

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
High School Library, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950
Tuesday, February 27, 2024

Present: Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Andrew Boger, Brian Callahan, and Juliet Walker
Absent: Breanna Higgins and Kathleen Shaw

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Sean Reardon called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present, except Breanna Higgins and Kathleen Shaw. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. At this point in the meeting, Sarah Hall took over.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITIONS

Grade 3 student, Drew Contrino, was recognized for showing good sportsmanship and helping to brainstorm solutions to resolve a problem occurring during recess at the Bresnahan.

Four Bresnahan staff members were recognized for their commitment, dedication and amazing teamwork creating a supportive learning environment for their students at the Bresnahan Elementary School: Julie Carroll, Caitlyn Marsh, Cheryl Surprenant, and Katherine Perrin.

CONSENT AGENDA

Warrants

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Mayor Sean Reardon it was

VOTED: to approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following Warrant:

Warrant 8111	\$603,911.18
A-Warrant	<u>\$ 11,340.00</u>
	\$615,251.18 Total

Motion Passed

Absent: Breanna Higgins & Kathleen Shaw

Minutes

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the February 5, 2024 School Committee Business with a modification to paragraph # 1 to include "At this point in the meeting, Sarah Hall took over."

Motion Passed

Absent: Breanna Higgins & Kathleen Shaw

STUDENT REPORT

Theo Roberts presented the student report which included Kindness Week at the Bresnahan, March Madness at Nock/Molin, and high school overnight field trips (see attached).

WHITTIER SCHOOL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Newburyport representatives for the Whittier Regional School Committee, Brett Murphy and Donna Holaday, provided an update of recent activities, including receiving an anonymous \$390K grant, the CVTE program being offered in April to local seniors, a policy review underway and next steps / plans related to the proposed building project.

FY25 LEVEL OF SERVICE BUDGET PRESENTATION

Superintendent Sean Gallagher reviewed priorities, budget assumptions, budget drivers, funding sources, as well as demographic trends as part of the FY25 LOS Budget presentation. Preliminary Budget presentations will be provided by the building principals at the March 4th meeting.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS / RESTRUCTURING PLAN

A summary of organizational decisions over the past six years was reviewed by Superintendent Sean Gallagher, including changes that were made to strengthen teacher leadership, union relationships, literacy support, communications, technology, financial management and internal procedures. Next, the Superintendent reviewed a proposal to reorganize and reallocate Central Office personnel in efforts to increase leadership and support for Student Services and Special Education, reduce costs, and clarify roles/responsibilities.

There is a typo on the job description for Special Education Program Supervisor – Academic. The responsibility for “ELL Programs” should be listed on the Special Education Program Supervisor - Social Emotional Learning.

After discussion, members decided to hold off on a vote until the March 18th School Committee meeting to allow more time for members to review the proposal and job descriptions.

SECURITY UPGRADE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Superintendent Sean Gallagher presented a summary of proposed district-wide security upgrades. Key elements of the proposed 7-year payment plan were reviewed, along with overall project benefits.

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Mayor Sean Reardon it was

VOTED: to enter into Lease Agreement Number NEW022124 with Vantage Financial and to authorize Superintendent Sean Gallagher to execute such Lease Agreement and all related documents, including without limitation and all subsequent schedules and/or addenda as required by such Lease for and on behalf of the District, and to authorize Mayor Sean Reardon, School Committee Chair, to execute the required Certificate of Incumbency in connection with such Lease Agreement.

Motion Passed

Absent: Breanna Higgins & Kathleen Shaw

FY25-29 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

Facilities Director Steve Bergholm reviewed 19 projects on the FY2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan. (NOTE: Steve mentioned that the City recently approved submitting the SOI's for both the high school and Nock roof replacement projects to MASBA)(roofs on pages 3 & 4).

Juliet Walker voiced concerns with the high school parking lot, particularly as the parking is getting too close to the trees.

Brian Callahan stated he would like to have more than just asphalt for the Nock/Molin Playground repaving project (page 10). Juliet Walker suggested a "traffic garden".

Brian Callahan suggested using school choice funds to pay the 1x cost of the NHS Library carpet replacement (page 13).

2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR – 1st DRAFT

The first draft of the SY24-25 School Calendar was presented, and will be reviewed again at the March 4th meeting.

