

Questions/Answers

- How would families get in contact with Janice?
Janice may be reached at (508)208-5518.
- Mayor Sullivan thanked Janice for providing important information to our families.

Remote Learning and Participation Update

Superintendent Thomas invited Dr. Ethan Cancell, Ms. June Saba-Maguire, Dr. Clifford Murray to discuss the remote learning and participation within the district.

Ms. Saba-Maguire discussed the district response to the Commissioner's advice which has been around looking at what the essential standards are. We are moving in the right direction and making modifications. We have focused on the essential standards all along.

Questions/Answers

- How many students are engaging?
It has increased, a survey was given to all principal's asking how many families you were able to reach and not able to reach. We have a total of 69 families that we were completely unable to be in contacted with, all but one of the schools have reported.

Social and Emotional Update

Superintendent Thomas invited Sharon Wolder to give an update on Social and Emotional services.

Ms. Wolder discussed what the team will do to reach out to the 69 families of no contact. We will cross reference the list that was provided by the principal's and work with John Snelgrove and adjustment counselors to set up a time with the mentors to do a wellness check and try to make contact with their schools to engage them with their principal and teachers. Supports that may also be needed for families would be resources that we can share such as: hygiene, food pantries and other resources in the community.

We have learned that a student has lost a parent to COVID-19 and the older sibling is now responsible for the siblings in the home. Mr. Snelgrove was able to visit and deliver supplies to the family.

For tougher cases as we begin to learn the needs of families we will try to have a team that is going to be able to deliver what supports we can. Families who have disconnected themselves totally from school will be contacted and we will try to re-engage them.

Comment

- Mr. D'Agostino thanked Ms. Wolder for the update and everything that is being done. He would like her to keep school committee members up to date how progression is being made.
- Mr. D'Agostino asked out of the 69 families do we think it could include students having to work to help provide for their families?
Based on the grade levels from schools it appears to be a good assumption.
- Mayor Sullivan thanked Ms. Wolder for everything that is being done.

FY2020 Budget Update

Superintendent Thomas invited Aldo Petronio Chief Financial Officer to give an update on the FY2020 budget.

Mr. Petronio reported that we are going over account by account to see what funds we may have remaining that we can pre-buy or possibly carry forward to next year. We are estimating costs of electricity, gas and expenses looking at anything that is open to close out and preserve funding that we have. Bid openings were held the last two days for next year, action is not needed until July 1st. The payroll budget will be close, we were asked to pay all employees for the remainder of this school year. We will review the ordinary maintenance accounts and see where we can also save.

FY2021 Budget Update

Superintendent Thomas invited Aldo Petronio Chief Financial Officer to give an update on the FY2021 budget.

Mr. Petronio mentioned conference calls with the Department of Education that he attends weekly, there is no concrete guidance on whether they will level fund us or cut us, status of grants. There is no information on the budget or a figure on Chapter 70 before July 1st. We are thankful for the Superintendent, Dr. Kathleen Moran Executive Director of Human Resources and Kim Gibson BEA Representative, they were able to negotiate and push the ruff notices to June 12th to give us time to get guidance. In the meantime, ways will be looked at to save funding for next year's budget and see what we need to adjust if necessary.

Mayor Sullivan discussed a conference call held with Superintendent Thomas, Troy Clarkson City Financial Officer, Aldo Petronio BPS Chief Financial Officer and Rep. Michelle DuBois State Delegation (Rep. Claire Cronin and Senator Brady were unable to attend due to prior calls) where it was expressed strongly to receive any/all money in a timely manner to create a budget for the city and school side as we wait for guidance from the commonwealth. We need to be cost efficient and fiscal responsible. The purchasing of buses will no longer be up for discussion this year, we need to account for all funds, hiring of 93 teachers and paraprofessionals is also on hold.

Superintendent Thomas mentioned a call with Commissioner Riley no new information was given, however he did confirm the \$4.3 million out of the First Cares Act through Title One. It is unclear if the funds will go through Chapter 70 or if they will be added or subtracted.

Questions/Answers

- Mr. D'Agostino asked if we received guidance to carry over funds into next year's budget. The Department of Education and Legislation are working on possibly carrying funds forward.

Superintendent Thomas thanked the following outside agencies for their help and support.

- NAACP
- The Charity Guild
- BEA
- Kenny Monteiro/Mentor program

Graduation Ceremony Update

Superintendent Thomas discussed the graduation ceremony. Jess Hodges, Dr. Murray, Dr. Cobbs, BHS Deans and Cynthia Burns are working on two options.

1. Virtual Graduation
2. Physical Graduation (smaller scale)

It is recommended and the best option to have graduation in July (25th/26th) for safety and security reasons.

