



Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

Cohasset Middle-High School

Community Use Room

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA

In Attendance: Ellen Maher, Chairman
Jennifer Madden
Paul Kearney
Ashley Colleary
Craig MacLellan

Also in Attendance: Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent
Dr. Leslie Scollins-Assistant Superintendent
Michael MacMillan, Director of Finance & Operations

Chairman Maher called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. **Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Present, Ashley Colleary-Present, Ellen Maher-Present, Jennifer Madden-Present, Craig MacLellan-Present.**

Motion by Mr. Kearney to move the Educator Spotlight to the next item on the agenda, seconded by Mr. MacLellan and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Motion by Mr. MacLellan to move the Student Representative update to the next item on the agenda, seconded by Mr. Kearney and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Superintendent's Report-Student School Committee Representative-Update-Student Representative Carolyn Patterson gave a quick update. The Osgood School celebrated their 100th day before February vacation. The Deer Hill School held the "Read Your Heart Out" program with four legged friends. They enjoyed a coding day sponsored by the Cohasset Education Foundation. The Middle School had a Kindness Day with kindness rocks.

Educator Spotlight-Middle School -Principal John Mills, teachers Catherine Duggan, Gail St. Peter and Donna Melia were present. They discussed the Project Based Learning (PBL) they are currently doing. The group discussed the books Hidden Figures (for grade 7) and the Boy that Harnessed the Wind (for grade 6) and the projects they did with them. The students have an authentic learning experience through PBL.

Superintendent Update-Dr. Sullivan read aloud a statement concerning an incident that occurred before the February break. He stated they are committed to transparency to the community about issues/situations at the school. They are trying to be proactive in cultural kindness.

Public Comment-Maggie Moy 33 LedgeWood Drive wanted to follow up with what Dr. Sullivan said. She stated this issue is a community issue. She would like to see some type of education for the staff, students and parents. This is a big issue on college campuses. They need to find money in budget to educate and support staff for programs. For some reason, students still don't understand the big picture about social media. She is here to render support as a parent.

Chairman Maher reminded everyone that the Committee adopted "RESPECTfully" a statewide public health awareness and prevention campaign to promote healthy relationships among middle and high school students at their meeting on 12/18/19.

Middle School Program of Studies-Mr. Mills reviewed the 7 proposed changes to the Program of Studies. Mr. MacLellan asked about the Grade 8 Civics class and if they would consider a trip to Washington, DC or maybe going to the State House or maybe a trip to a courthouse. Mr. Mills agreed those are great ideas and would add a lot of value. He mentioned a trip to the Planetarium in Plymouth they participated in for astronomy. Mrs. Colleary asked Mr. Mills how the courses are named. He stated the names were inherited. She suggested reviewing goals and objectives and try and make the name of the classes more appealing. The description should have more detail of the course to give more clarity. Mr. Mills thanked the SC for their time and ideas. He stated it is good to have additional eyes on the document. He stated he is happy to take these suggestions back and discuss. Mr. Kearney thanked Mr. Mills for all his hard work. He agrees with Mrs. Madden there should be money in the budget for a Reading Specialist. The schools need more money. There are no water fountains, there is no wellness program and the schools are not designed properly. He stated it is time to let the community know that the schools are underfunded.

Motion by Mrs. Madden to approve the Cohasset Middle School Program of Studies, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig Colleary-Aye.

Before and After School Programming for 2020-2021-Dr. Sullivan advised the Committee, he met with the Recreation Commission and they reviewed the process and programs. The program has been approved by the State. This is a totally self-funded program. He is asking for the Committee to approve the idea and he will continue to work on the details and report back. **Motion by Mr. Kearney to approve the Before and After Program as outlined by Dr. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. MacLellan and the vote was unanimous (5-0).**

Finance-Monthly Update-Mr. MacMillan gave an overview of the Operating Budget. Everything is pretty much the same as last month. Revolving and Grants accounts are good. Some grants just came in and will be updated in next month's report. There are no issues at this point.

Transportation Update-Mr. MacMillan stated the vehicle maintenance log has not changed much over the last month. Any spending was on supplies and fuel.

FY21 Budget Update-Mr. MacMillan stated they have continued working with all departments on the budget. Right now, the FY21 proposed budget has an increase of 3.4% which is \$21,027,711. They have been advised of a few retirements which is a savings of \$92,000. They are proposing to increase bus fees by \$50 per year and raising the Kindergarten fees. Dr. Sullivan worked with the Town Manager Chris Senior. He really appreciates his working with them. Dr. Sullivan stated Mr. Senior agreed that the Town will put \$75,000 in the Warrant for one-time cost for Elementary Math curriculum. Mr. Kearney asked that they form a sub-committee to figure out how to offer Kindergarten without charging families. He stated this is another example of the schools being underfunded. They need a full-time nurse, guidance counselors and custodians. He believes it is time to ask the town for an override. Dr. Sullivan appreciates the town manager and staff working with them. And they do realize things that the schools haven't been able to provide. Dr. Sullivan Patrick doesn't think this is a time for an override. Town is working well with the schools and he really appreciates it. Mr. MacMillan reviewed the historic budget and the percent changes from 2014 to 2021 which increases every year.

Warrant-Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve Warrant 20-15S, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Nay, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye. The vote was 3-0-1. Ellen Maher abstained from the vote.

SC Goals-The School Committee reviewed their goals.

Reports from Sub-Committees-Mrs. Madden attended the Deer Hill School Council meeting where they discussed budget priorities. Mrs. Maher met with Chris Senior. She encourages other members of the Committee to reach out to him. It doesn't have to be a formal meeting but there is a lot to learn. He and Don Piatt are great resources. Mrs. Colleary advised the SC there is a Life Skills meeting with the Safe Harbor Committee on 3/15 from 2-4:30 p.m. at Willcutt Commons. She also went to the High School Counsel meeting and listened to Mr. Scott discuss the incident before vacation and it was helpful. The hope is that there will be learning opportunities for everyone. Mr. Kearney asked where the SC stands with the new attorney search. Mrs. Maher will review the template for the RFP that Mr. MacMillan sent to her.

Dr. Sullivan stated the search for the new business manager is moving along. The Committee met twice and has narrowed down candidates and will call for interviews.

Mr. Kearney asked about the door guard at the Middle School and when it will be complete. Mr. MacMillan stated there needs to be three bid quotes. He is not sure when it will be done.

Dr. Sullivan stated the playground at Osgood is progressing and should be ready in the spring.

Mr. MacMillan stated there is a PSO grant that hopefully will pay for hydration stations. The Committee had a brief discussion. Mr. Kearney asked if the Committee would allow him to take the lead on the with Mr. MacMillan. The cost of the project seems very high. Mr. MacMillan will get the cost info and bring back to the SC at the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes-Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve the minutes of 1/22/2020, seconded by Mrs. Madden and the vote was 4-0. Paul Kearney was not present at the meeting.

Motion by Mr. MacLellan to approve the minutes of 2/5/2020, seconded by Mr. Kearney and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Motion by Mr. MacLellan to go into Executive Session for Exemption #4, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Ashley Colleary-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye, Craig MacLellan.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 10:31 p.m.

The Committee exited Executive Session and Mr. McLellan made a motion to adjourn open session at 11:21 pm, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Aye (5-0).

Documents Used at the Meeting

Middle School Program of Studies	D-1
Monthly Finance	F-1
Bus Maintenance Update	F-2
School Committee Goals	G-1