

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**

**High School Library, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**

**Monday, October 21, 2024**

**Present:** Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Andrew Boger, Brian Callahan, Kathleen Shaw 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 7:02 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 Comments**

Shawn Bleau, 13A Christie Drive (NHS coaching salaries)

**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 8133	\$570,677.75
Warrant 8134	\$ 1,472.30
A-Warrant	\$ <u>6,648.00</u>
	\$578,798.05

**Motion Passed**

**Minutes**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to accept the minutes of the October 7, 2024 School Committee Business meeting as presented.

**Motion Passed**

**Student Representatives and Student Report**

Madeleine Jackman presented the student report that included Bresnahan Pollinator Gardens, Molin’s dune restoration project with UNH, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Molin Buddies mentors, and NHS students performing at a UMass football game. (attached)

### **Newburyport's Whittier School Committee Reps – Check-in**

Brett Murphy reported that 33 Newburyport students currently attend Whittier. He also provided enrollment data by grade for surrounding communities, and spoke of two new CTE shops, Newburyport's co-op partners, the Adult Evening Program, Senior Exploratory, listening sessions with UMass Donahue, and open house dates.

### **School Council / Principals Update**

High School Principal Andy Wulf, Nock Principal Nick Markos, Molin Principal Tara Rossi and Bresnahan Principal Jamie Sokolowski presented their School Council membership information, plans for the upcoming year, and their School Improvement Plan goals. Each principal introduced their council members and thanked them for their work and participation. In addition, each principal provided a brief explanation of the process of working on the SIP and their school's goals.

Breanna Higgins and Juliet Walker stated they would like all goals to be specific and to have measurable data (i.e. ability to see achievement and/or to see what is/is not working).

Juliet Walker would encourage all School Improvement Plans to be consistent with clearly defined measurements, and be careful of the terminology.

Superintendent Gallagher thanked all the staff and School Council members for their hard work and efforts on the SIP goals and their attendance at tonight's meeting. A full, comprehensive presentation of the School Improvement Plans will be provided at a future meeting.

### **Review MASC Resolutions**

Vice Chair Sarah Hall reviewed Resolutions 6 thru 10, and the votes are as follows:

#### **MASC Resolution 6: Support of legislation to improve the fiscal health of rural school districts**

##### **Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Andy Boger it was  
**VOTED:** to advise our representative to support Resolution #6.

**Motion Passed**

#### **MASC Resolution 7: Fully adjusting Chapter 70 aid for inflation**

##### **Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Mayor Reardon it was  
**VOTED:** to advise our representative to vote in favor of Resolution #7.

**Motion Passed**

#### **MASC Resolution 8: Equitable funding for non-regional school districts with high transportation costs**

##### **Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Andy Boger it was  
**VOTED:** to advise our representative to vote favorably of Resolution #8.

**Motion Passed**

#### **MASC Resolution 9: MSBA grants evaluation for Chapter 74**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to advise our representative to vote favorably of Resolution #9.

**Motion Passed**

MASC Resolution 10: Expansion in capacity in Chapter 74 vocational technical programs

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Sarah Hall it was

**VOTED:** to advise our representative to vote favorably of Resolution #10.

**Motion Passed**

Brian Callahan opposed

Expiring Resolutions

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to give our representative discretion to vote for the continuing of these resolutions.

**Motion Passed**

**SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Finance Subcommittee**

Brian Callahan reported that FINCOM didn't meet.

**Policy Subcommittee**

A meeting was recently held. Juliet Walker stated the policy audit has been completed, and they are reviewing policies that MASC recently updated (i.e. Technology and digital access related).

Brian Callahan noted that language in the School Calendar Policy may change due to upcoming negotiations.

**Communications Subcommittee**

Andy Boger reported the committee will meet on October 24.

**Superintendent's Report**

Business Manager Update: Superintendent Sean Gallagher reported that Phil Littlehale is transitioning out of his position. They've reached out to three companies to cover for the interim, and bids will be due by October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Superintendent's Advisory Council: Superintendent Gallagher thanked the parents, staff and community members for their attendance, hard work and support over the past two years.

