



## Cohasset Public Schools

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA 02025

*Continuing the Commitment to Excellence*

### **Cohasset School Committee Meeting**

#### **School Committee Minutes**

Wednesday, 5/20/2020

Zoom Video Call

Virtual Meeting – 143TV and Zoom

#### **In Attendance:**

Ellen Maher, Chairman

Jennifer Madden

Paul Kearney

Ashley Colleary

Craig MacLellan

#### **Also, in Attendance:**

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

Dr. Leslie Scollings, Assistant Superintendent

Michael MacMillan, Director of Finance & Operations

Chairman Maher called the meeting back to order at 6:59p.m. She stated the meeting is being held remotely under the Town's Declaration of Emergency. All votes will be taken by roll call vote. This meeting is being live streamed on Cohasset 143TV and Facebook. **Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Present, Ashley Colleary-present, Ellen Maher-present, Jennifer Madden, present, Craig MacLellan-Arrived late.**

#### **Public Comment-None**

**Superintendent's Report-Student School Committee Representative-Update-** Superintendent Dr. Sullivan updated the committee that the leadership team met to discuss the planning of the return of student belongings. Students and their parents will be able to pick up their belonging from their school buildings between June 8<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> with a rain date on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Sullivan also stated that they had a wonderful Student Advisory Council Meeting last week. The group discussed what school might look like in the fall. Dr. Sullivan stated he asked several questions regarding staggered start times, virtual learning and activities. Student School Committee Representative Ms. Patterson gave an update on student perspectives regarding remote learning. She mentioned that being open and communicative as much as possible with your teachers is the best way to get through some of the difficulties that come with remote learning. She stated that having a learning environment that is comfortable for both students and faculty is the main goal and to get back to some form of normalcy is what the students of Cohasset are looking forward to. Chairman Maher stated that she hopes Ms. Patterson has the time next year to return as a Student School Committee Representative to share her knowledge and experience with the new members. Dr. Sullivan mentioned that the Wellness Team met, and they discussed how to support the students and get more virtual opportunities available for them. Deer Hill has several virtual activities planned such as Disney Night, Trivia and Cooking with Mr. U.

**Faculty Update-** Superintendent Dr. Sullivan introduced candidate Barbara Cerwonka as the finalist for the Director of Student Services position. Mrs. Cerwonka has over 30 years of experience in various special education capacities almost exclusively in North Attleboro. Dr. Sullivan stated that Mrs. Cerwonka is described by her colleagues and former supervisors as thoughtful, collaborative, student centered, patient, a great relationship builder and courageous. The Committee introduced themselves, asked questions and had a brief discussion with Mrs. Cerwonka.



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**Motion by Mrs. Colleary to appoint Barbara Cerwonka as the Director of Student Services, Seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Alternative Energy Committee Discussion of Town Warrant Article to Lease School Roof for Solar Energy Array**- Chairman of the Alternative Energy Committee Tanya Bodell gave a proposal to the Committee and discussed the opportunity of potentially putting solar panels on the school's roofs. The incentives support solar energy array, energy storage, electric vehicle charging equipment, and other advancing technologies. Mrs. Bodell stated there is Microgrid Funding Opportunities available to the Town. The committee has a lengthy discussion.

**Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve the article for the lease of school property for siting of a Solar Power Electric Generation Facility as outlined in the draft warrant article vetted by Town Council on Tuesday, May 19th, Seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Update on Senior Activities**- Superintendent Dr. Sullivan gave an update on Senior activities. He mentioned that Senior Banners were installed on the Town Common. Class Night will be broadcast on Cohasset 143TV, Athletic Director Steve Rotundi has been posting an ongoing Senior Athlete. There will be a Drive-in event showing a compilation Senior Video at the Music Circus and streamed via the YouTube Channel on May 27<sup>th</sup> which is the last day of classes for the Seniors from 8:00-9:00 pm. The valedictorian and Salutatorian will be announced that night. Dr. Sullivan thanked Chief Quigley, his team, Pam Fahey and the Board of Health for their close collaboration and efforts in making these special events happen for the Senior Class. He also thanked the South Shore Music Circus for allowing the School to have the Drive-in Event on their property. Dr. Sullivan mentioned that this will be a social distancing, safe event for seniors and their immediate families. Seniors will have the opportunity to get a photograph with families and receive their diploma on Diploma Day which will be held on June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Music Circus from 9:00am to 2:30pm. Senior Prom will be held at the Red Lion Barn on August 5<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 10:30 pm. The Senior Class Field Day will be held on August 6<sup>th</sup> at Milliken Field from 2:00 – 4:00pm. Lastly, Graduation is scheduled to be held on August 7<sup>th</sup> at Alumni Field at 4:00pm.