Brian Callahan suggested that ER days that fall on a Friday would be better if scheduled on a Friday just before a holiday weekend or vacation week. He will email the dates in question to the Superintendent.

Brian Callahan would like to see Early Release Day attendance data.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Brian Callahan reported the last meeting was held on February 15th. They discussed fundraising and the gift policy. Juliet Walker will attend their next meeting to review the gift policy with FINCOM. Phil Littlehale will highlight the EOY report, and send to members.

Policy Subcommittee

The review of Policy Sections "K" and "L" has been completed. Both sections are ready to move forward for approval, and are the last sections in the review process.

Juliet Walker presented Policy "Section J – Students" for a second read and reviewed the proposed changes.

- JICH – Alcohol, tobacco and Drug Use by Students Prohibited: Language related to breathalyzers is in the high school's student handbook which is currently being updated. Additional language is not needed in this policy.

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Mayor Sean Reardon it was

VOTED: to approve the changes to policies in Section J: Students as presented.

Motion Passed

Absent: Breanna Higgins & Kathleen Shaw

Fundraising Advisory Committee

- Brian Callahan reported the last committee meeting was held on February 12 with the high school Athletic Director Kyle Hodsdon. The Athletics fundraising presentation was shared with members.
- Brian will attend the March 11th Policy Subcommittee meeting.
- Brian Callahan and Juliet Walker may be able to present their findings in April.

CISL: meeting was cancelled.

NEW BUSINESS

- Whittier School Committee Opening: Sarah Hall would like to schedule a special school committee meeting at 5:30PM on Monday, March 4 to meet six candidates that submitted letters of interest, then schedule a possible vote for the March 18th meeting. Members also discussed responsibilities/expectations of a SC Representative, as well as voting methods.
- Whittier Task Force Meeting: Mayor Sean Reardon will hold the first Whittier Task force meeting with the 11 sending community members on March 6th at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 9:34 PM.

Motion Passed

Absent: Breanna Higgins & Kathleen Shaw

City of Newburyport
School Committee Business Meeting
Newburyport High School, February 27, 2024

Student Representative Report, Submitted by Theo Roberts

Bresnahan Elementary School:

For their annual Kindness week prior to February break, students in several classes made Valentines that were distributed to senior citizens living alone in the Greater Newburyport area. These are now being displayed at the Cookie Jar Kitchen on Washington Street.

The 3rd Grade Leadership Team also recently began a mittens and gloves drive for Bresnahan students that may not have access to or forget to bring their winter clothing for recess. Any donations can be dropped off at the Main Office.

Edward Molin Upper Elementary/Rupert Nock Middle Schools:

This upcoming month, the Nock/Molin community will once again compete in their annual March Madness competition. Students will take part in daily and weekly activities, both in and outside of the classroom, to earn the illustrious "Clipper Cup". The event will begin this Friday with an assembly to build excitement and community spirit.

Newburyport High School:

The theater program led their yearly trip to Manhattan, which gives students a taste of Broadway shows in order to enrich their own acting. They are now putting the finishing touches on the spring musical, Legally Blonde, which opens on March 15th.

Sixteen NHS students embarked with Dr. Hobbs and Ms. Taggart to Iceland over February break as well. The trip, led by EF Tours, showcased the unique culture and landscape of Iceland over a variety of new and exciting experiences. All went well, and everyone had a wonderful time.

Next Wednesday, March 6th, the Global Scholars Club will host the 2nd International Cultural Night, immediately following the Peace Prize Award Ceremony. All students are encouraged to submit any remarkable travel photos for the event's travel showcase section.

Newburyport recently gained another Gold Medal in the field of Economics. The Investment Club, supported by the NEF, competed against hundreds of other schools in the Commonwealth to enrich their earnings on the New York Stock Exchange, and came out in first place.

Lastly, I would like to recognize those who were recognized by the state as having made extraordinary achievements on state assessments. Congratulations to Jayden Amaral, Samuel Brickman, Harrison Gijbbers, James Kench, Adelaide Malone, Lydia Mantzekis, Christopher Rohland, Nadia Toth, William Tymowski, Sean Urbanczyk, and Matilda Welch-Malkasian.