NEF Media Lab: Plans for the media lab are being finalized and will go out to bid by November 22. Facilities Director James McSweeney will review the project to possibly take on the demolition for this project during the Thanksgiving and/or Winter breaks. The Superintendent is hopeful the project will

be finished by January/February 2025 in time for classes the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year. He also thanked the Newburyport Education Foundation for funding this project.

**New Business**

AI: Andy Boger suggested creating a taskforce to discuss “AI” and the future of education.

MSBA Update: Superintendent Gallagher reported he has not heard back yet from MSBA regarding the roof projects. An announcement should be expected in the October/November timeframe.

SEPAC: Kathleen Shaw reported meetings have started, but there is confusion in the community regarding communications. SEPAC will be added as an item for the next SC meeting agenda.

Hybrid Meetings: Juliet Walker would like SC to continue efforts to set up hybrid meetings. Next steps are to figure out who will be responsible for setting up the Owl and running the equipment.

Trick or Treat Events: Mayor Reardon stated the Senior/Community Center will hold trick or treat on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup> from 4-6PM and at City Hall from 5-6PM. The Mayor is closing State Street on Friday, October 25, appx 4-5PM for atrick or treat night downtown.

Chief of Staff: Mayor Reardon is looking for a new Chief of Staff for the city. Andrew Levine’s last day will be November 8th. Currently, 20 applications have already been received.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Juliet Walker it was

**VOTED:** to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 9:06PM and move to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing possible contract negotiations and/or legal matters, and will not reconvene in open session.

**Motion Passed**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>School Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Mayor Sean Reardon	Yes
Sarah Hall	Yes
Andrew Boger	Yes
Brian Callahan	Yes
Breanna Higgins	Yes
Kathleen Shaw	Yes
Juliet Walker	Yes

Submitted by: Madeleine Jackman

Location: NHS Library

### **Bresnahan News:**

Play Buddies are beginning between our Pre-K/K and Third Grade students. Together, students are choosing from among activities like games, reading, art and creative play. Our older students are being responsible role models and caring friends to their younger peers, and our youngest students enjoy every minute!

Students are using the new Native Pollinator Gardens to learn about pollinators such as bees and butterflies. They are learning about the essential role pollinators play in the health of our ecosystems and food crops. By planting native plants and supporting these pollinators, students in grades P-3 are learning how plants and animals depend on their surroundings and other living things to meet their needs, a critical foundation for becoming responsible stewards of the planet. They will also learn about the life-cycle of insects and plants as the year progresses. Through observation and inquiry, they are connecting with the natural world around them in an engaging and playful way.

Students have begun earning tokens for the NEF Book Vending Machine. For the first term, students will work on completing a level in Lexia, one of our digital literacy resources. Every Friday we announce the students who have earned a token to come use the vending machine. This has been a lot of fun and we are so grateful for the NEF!

### **Molin News:**

All Molin 4th graders participated in a dune restoration project with the University of New Hampshire.

Molin School is implementing "Discovery Fridays" once a month for Molin students. This has been a Molin goal for years now. Each month has a theme and this month's theme is "Building/Engineering". Students will rotate through a variety of stations building, experimenting, creating, discussing, and collaborating. Research shows that these hands-on experiences improve:

- Problem-Solving Skills
- Creativity
- Communication Skills

- Empathy and Emotional Regulation
- Memory and Retention

### **Nock News:**

Nock- 8th grade students are leading the way with Their Molin Buddies serving as mentors.

8th grade students are also building awareness through their building based responsibilities. Each 8th grade advisory is assigned a building based responsibility such as recycling, cleaning up grounds, updating school signs and more school community responsibilities.

The Nock is getting ready for the community Jack-o-Light Night on October 29th. We hope to see you all there.

### **High School News:**

The NHS band is travelling to Amherst on Saturday to perform at halftime of the UMass football game, along with dozens of other high school bands and the famous UMass band. This will be an amazing day of high level music making and fun, in an atmosphere of big time college football.

NHS students Cady Seaton, Milla Baptiste, Lucius Nelson, and Lila Coffey performed original poems at Newburyport's Indigenous People's Day celebration on the Waterfront.

- Students part of the Journalism/Broadcast class and club have combined their journalistic skills with their understanding of effective broadcasting to produce their first publication. You can check out [\*The Report\*](#) here. The thoughtfulness of their articles and presentation of short videos are highly professional