



School Committee Meeting
Zoom Virtual Meeting [Link](#)
Zoom Webinar ID: 955 2951 2599
Meeting Password: 556076
Wednesday, September 16, 2020
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Present:

Michelle Bailey, Chairperson
Michelle Horgan, Vice Chairperson
Dana Allara, Secretary
Anna Siedzik, Vice Secretary
Peter Wolczik
David Polito (7:02 PM arrival)
Stacey Metternick (7:03 PM arrival)

Also Present:

Mary Beth Banios, District Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration
Craig Genualdo, Athletic Director
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary
Maribeth Ting, Wenham Public Health Nurse

1. Call to Order 7:00 PM

With a quorum present, Michelle Bailey calls the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, noting that the meeting is being recorded and held remotely per emergency order of the Governor. All votes this evening will be conducted through roll call vote.

2. Citizen's Comments [Exhibit](#)

Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify himself or herself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. After Citizen's Comments, the chat feature will be turned off. If members want to be recognized, they can use the raise hand feature. Total comment time will be limited to 20 minutes.

None.

3. New Business

(Due to the numerous fragmented discussions, technical challenges, and consolidation of topics based on speakers' availability, the minutes below follow the order reflected in the 09/16/2020 meeting [agenda](#), not necessarily the order in which they were addressed during the meeting).

A. [Approve NFHS Advertising](#) [Exhibit](#)

Ms. Siedzik provides an overview of the NFHS proposal as written in the [exhibit](#), noting that the Policy Subcommittee unanimously (3:0) approved this proposal during their last meeting (09/08/2020). Craig Genualdo, Athletic Director, asks the School Committee to approve the NFHS agreement, which would allow NFHS to broadcast all High School sports games, with NFHS approved advertisements. He reviews the agreement components in more detail, stating that he is strongly in favor of the services offered, especially in light of the COVID related restrictions that will limit fans from attending in-person sporting events.

Discussion regarding camera operations; authorization/signatures needed for filming/broadcasting students; district up-front and ongoing costs; installation and maintenance logistics including fiber cable extension; relationship with HWCAM; etc.

Review the Advertising Policy including the specific language written; intention and application of that language; previous School Committee decisions concerning advertising; definition of *commercial*; definition of *advertising*, etc.

The Policy Subcommittee came to the decision that the NFSC did not qualify as commercial, and probably did not even meet the definition for advertising. The subcommittee discussed this at length, consulting with Dorothy Presser from MASC, who advised that there were no violations of the policy. The question in front of the committee this evening is whether or not they are comfortable with the broadcast sporting events including advertisements/promotions.

Further discussion regarding district responsibilities, costs, and length of commitment. Mr. Genualdo explains that the district is obligated to the agreement for 5 years, during which any Hamilton - Wenham High School game will be broadcast. During this time, NFHS would replace any damaged cameras (aside from those damaged by the district's negligence).

Discussion regarding the local broadcasting station HWCAM, with Mr. Genualdo explaining that the system proposed is able to cover games at the basketball court and the outdoor athletic field, and further that the proposal includes a clause specifically allowing HWCAM (but no other paid service or company) to film and broadcast games. Continued discussion which clarifies that NFHS is not duplicative of HWCAM services and that this is a COVID related response to address equity and access issues.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZE PERMISSION FOR CRAIG GENUALDO TO ENGAGE A CONTRACT WITH NHFS TO PROVIDE CONTENT BROADCASTING OF HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC SPORTS UNDER THIS NEW PLATFORM.

MOTION by Anna Siedzik; SECONDED by Peter Wolczik.

Discussion: Ownership of the content of broadcasted content. *Brian Doser, HWCAM Chair*, speaks about previous decisions about advertising. He notes that the School Committee had previously decided to turn down free wiring for TVs in every classroom because of the advertising involved. He also notes his concern surrounding costs for families, as not everyone will be able to afford to subscribe to the services provided. Further discussion regarding HWCAM; advertising policy; etc. The Policy Subcommittee has examined this issue in detail, and reached a unanimous decision to approve this proposal. Ms. Siedzik reads the language from NFHS detailing what content is not allowed to be advertised.

Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Mr. Genualdo is aware of the district's relationship with HWCAM, and he will continue to honor and respect the excellent services HWCAM provides. He thanks the School Committee for their time.

B. Athletics Update

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Genualdo provides an update on district athletics for the 2020/2021 school year, as detailed in the [exhibit](#). He explains that due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, user fees are likely to be significantly higher, and will be announced 09/25/20. Discussion regarding the School Committee's vote

on sports, with Mr. Genualdo explaining that a vote is only required should the district be operating in a full remote plan.

C. Discussion of School Tours

The School Committee members provide a summary of their observations and overall experience while touring the schools each were assigned:

- Ms. Bailey summarizes her tour with Winthrop elementary school;
- Ms. Siedzic summarizes her tour with the High School, sharing pictures she took;
- Ms. Horgan summarizes her tour with Buker elementary school;
- Mr. Polito summarizes his tour with Cutler elementary school, noting that he was uncertain about the purpose of his visit;
- Ms. Allara summarizes her tour with Miles River Middle School.

