

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DARTMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

May 11, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kathleen Amaral at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom Technology.

Present were the following members: Mrs. Amaral, Mr. Oliver, Dr. Karafotis, Dr. Jenkins and Mr. Nunes.

Also present: Dr. Gifford, Ms. Roy, Mr. Kiely, Walter Smith, Esquire and Mrs. Genthner.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis to adjourn to Executive Session in order to provide an update with respect to collective bargaining for union personnel and to reconvene in open session at 6:30 p.m. with the Select Board and Finance Committee via Zoom Technology for the purpose of discussing Town Warrant matters and any other matters that may properly come before the Committee. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The Committee reconvened with the Select Board and Finance Committee at 6:45 p.m. Via Zoom Technology for the purpose of discussing Town Warrant matters and any other matters that may properly come before the Committee.

Stanley Mickelson, Chair of the Select Board, took a roll call of Select Board members in attendance: Frank Gracie, John Haran, Shawn McDonald, and David Tatelbaum.

Stanley Mickelson, Chair of the Select Board, asked the Chair of the Finance and School Committees to introduce respective members in attendance.

Teresa Hamm, Chair of the Finance Committee, called the Finance Committee Meeting to order with a roll call: Co-Chair Gloria Bancroft, Louis Garibaldi, Robert Gauvin, Brian O'Hare, Beppie Wheatcopper, Jeffrey Raymon and Jeannine Simmons. Adam Silvia was present but did not participate.

Kathleen Amaral, Chair of the School Committee, opened the School Committee meeting with a roll call: Vice-Chair Chris Oliver, Dr. Shannon Jenkins, Dr. Carol Karafotis, and Mr. John Nunes.

Mrs. Amaral noted that Superintendent Dr. Bonny Gifford and Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Mr. James Kiely were in attendance.

Also in attendance were Shawn MacInnes, Town Administrator, and Greg Barnes, Town Treasurer.

Ms. Hamm directed the participants to the draft Warrant rationale and cover letter which was emailed to them.

Ms. Hamm briefly explained the Finance Committee's rationale regarding matters listed in Schedule A – Town Operating Budget, noting that a tightening of the Town's budget was forecasted prior to the current Pandemic.

Ms. Hamm commented the Finance Committee appreciates the policy put in place by the Town: a hiring and non-discretionary spending freeze.

Ms. Hamm stated the Finance Committee's support for the budget going forward would be a recommendation to continue such policies as "we" are very concerned about where revenues could be in the next budget year and the year after.

Ms. Hamm stated the Finance Committee is recommending meeting with the Select Board for the next few months to review the status of the budget and to come up with and have in place a non-reactive plan moving forward.

Ms. Hamm asked the Select Board and School Committee to give some "advance thought as to how decisions would be made in the event that a budget cut is necessary."

Ms. Hamm reiterated "we" need to agree to meet.

Mr. Mickelson suggested a small group meet a few times and then the full Board and Committee meet.

Mr. MacInnes reported he meets weekly with Mr. Barnes; we will schedule to meet monthly with the Finance Committee and recommend another Joint Meeting in August.

Mr. Mickelson commented he would like to meet before August.

Mr. McDonald suggested quarterly meetings so long as each Board/Committee received monthly financial updates from Mr. MacInnes and Mr. Barnes along with Mr. Kiely stating he is confident they could come up with a plan.

Dr. Jenkins noted a complicating factor for the School Department is that it is unknown "what school will look like" starting next year and it would be difficult to make budget predictions.

Mr. O'Hare commented monthly meetings would be necessary because of the fluid nature of the situation and think about options going forward.

Mr. Tatelbaum suggested one member from each Committee join "the three staffers" who would report back to their full Committees.

Ms. Hamm agreed it is important to keep communications open between the Committees.

Ms. Hamm asked Ms. Amaral if she has any questions about having future meetings.

Ms. Amaral responded that it is helpful having Mr. Kiely report back to the School Committee.

Ms. Bancroft asked if it would be possible to have a Select Board Member and Mr. Kiely for the School Committee attend future Finance Committee meetings.

Mr. Barnes stated he will be meeting with the Finance Committee monthly and cautioned against increasing the frequency or expanding the number of participants as there is likely to be no new information at present and anything that is learned will be shared with the Select Board, Finance and School Committees.

Ms. Hamm stated she will be in touch with the Chairs of the Select Board and School Committee to determine how we communicate.

Mr. Haran asked if the bus contract is being paid by the School Department since the buses are not running.

Mr. Kiely responded that the School Department is currently not paying adding the School Department does have a contractual agreement and recognizes that the District would be responsible for some of the cost of the bus contract but that has yet to be determined noting there is a bill currently pending in the State legislature relating to this matter.

Mr. Haran asked if a copy of the school's bus contract could be sent to Attorney Anthony Savastano for his review.

Mr. Kiely responded he could at the discretion of the School Committee.

Mr. Mickelson asked Mrs. Amaral if the Committee would allow Attorney Savastano to review the bus contract.

Mr. Tatelbaum asked "for what purpose."

Mr. Haran responded to see if the Town could save any money going forward.

Mrs. Amaral responded the matter would be taken up by the School Committee.

Dr. Jenkins moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to adjourn from Open Session with the Select Board and Finance Committee at 7:33 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent