

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING

Senior/Community Center, Newburyport, MA 01950

Monday, November 20, 2023

Present: Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Bruce Menin, Brian Callahan, Steve Cole and Breanna Higgins.

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. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. At this point in the meeting, Sarah Hall took over.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

STUDENT & STAFF RECOGNITIONS:

High school student JiJo Welch-Malkasian (grade 9) was recognized for their commitment and dedication to the NHS Theater Arts Program.

High School Drama teacher Lisa Zaleski was recognized for always going above and beyond for the students in her drama and speech classes. Lisa is known to be a team player that gets the job done and works countless untallied hours to motivate and engage students.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

Motion:

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

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

Warrant 8104	\$668,021.72
A-Warrant	<u>\$ 11,792.51</u>
	\$679,814.23 Total

Motion Passed

Minutes:

Motion:

On a motion by Steve Cole and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to accept the minutes of the November 6, 2023 School Committee Business meeting as presented.

Motion Passed

FY25 Budget Process

- Superintendent Gallagher reviewed the FY25 Budget Assumptions and Guidelines, which included an explanation of a level service budget, followed by a brief summary of the budget priorities, revenue and expenditure assumptions, Strategic Plan Overview, budget timeline and various links to the FY24 Budget information.
- Background information and demographics that impact the FY24 Budget were presented.
- Bruce Menin would like to see how much money the PTO provides in support of the schools. Brian Callahan stated that number should be available in March. Superintendent Gallagher will provide some information for the next meeting.
- Juliet Walker stated it would be helpful to actually see capital improvement areas prior to budget presentations.
- Breanna Higgins suggested that future budget presentations include explanations of LOS Budget comparisons from year to year (i.e. is it okay to compare FY24 to FY23, or should it be compared to a year before COVID and ESSER grants i.e. FY19).

MASC / MASS Joint Conference Highlights

- Juliet Walker provided a brief overview of her experience at this year's conference. She felt the workshops were both interesting and helpful. Juliet encouraged existing and new members to attend next year.
- Of the eight resolutions proposed by MASC, only Resolution #2 was approved. The remaining resolutions were tabled for further discussion.
- Bruce Menin was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Finance Subcommittee:

- Brian Callahan stated FINCOM met last week and discussed the Superintendent's budget report.

Policy Subcommittee:

- Juliet Walker reviewed the summary of suggested revisions to policies in Section I (Instruction) presented for a second reading.
- Sections J, K and L are being reviewed and should be completed by the end of the year.

Motion:

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: to adopt the revisions as presented for policies in Section I – Instruction, including revising 2nd paragraph in IGB to read “Director of Pupil Services”.

Motion Passed

Fundraising Advisory Committee

- Juliet Walker and Brian Callahan met and developed agenda items for future meetings. The remainder of the meetings will be split to one group per meeting, beginning with the Boosters.
- Brian has not yet heard back from the Gridiron group.
- The next meeting will be held on November 27th.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

- **School-based Budget Workshops:** A school-based budget workshop was held at the high school on November 15th, and another was held on November 16th at the Nock/Molin. The workshops provided a good opportunity to obtain feedback from parent/guardians, as well as provided the staff with an opportunity to fine tune the process.
- **Search Update – Director of Pupil Services position:** (1) Three focus groups were held on November 15th for parents, administrators and faculty. The Superintendent will provide attendance numbers at the next School Committee meeting. (2) The survey was sent and will remain open until November 22nd. To date, close to 100 responses have been received by both parents and staff. (3) The results of the focus groups & survey will then be used by NESDEC to create a candidate profile. The creation of a screening committee is in the final stages.
- **Nock Recital:** Both Sean Gallagher and LisaMarie Ippolito attended the Nock's recital on November 8th. They were very impressed with the exceptional student talent, and thanked both Ms. Kathy Shepard and Mr. Brian Nickerson for their hard work with the students.
- **Veterans Day Activities:** Various assemblies were held throughout the district to honor our local Veterans. Bresnahan students wrote thank you letters, Molin students read stories and shared backgrounds, Veterans met in small groups with Nock students to talk about why they chose to serve, and Veterans addressed the high school students at an assembly organized with the help of the NHS Red Cross Club.
- **Thanksgiving Week Activities:** The Rotary sponsored the annual luncheon for the Newburyport & Amesbury football teams, band and cheerleaders; Molin students participated in Spirit Week activities, 8th graders will have a fashion show dressing up as food, and the high school held the annual Color Day event and will hold the dessert auction. Ritchie Eaton will give his final sports commentary at the football game on Thursday.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mayor Reardon stated that this year will be the 100th official meeting of Newburyport vs. Amesbury football teams on Thursday. Newburyport leads the series 52-41-6.
- Mayor Reardon congratulated recent election winners: Breanna Higgins, Kathleen Shaw and Andrew Boger.
- Mayor Reardon reported the NEF raised \$153K from the recent auction, and Andrea Weetman hosted her last NEF Board meeting.
- The City Council / School Committee Joint Budget meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29th at 6:30PM in the Senior/Community Center.
- Mayor Reardon provided an update of various meetings and communications involving Whittier Tech, the other 10 districts and/or the Lt. Governor. Whittier's next School Committee meeting is scheduled for December 13th.
- Brian Callahan provided an update of the Building Project community information session that he attended at Whittier on November 16th.
- Brian Callahan emailed the School Committee members a "draft" of a Resolution asking the Whittier School Committee to vote for a state audit on its proposed building project. The idea will be discussed at the next meeting on December 4th.

- Breanna Higgins asked if the district could reflect on why the position of SEPAC President has had so much turnover.
- Sarah Hall suggested Saturday, January 6, 2024 as the date for a winter retreat.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion:

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

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 8:15 PM.

Motion Passed