### **Discussion of Future Presentation Dates of School Improvement Plans and Handbooks-**

Superintendent Dr. Sullivan stated both School Improvement Plans and Handbooks are typically presented towards the end of the year. He mentioned that due to the trying times and thought that both Improvement Plans and the Handbooks will be impacted by COVID-19 and the regulations that are set depending on when they receive guidance. Dr. Sullivan doesn't think that they will be ready during the June School Committee Meetings. He asked if the committee would consider delaying this until the Fall in order to give the teams a better chance to meet with their school counsels. The Committee had a brief discussion and decided to remove the presentation dates for the School Improvement Plans and Handbooks from the agendas for the June meeting until the Fall.

**Finance-Review of Fee Reimbursement**- Mr. MacMillan stated that due to the schools closing on March 16<sup>th</sup> there are several reimbursements that should be considered. Mr. MacMillan stated that his recommendations are based on the level of services being provided during the school closure, portions of the fees to reimburse, the impact on district budgets for FY21 & FY22 and the reimbursement process. The options that he presented are a total refund for the days remaining which is 61 days at the time of closure which equals 33.9%, a partial refund or no refund. Some of these fees were for athletics,



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Kindergarten, Preschool, Transportation and Food Service. Lydia St. Onge of 401 Beechwood Street raised the question that Kindergarten tuition was listed as \$2,800 and my Kindergarten invoice and payments reflect a fee of \$3,500. Mr. MacMillan stated that Kindergarten tuition is \$3,500 and the tuition amount listed on the slide was inputted in error. Mr. Kearney commented that Cohasset is in the small percentage of Massachusetts Towns that charge for Kindergarten and that the committee continues to advocate for free Kindergarten services. He also commented that statistics show the importance of children attending Kindergarten and the burden that the cost of tuition has on families. Mr. MacMillan stated that refunds will be done by check and will be issued in the name of the person from whom the original payment was received, payments by check will take up to four weeks to process as they must go through the accounting system and approval process, refunds will be done by activity type, not by household so households may receive multiple checks and households with negative balances will have refunds applied to those negative balances before reimbursement is made. The committee had a lengthy discussion.

**Motion by Mr. Kearney to approve the refund of \$3,200 to the families that paid for Spring sports. Seconded by Mr. MacLellan. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Motion by Mrs. Madden to reimburse 28% of the annual Kindergarten fee to Full Day Kindergarten Families. Seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve refund of our Transportation Fees of 33.9% of the fee accounting for 61 days. Seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve Preschool Tuition reimbursement in the amount of 33.9%, Seconded by Mrs. Madden. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Monthly Update-** Mr. MacMillan gave an update on the current budget up to April 30, 2020. He stated that it looks as though they have spent more of the budget this year compared to last year at this time, but he explained that it is because they have paid more payrolls this year than last year due to where the dates landed. He mentioned that the budget is actually down approximately \$70,000 from last year because of COVID-19. The Committee had a brief discussion.

**FY20 Year End Surplus/Deficit Forecast-** Mr. MacMillan gave an update on FY20 Year End Surplus/Deficit Forecast. He stated that there are surpluses in the following categories; Athletics, Cleaning/Contract/Supplies, Regular Transportation, Salaries, Special Ed Transportation, Special End Tuitions, Texts/Materials/Supplies, Utilities and Other – which consist of items such as Personal Development. He stated that the next steps are final bills, the ability to use the surplus funds to pre-pay Special Education Tuition. There is a priority purchase list that consists of laptops for the Art Program and Textbooks for Social Studies and Science. Remaining funds could be used to pay into the SPED stabilization fund. The Committee had a lengthy discussion.

**School Committee Comments and Communication-RFP Legal Counsel-** Mrs. Colleary gave an update regarding the Committees search for new legal representation. She presented a proposed process



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and timeline that the Committee discussed. Mr. Kearney thanked Mrs. Colleary for taking the lead on this project and volunteered to help in the entire process. Chairman Maher suggested asking Dr. Sullivan, Dr. Scollins, Mr. MacMillan and Mrs. Owen for their input as well because they will be working closely with the chosen firm. Chairman Maher also suggested that Mrs. Colleary reach out to Liza O'Reilly of the Hingham School Committee as they recently went through the process of finding new legal counsel and she could provide some great insight. Mrs. Madden asked Mrs. Colleary to update the guide to include the Leadership Team and change the number of finalists from two to a range of two to four.

#### **Reports from Sub-Committee and Liaisons (Policy & Standards, Budget Finance, Special Ed. PAC, Legislative Liaison, Facilities/Capital Projects/Technology/AEC, Collective Bargaining, Security, Superintendent Evaluation)**

Mrs., Madden stated she attended a School Council meeting via zoom and Principle Sullivan gave an update on remote learning and most people are happy with remote learning. She also gave an update on the new configurations of classes which will consist of self-contained classes next year. She presented that they will be going forward with the new math curriculum and in the budget the ESP. 4 will support math. Principle Sullivan also announced the schedule for student belongings to be pick-up. Mrs. Madden stated she was impressed with how organized the schedule is. She thanked Karen Johnston for finding paper bags for packing up the student's belongings, which is a great help. Mrs., Madden stated she attended an Alternative Energy Committee which reviewed a Microgrid Power Point presentation. Mr. Kearney gave an update from the Wellness Committee this past Wednesday. He stated that it is a great group and he is excited to be a part of it. He was glad to hear how many of the teachers are missing their students. Dr. Scollins added that the Committee checked in with staff, students and families. She also mentioned that the committee is looking at their wellness plan/policy and Nurse Judy Collins attended a course and has recommended a plan to use a evaluation tool to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the plan. They will come back on the first week of June and see what the evaluation will look like. Dr. Scollins stated that they will be looking to have a student on the committee next year. Chairman Maher attended a PEB Committee meeting, but they didn't have a quorum, so the meeting was suspended. She mentioned that she met with Senior Town Leadership today about Phase one this week and what Phase two will look like. She forwarded a PowerPoint presentation on the gradual opening. She stated that Cohasset will be receiving money from the CARES ACT. The Beach will be opening on Friday until 6pm. There are plans to keep people socially distant and they will be limiting parking and giving gentle reminders of staying socially distant.

**Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chairman 48 hours in advance of the meeting**- Chairman Maher stated that in the reopening plan the Town voted to open Alumni, Lillard and Deerhill Field which are under the School Committee Purview. There are no responsibilities for the schools to manage or monitor. The Police Department will be assigned to patrol.

**Motion by Mr. Kearney to open Alumni Field, Lillard Field and the Deerhill Field to recreation in compliance to the Towns Phase Two reopening. Seconded by Mr. MacLellan. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Nay, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Motion by Mr. MacLellan to adjourn the meeting at 9:53p.m. Seconded by Mrs. Colleary Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney- Aye, Ashley Colleary- Aye, Ellen Maher- Aye, Jennifer Madden- Aye, Craig MacLellan- Aye.**



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#### **Documents Used at the Meeting**

AEC Discussion of Town Warrant Article to Lease School Roof for Solar Energy Array	C-1
Update on Senior Activities	C-2
Review of Fee Reimbursement	D-1
Monthly Update	D-2
FY20 Year End Surplus/Deficit Forecast	D-3
RFP Legal Counsel	E-1