



**PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, December 6, 2022**  
**North Pembroke Elementary School LGI**

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**Present from Administration:** Erin Obey, Superintendent; Marybeth Brust, Assistant Superintendent; Jessica DeLorenzo, Director of Student Services

**Present from Committee:** Lance Kennedy, Chair; Susie Scholl, Vice Chair; Susan Bollinger, Secretary; and David Boyle

### **Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors**

Mr. Kennedy welcomed the audience members.

### **Adjustments to Agenda**

None

### **Communications**

a) Master Plan Committee

Mrs. Obey said the planning board at Town Hall is looking for a member of the School Committee to join. Mr. Boyle agreed to be the liaison and Mrs. Bollinger will be the alternate.

### **Approval of Bill Schedule**

Warrants were sent out electronically for signature.

### **Consideration for Approval: Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2022**

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of November 15, 2022.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

### **Discussion Regarding School Committee Vacancy**

Mr. Kennedy said it is important to add the fifth school committee member soon and the committee agreed to start the process. Mrs. Obey will reach out to Sabrina Chilcott to post the vacancy and then a joint meeting with the Select Board will take place to vote for the new member. The time frame will be late January or early February.

### **Superintendent's Report**

a) Vocational Opportunities Update

Mrs. Obey said this update was a request from a community member. Mrs. Obey presented the historical vocational enrollment information which has fluctuated over the past 12 years but has hovered around 2-2.5% the

past several years. Norfolk Agricultural currently has 17 Pembroke students enrolled and Silver Lake has 34 Pembroke students enrolled this year in grades 10-12, no freshmen. Several applications have been received for Bristol Agricultural for Pembroke 8<sup>th</sup> graders. In 2015-2016 the committee started the conversation of designating Silver Lake as the vocational school of preference, which gives the committee financial stability when budgeting out future years of vocational tuition. If accepted into Silver Lake, students are required to attend unless Silver Lake does not have their desired vocation. South Shore Vocational Technical High School stopped taking Pembroke students as of 2019-2020 school year. About 50% of students that apply to a vocational school get in due to the entrance requirements. In 2012 the school committee has conversations with SSVT about becoming a member town and the cost at that time was \$500k with no tuition break for member towns: the school committee decided not to move forward with buy-in. In 2018 PPS met with SSVT again to consider becoming a member and at that time it required a debt exclusion override for a building project along with the large capital investment and it was decided not to move forward. In 2019 Silver Lake was designated as the vocational school of preference for PPS and this meant that if accepted into Silver Lake, students are required to attend unless Silver Lake does not have their desired vocation. In 2021 the Pathways Program was created to allow for some career hands-on components to be established at PHS, but not a substitute for a Chapter 74 program. In 2022 the Chapter 74 enrollment rules changed requiring all students from member towns that meet the minimum criteria for admissions to be admitted prior to any non-member town students. Pembroke is not a member town for any vocational school. In 2023 PPS will continue to build out the Pathways Program.

Mrs. Obey urged parents to engage their lawmakers to advocate and said there is no immediate answer. In looking at the interests of current students at Silver Lake there is no critical mass in one vocation. PPS could consider Early Education as a Chapter 74 pathway. PPS is not built to be a Chapter 74 school and it is a multiyear process to become one. The Hatch building was discussed as an option, but it is not salvageable for retrofitting as a Chapter 74 space. The next step is to reach out to any living heirs and ask to be allowed demolish the building and decide if want to build something there, and the process has been started with legal guidance.

Also, discussed purchasing a guaranteed back of 10 seats at Silver Lake but their legal counsel for Silver Lake advised against this. Silver Lake is looking to expand some of its offerings in the 2-3 years which could open up some additional seats for PPS.

SSVT is looking to build a new school building through MSBA. The student cost is now \$17,992 plus special education services and plus transportation. If PPS were to buy in right now it would be \$900k split annually between all member towns based on a proportional share of eighth-grade enrollment.

PPS would pay \$400k in 10 annual payments plus the \$30k per student cost and every member town would need a \$9-10 million debt exclusion. The earliest PPS students could attend would be the fall of 2025 and the cost would be upwards of \$40k per student. In addition, 6 out of the 8 member towns would need to approve the PPS application, and they would have to give up some of their seats for PPS. Mr. Boyle asked about the cost to taxpayers and Mrs. Obey said around \$150-\$180 per household. Mrs. Scholl asked if COVID created an inflated vocational number and Mrs. Obey said she thinks interest state-wide and nationally there is an increase in vocational education. Mrs. Bollinger said she is concerned about paying for a new SSVT building and Mrs. Obey said SSVT is a region and PPS would be paying for a piece of that. Mr. Kennedy said he questions the desire of other towns to partner with PPS to create a program. Mrs. Obey reiterated it is a three-year process to become a member with seats. She pointed out that PPS spends \$15,600 to educate a student as compared to \$41k per student to send a student to SSVT.

Mrs. Obey said the PHS Pathways Program has been created not in exchange for a vocational education but as a way to get some career training, internships, and job-specific coursework. This year the Pathways are Digital Arts, Business and Computer Science. Proposed programs for next year include Computer Integration Manufacturing and Biomedical. There is some medical fabrication as part of the Computer Integration Manufacturing proposed for 23/24. Also, there is a computer tech and repair piece as part of the Computer Science Pathway that is proposed for 23/24. Early Childhood Education will be considered as a future expansion of the Pathways Program for 24/25. In addition, the district will build out a work/internship offering for interested students to get work experience while getting elective credits toward graduation. Mrs. Scholl asked if the district has the opportunity to send students into an apprenticeship with electricians, plumbers or HVAC. Mrs. Obey said the Pathways Coordinator, Mrs. Gates, is working on finding opportunities within the community that don't currently fall under the Pathways Program offerings.

Mrs. Obey said the district is also looking at the feasibility and costs associated with joining other regional vocational districts like Upper Cape Cod. She said they are going back to their members to talk about what it would take to join. Also, she had a conversation with SSVT to offer after-school shop experiences for students. In addition, the district will engage with State reps regarding the change to the enrollment policy and what it has meant for districts like Pembroke. She added that the district is looking at every possibility so students can be successful.

Mrs. Webster asked for clarification about the Chapter 74 policy change and Mrs. Obey explained the change in policy, by the State, requires vocational schools to accept every student in their member towns that meet the minimum requirements before taking any students from outside towns.

Mrs. Barone asked what happens with the students that want a hands-on education and Mrs. Obey said there are nine students that are known to want to attend a vocational school and the Pathways Coordinator is working to find hands-on opportunities for the students. Mrs. Obey added that parents can also reach out to the DESE Commissioner.

Mrs. Melissa Hooley confirmed that Mr. Boyle is going to reach out to the State reps on behalf of the committee.

Mr. Tom ?? said the school committee has to reach out to lawmakers on behalf of the PPS community. He said it is wrong that the students don't have a vocational option.

Mrs. Jasie said she would like to learn more about DESE's authority over the school committee. Mrs. Obey explained that the Chapter 74 changes came from the State, not DESE and she said she is happy to put together a document explaining how DESE governs school districts.

Mrs. Katie Kupustas asked about starting a subcommittee on the vocational education problem. Mrs. Obey said she can hold a meeting for parents to share ideas and get feedback on the topic. Mr. Kennedy said the committee will exhaust all options for students.

Mr. Mike Quinn said the State created this problem and asked what everyone can do to get the State to reverse or amend this. Mr. Kennedy said people should reach out to the legislative reps. Mrs. Scholl suggested that communities partner in order to have a big voice. Mr. Boyle said the reps need to hear from the parents.

Mr. Adam Gedutis asked about bringing back shop classes to PHS. Mrs. Obey said the woodshop would have to be retrofitted and it involves opening up the envelope of the building which would include HVAC, ventilation, building codes, etc. Also, there isn't a big student interest in woodshop. Mr. Kennedy said this is something that would be looked at along with all other options and the committee will continue this dialogue and do the best for students. Mrs. Obey said added that the current Pathways Program was created as a result of surveying the interest of 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

**b) Consideration for Approval: PHS DECA Trip to Quincy in December, PHS DECA Trip to Boston in March, PHS DECA Trip to Orlando, FL in April, PHS Trip to Spain in February, PHS Trip to England in April**

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS DECA Trip to Quincy in December, PHS DECA Trip to Boston in March, PHS DECA Trip to Orlando, FL in April, PHS Trip to Spain in February, PHS Trip to England in April.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

**c) Budget Process/Timeline Overview**

Mrs. Obey presented a reference document for the committee members and Mr. Kennedy suggested the audience also use it as a reference to help understand the upcoming budget season. The document provides links to many resources including finance laws, personnel laws, and the school finance handbook.

January 17<sup>th</sup> will be the Maintenance of Effort Budget. February and March will include departmental budget presentations. April will be the Administrative Recommended Budget, the fee discussion, and budget balancing. May is the Public Budget Hearing followed by Town Meeting on 5/9.

### **Future Meeting Dates and Topics**

12/13 and 1/17

VOTE: At 7:54 PM, on a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

### **APPROVED: January 24, 2023**

### **MOTIONS**

VOTE: On a motion made by David Boyle and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of November 15, 2022.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: On a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by Susan Bollinger, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS DECA Trip to Quincy in December, PHS DECA Trip to Boston in March, PHS DECA Trip to Orlando, FL in April, PHS Trip to Spain in February, and the PHS Trip to England in April.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

VOTE: VOTE: At 7:54 PM, on a motion made by Susie Scholl and seconded by David Boyle, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Lance Kennedy, Susie Scholl, Susan Bollinger, and David Boyle

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none