

**Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting  
Thursday July 8, 2021  
6:00pm**

Zoom Recording ID 970 0736 9325 & Password 872600

<https://zoom.us/j/97007369325?pwd=bFp1Z3BkRG1KeEpjYmNtV2FBOEY4dz09>

**Members Present:** Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Sarah Fox, Emily Barron, David Harris

**Also:** John J. Buckey, Superintendent  
Michelle Cresta, Director of Finance

I. Call to Order

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

a. Public Comment

- Ms. Tedford of Locust St. encouraged the committee to reconsider approving an extended contract for the Superintendent
- Catherine Martin of W Shore Dr. shared her concerns with renewing the Superintendent's contract for a total five years as she felt "it was fiscally irresponsible."
- Dan Albert noted extending a contract for the Superintendent during an uncommon year does not provide enough assessment for that renewal length.
- Kim Day shared that Dr. Buckey is off to a great start but that she struggles with the additional two-year extension due to the Superintendent not having experienced a typical school year.
- Scott Solberg of Ramsy Rd. spoke in favor of an extended contract reminding the community that stability is what the district needs.
- Reece Dahlberg echoed Mr. Solberg's thoughts sharing that during the Planning for Success Initiative many community members shared the need for stable leadership.
- Melissa Kaplowitch spoke in favor of extending Dr. Buckey's contract sharing that not even the most seasoned Superintendents could have a planned for all of the changes faced during COVID.
- Paul Baker of Overlook Rd. spoke in favor of extending the Superintendent's contract noting that if Dr. Buckey was driven out of the district by all of the underlying negativity, the position would become nearly impossible to fill. He recommended that community members start to "get on board" to support the votes of the elected committee.
- John DiPiano spoke against extending a contract for five years sharing that the current committee should not decide the contract for a future committee.
- Mary McCarriston spoke in favor of extending the Superintendent's contract sharing that she believes in stability and believes Dr. Buckey works hard and is invested in the Town.
- Cindy Tower Loewen of Trinity Rd. spoke in favor of extending Dr. Buckey's contract sharing that he is invested. She further noted that the community should come together and stop putting energy into negative social media attention that focuses on issues from a former administration.
- Xhazzie Kindle recommended waiting another year to extend the contract as there is already another two years included in the current contract.
- Kristen Pratt questioned why the extension needed to occur at this time and inquired if there was some information the community may be unaware of.

## II. Director of Finance Contract

Ms. Gold made a motion to appoint Michelle Cresta for Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations and approve the contract for such appointment. The motion was moved by Mr. Harris and seconded by Ms. Barron.

Ms. Fox amended the motion to include the new Juneteenth holiday and to reflect a three-year contract instead of a one year. It was explained by Ms. Gold that since the three-year time frame was not discussed in Executive Session, it was written to reflect that. After a brief discussion confirming that there would be no need to return to Executive Session in order to vote the recommended amended motion, the amended motion was seconded by Ms. Barron.

Ms. Gold restated the original motion including the amended motion to make Ms. Cresta's contract a three-year term including the Juneteenth holiday off. A roll call vote was taken.

The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Ms. Taylor.

Ms. Gold-yes  
Mr. Harris-yes  
Ms. Barron-yes  
Ms. Taylor-yes  
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes, 5-0.

Ms. Gold asked for a seconded motion to authorize the Chair to execute on behalf of the committee the contract for the assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations. The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Ms. Taylor. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes  
Mr. Harris-yes  
Ms. Barron-yes  
Ms. Taylor-yes  
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes, 5-0.

## III. Superintendent's Contract

Ms. Gold made a motion for the school committee to enter into an amended employment agreement with Dr. John Buckey as Superintendent extending the term of employment to and including June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025 and granting a 2% COLA increase in annual salary for the 2021/2022 school year.

The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Harris. Mr. Harris read a prepared statement and thanked Dr. Buckey for his leadership.

Ms. Fox shared that it was "unprecedented" to extend a contract for that length after a first year. She made a motion to amend the current motion to revisit the contract extension at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. The motion was not seconded.

It was mentioned by other committee members that both Dedham and Boston recently extended contracts for their Superintendents. Committee members noted the great curriculum and equity work completed in the district while navigating a pandemic.

Ms. Taylor noted that consistency in leadership was highlighted during the Planning for Success Initiative and that Dr. Buckey would see through a five-year plan he helped to prioritize. Ms. Gold mentioned that the extension is a stabilizing choice that would help the district to move away from past traumas.

Ms. Fox reminded the committee that the extended contract does not prevent Dr. Buckey from leaving at any time prior to the end of his contract. It was mentioned that 180 days' notice was required and the district would be responsible for six months of salary.

A roll call vote was taken.

MS. Gold-yes  
Mr. Harris-yes  
Ms. Fox-no  
Ms. Barron-yes  
Ms. Taylor-yes

The motion passes, 4-1

Ms. Gold made a second motion for the Chair to execute the amended employment agreement on behalf of the committee. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken.

MS. Gold-yes  
Mr. Harris-yes  
Ms. Fox-no  
Ms. Barron-yes  
Ms. Taylor-yes

The motion passes, 5-0

Dr. Buckey shared how much he enjoys the work he does and thanked the committee for their vote. He mentioned his excitement with continuing the work with such a strong team.

Ms. Fox reminded Ms. Gold to include the Juneteenth holiday in Dr. Buckey's contract also.

#### IV. FY22 User Fees

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve a rate increase of 2.5 % for the 2021-2022 school year user fees. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. After a discussion about how the user fees are monitored and used took place, various committee members recommended absorbing the fees into the operating budget. Ms. Fox inquired if there would be a cap for families with multiple students to which Ms. Cresta confirmed. Ms. Cresta also noted that a deeper review of user fees would be planned for a future discussion.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Fox-yes  
Ms. Taylor-yes  
Ms. Barron-yes  
Mr. Harris-yes

The motion passes, 5-0.

Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 7:49pm.

Materials Included:

Contract-Superintendent Extended

Contract-Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

User Fees Memo for 21-22SY

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Lisa Dimier, Secretary*

*Marblehead School Committee*

*Approved February 3, 2022*