School Committee members agree that the schools are incredibly clean and show ample evidence of the custodian's hard work. Numerous concerns brought up on prior occasions are addressed through members' detailed tour recounts. Most members express a high level of confidence that the schools are prepared to welcome back staff and students when schools reopen in the hybrid learning model.

D. Review Outcome of Board of Health Metrics Conversation

[Exhibit 1](#) [Exhibit 2](#)
[Exhibit 3](#) [Exhibit 4](#)

Superintendent Banios reviews the history and plan moving forward to reopen schools. On Monday, 09/14/20, the Boards of Health voted to revise the metrics used (8 to 6), as shown in the graphic in [exhibit 1](#). They also revised language to highlight that the established metrics are to be used only for guidance. The revisions are reflected in the final copy, revised 09/14/20, of the *COVID-19 METRICS FOR HWRSD OPERATIONS*, [exhibit 2](#), above. Ms. Banios explains when the COVID Response Team reconvenes on 09/24/20 meeting, they will be relying on the new metrics established.

Ms. Banios refers to the 09/14/20 letter, as presented in [exhibit 3](#). This letter advises:

... it is critically important that school districts do not make decisions based on a single report from DPH. Instead, I recommend that school districts wait for color changes in either direction in three consecutive weekly reports before considering a change to an instructional model (remote, hybrid, in- person).

Ms. Banios reviews the data found in the spreadsheet *HWRSD Metrics Dashboard*, as shown in [exhibit 4](#). The Dashboard, which will be linked to the District's website, shows the daily, 7-day, and 14-day incident rate per 100,000. Currently, Hamilton - Wenham is showing a significant drop in numbers. The COVID Response Team will reconvene on 10/24/20 to analyze the 3 weeks of data. If the downward trend continues, the district anticipates opening schools 10/01/20 in the hybrid model. Ms. Allara adds that though the Boards of Health considered surrounding communities, they have dedicated a great deal of time and effort to analyze Hamilton - Wenham specifically. Further discussion regarding methodology in determining metrics, with Ms. Banios noting that this is an iterative process.

Ms. Allara clarifies that DESE's guidance applies to the broader community, however, the more detailed narrative provides direction on how the district would respond should COVID cases occur in the schools. Mr. Polito indicated that he is uncomfortable with the 3-week time period, as the district puts both students and teachers at risk. He asks that the School Committee receive a written plan of action detailing how the district plans to respond to positive COVID cases in schools. Ms. Banios would like this to be included in the next meeting's agenda to allow Public Health Nurses to clarify the protocols in place to address cases in schools.

Ms. Metternick is concerned about including so many surrounding communities, as this could be detrimental to Hamilton-Wenham. She is glad to see the conservative metrics were changed, however, she explains her frustration with what she perceives as an emotionally driven response to enter into remote learning, and wants to ensure that the metrics relying on surrounding communities is not merely an excuse to continue operating in a remote model.

Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse, joins the discussion to provide clarification regarding the new guidance from DESE: DESE requires schools to report all positive cases and with any closure plan, there has been direct communication between DESE and the superintendent. Further, if infections occur at schools, that will be examined immediately, and the three week waiting period will not necessarily be in effect.

Ms. Allara clarifies that the COVID Response Team used established metrics to make their decision to open schools in a remote model. She adds that the decision was authorized by School Committee vote. Ms. Metternick wants to make sure that we are relying on the data only, and not aren't emotional decisions. Ms. Allara reiterates the process, noting there were, in fact, no emotions involved, and the decision was made strictly based on the School Committee's vote to authorize the COVID Response Team to make such decisions based on the metrics established by the towns Boards of Health. Ms. Allara helps Ms. Metternick reframe her statement: the original metrics were too conservative. Further discussion regarding School Committee's role in opening schools; decision making processes; etc.

4. Superintendent's Report

A. Report on School Reopening

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Banios provides an update to the School Committee, detailed in the [exhibit](#) above. She speaks about the [High School Summer Reading Program](#); a [Parent webinar](#) scheduled for 09/10/20; MRMS [virtual welcome back message](#); elementary meet and greet/ material pick up; Kindergarten screening; Academy of Personalized Learning (APL) update; and [Week 1](#) update from student services.

Ms. Siedzik states that she has heard a great deal of feedback from parents regarding the changes in the schedules as originally communicated, as well as the time spent on learning and the amount of content offered to students. Ms. Siedzik observed her daughter's elementary zoom class, which had over 200 students in attendance. She asks Superintendent Banios about the district's plan to develop and offer a mechanism for feedback as well as the district's ability to make necessary adjustments. Ms. Banios explains that elementary and middle school classes will be sending surveys out to parents and caregivers either this week or early next week. Surveys for high school will be sent to students next week. Ms. Banios notes that this is an iterative process where the district will solicit feedback, reflect on that feedback, and make necessary changes. There will be more structure in the future. Ms. Siedzik would like to stress the importance of teacher-led and parent affirmed process to avoid chaos and confusion.