Superintendent Thomas thanked Mike Simmons from BCA working along with Jess on either graduation options. Cap and gowns are being ordered for the seniors, lawn signs are in and are awaiting the t-shirts. Deliveries will be made to the seniors within the next two weeks. There are approximately 1300 graduates from all our high schools.

Mayor Sullivan discussed although this is a great disappointment to our seniors we need to show our joy, pride and support in their accomplishments.

2020-2021 School Year Calendar – Revised First Read

Superintendent Thomas discussed the 2020-2021 school year calendar – revised first read. Monday, September 14, 2020 is added as a holiday/ Marathon Monday by the Commissioner.

Questions/Answers

- Should Good Friday be added to the calendar?
No, it is a half day of school.

Items to refer to Subcommittee

Public Hearing School Choice – Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Superintendent Thomas reminded School Committee members of the public hearing on school choice, Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 5:45 p.m. Information will be sent in Friday's packet for review.

Unfinished Business

Student Opportunity Act (SOA) 3-year District Plan

Superintendent Thomas thanked Mr. Bath as he continues to work on the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) 3-year District Plan. He is collecting all the data from meetings held with teachers and community meetings. The Commissioner's office confirmed the May 15th date is not a date they are looking at for submission at this time. We will continue to work with Mr. Bath on the SOA 3-year District Plan.

New Business

Mr. Minichiello shared a few words about Mr. John Jerome. He was an Executive Director of Middle schools, Assistant Superintendent and Interim Superintendent. Mr. Jerome was a lifelong committed Brocktonian who grew in Brockton, a good father, husband, a great friend to many in the BPS, he loved children and was a great problem solver. Mr. Jerome will be sadly missed.

Superintendent Thomas mentioned Soraya deBarros, Michele Bolton and Jess Hodges will begin a campaign outreach to business this week for laptop donations.

Superintendent Thomas thanked Dan Vigeant, Dr. Ethan Cancell, Sharon Wolder, Janice Johnson-Plumer who are working with Comcast to expand the internet access for families of BPS that need access. Thank you, Mayor Sullivan for providing a point of contact at Comcast in this matter. The district has made it clear to the Department of Education of our families' lack of internet access. They understand that many Gateway cities are limited to internet access.

Mayor Sullivan thanked Superintendent Thomas and Jess Hodges Chief Public Relations Officer for working in collaboration on a draft of information detailing best practices regarding COVID-19. It is being translated into many languages and being distributed at the school's lunch site.

Mayor Sullivan shared news that Stop & Shop located on Belmont Street originally was scheduled to close as of today. After a conversation last week with management a decision was made to not close but instead change it to a Peapod virtual shopping location. In hiring of 50 employees Mayor Sullivan asked for Brockton resident preference and to register all vehicles that will transport food to ensure the city receives the excise tax and that was agreed on. Stop & Shop mentioned to the Mayor they are working on giving a grant to BPS.

Ms. Sullivan shared a few words about Mr. John Jerome. At the time when Mr. Jerome worked for the school department Ms. Sullivan was a parent of children in the system and could tell being an outsider he was very caring and respected by educators in the district and parents.

Superintendent Thomas gave an update on the Adult Ed classes. When the district closed on March 12th all compensation jobs and grant funded including local stopped such as: coaches, extended day, several teachers at Edison Academy, STEM, clubs at the middle and high school level. We are waiting for guidance from the Department of Education in the next few weeks regarding Adult Ed classes and other grant programs to carry funds forward.

Mr. Minichiello followed up on a question previously asked about summer programs. Superintendent Thomas replied at the moment there are no plans for summer programs. Vincent Marturano President & CEO Old Colony YMCA and his team members invited Superintendent Thomas to a zoom meeting planning what the summer will consist of, they are partnering with BPS. Discussion of a hybrid model where some students would come in and others would go online depending what the guidelines are from the state.

Ms. Asack expressed her sympathy to the Jerome family. Although she didn't work with him, she heard wonderful things about him throughout the years. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. She also mentioned that BHS student representative Georgina Younes is celebrating her 17th birthday today.

Executive Session

Mayor Sullivan announced School Committee members have personnel matters to deal with and would go into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if any open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares [BEPA], and that the regular meeting would not reconvene.

Ms. Sullivan motioned to go into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Asack.

A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Mayor Sullivan, Chair – yes	Mr. D'Agostino, Vice-Chair – yes	Ms. Asack – yes
Ms. Mendes – yes	Mr. Minichiello – yes	Mr. Rodrigues – yes
Ms. Sullivan – yes	Mr. Sullivan – yes	

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

School Committee Members went into Executive Session at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael P. Thomas
Superintendent/Secretary

mdc