5. Chair's Report

- A. Ms. Bailey thanks the School Committee members for participating in school site visits. She would like the teaching staff to know that all members felt safe during these tours. Ms. Bailey and Ms. Horgan composed a thank you letter to Hamilton - Wenham Regional School District staff and faculty, which Ms. Bailey reads. School Committee members offer their gratitude by holding thank you signs.
- B. Scheduling School Committee retreat: this was originally scheduled two weeks from now, but will need to be rescheduled due to Ms. Presser being unavailable. Ms. Bailey will circulate a poll for members' availability/preference with the following potential dates: 10/3/20, 10/5/20 or 10/6/20. Ms. Banios recommends that the School Committee retreat take place in-person. The agenda includes:
 - a. School Committee protocols;
 - b. Committee and subcommittee workflow and assigning responsibility;
 - c. Calendar planning (TURF field, master plan, etc.);
 - d. Goals developed for both Superintendent and School Committee;
 - e. Subcommittee Groups: develop and approve charges, goals, chairperson, etc.

6. Committee Reports

A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

- Ms. Siedzik will schedule a Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee meeting to develop a charge, goals, and elect a chair.

B. Policy Subcommittee

- Approve Concussion Policy

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONCUSSION POLICY AS PRESENTED IN THE [EXHIBIT](#) ABOVE.

MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey notes that this policy is not approved *in form*, which means that it will need to be updated on the district's website immediately. Ms. Siedzik will communicate this information to Ms. Presser, and provide her with a copy of the policy.

Anna Siedzik	YES;
Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

- Subcommittee has not met - no update.

Other Town/Board updates:

- Ms. Horgan met with Valerie McCormack, Hamilton FINCOM member. Mr. Leone and Ms. Banios will meet with Hamilton FINCOM in the near future.
- Ms. Siedzik reports both Hamilton and Wenham are interested in developing Human Rights Commissions. Should these measures pass, there will be a call for both student and School Committee member representatives;
- Thomas Geary will serve as a member on Hamilton's Capital Committee;
- Discussion about subcommittee or designated School Committee members tasked with communicating with State Legislators and ensuring that the district is represented in legislation. Ms. Bailey states that she will reach out to legislators. The agenda for the School Committee Retreat (date TBD) will include time to discuss regularly scheduling meetings open to the public with legislatures present to provide updates. There will also be further discussion regarding designating a subcommittee or member to liaison with legislatures.

7. Consent Agenda

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 8
- Voucher No. 1010
- Voucher No. 2934
- Voucher No. 2937
- Voucher No. 2938
- Voucher No. 1009

B. Minutes

- July 29, 2020
- August 6, 2020

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS WRITTEN ABOVE; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.

MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.

Anna Siedzik	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;

Stacey Metternick ABSTAIN;
David Polito YES;
Peter Wolczik YES;
Dana Allara YES;
Michelle Bailey YES.

MOTION PASSES through majority (6:1) roll call vote of 7 members present.

8. Other

A. Topics for next meeting (Next School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, 09/30/20, subject to change)

Ms. Bailey says topics for next meeting can be emailed to her. Mr. Wolczik says he has repeatedly vocalized and emailed his requests regarding an agenda item to include costs of contractors, current number of custodians, etc.

Discussion regarding established metrics and whether the School Committee needs to vote on changing metrics (no). Maribeth Ting joins the discussion and reviews the process by which the School Committee authorized the metrics to be established.

Mr. Wolczik asks for the following agenda items, which he will also email to Ms. Bailey:

- Finance Report to be on the agenda for 10/21/2020 meeting;
- Costs of contractors for maintenance department;
- District's Learning Management System.

9. Adjourn to Executive Session

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:23 PM FOR PURPOSE #3: TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OR LITIGATION WITH THE HAMILTON - WENHAM EDUCATION ASSOCIATION; THE CHAIR DECLARES THAT DISCUSSION IN OPEN MEETING MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE BARGAINING OR LITIGATING POSITION OF THE PUBLIC BODY; AND NOT TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by Dana Allara.

Anna Siedzik YES;
Dana Allara YES;
Michelle Horgan YES;
David Polito YES;
Peter Wolczik YES;
Stacey Metternick YES;
Michelle Bailey YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

10. —Vote to Adjourn

Respectfully submitted October 13th, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. The School Committee reserves the right to implement additional remote participation procedures and will notify the public of these procedures as soon as practicable. Please [click here](#) to read the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.

*Zoom App Information: If you plan to participate, download the [Zoom.com](#) application now. The option to download will also be available at the start of the meeting. When opening the Zoom App, select "Join Meeting" in the upper right corner and enter the Hamilton - Wenham School Committee
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webinar id: 955 2951 2599; password: 556076. The community should ask questions via the “chat” function within the Zoom application during the Citizen’s Comments section. During the Zoom meeting, participants will be given instructions on how to provide their comments. Unfortunately, we must limit the in-person conversations to just the Committee members. However, for the benefit of all, the School Committee meetings will be available on our local cable channel, HWCam, and HWCam.org, for review a few hours after the meeting has ended. Members of the public can access the meeting via [YouTube HWRSD live stream link](#) the next day.