

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**  
**Newburyport High School, 241 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950**  
**Monday, October 2, 2023**

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

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Vice Chair Sarah Hall called the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll call found all members present except Mayor Sean Reardon. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Katie Suchecki, 8 Toppans Lane: She is Co-President of the PTO and part of that role is to act as the liaison between parents and school officials. At the last PTO meeting parents brought up their concerns related getting their children to school safely. The PTO has met with Mayor Reardon and Superintendent Gallagher. They would like all School committee members to be fully committed to finding a solution to the problem of filling Crossing Guard positions.

**STAFF RECOGNITION:**

Three Special Education Team Coordinators were recognized in appreciation of their leadership, hard work and outstanding efforts to ensure the success of our students! Jeanna Guardino (High School), Elise Comeau (Nock/Molin) and Erin Gibson (Bresnahan)

*\*\* short break \*\**

**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 8099	\$216,659.60
Warrant 8100	<u>\$ 75.00</u>
	\$216,734.60 Total

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Minutes:**

**Motion:**

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

**VOTED:** to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2023 School Committee Business meeting.

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Student Report:**

Newburyport high school students Elizabeth Homer and Theo Roberts provided the student report which included news regarding the high school’s recent college fair, fall rally, a NEASC visit and national merit commendation. (attached)

**NESDEC Executive Search Overview**

- Superintendent Sean Gallagher introduced David DeRuosi, interim Executive Director of the New England School Development Council (NESDEC).
- David stated that Dr. Michael Palladino will be leading Newburyport’s comprehensive search for a new Director of Student Services. He provided an overview of NESDEC’s search process, including information related to communications, timeline, the needs assessment process, advertising, screening procedures, roles, interviews etc.
- A brief Q&A session followed.

**Appointment to Whittier Regional School Committee**

- Two Newburyport residents submitted letters of interest for the opening for a representative on the Whittier Regional VOTEC School Committee.
- Candidates Donna Holaday and Joseph Spaulding were each given five minutes to address the School Committee to explain their background and qualifications, followed by an opportunity for the SC members to ask questions and then vote.
- Vice Chair Sarah Hall confirmed the appointment of Donna Holaday via the results of a roll call vote. Superintendent Sean Gallagher will notify Whittier Regional of this appointment.

<u>Roll Call Vote:</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
	Sarah Hall	Donna Holaday
	Bruce Menin	Donna Holaday
	Steve Cole	Joseph Spaulding
	Brian Callahan	Donna Holaday
	Juliet Walker	Donna Holaday
	Breanna Higgins	Joseph Spaulding
	Mayor Reardon	absent

Results: Donna Holaday = 4 votes  
Joseph Spaulding = 2 votes

**Special Education Program Overview**

- Deb O’Connor, Interim Director of Student Services, provided an overview of the programming and other special education related work being done in the district.
- In addition to providing statistical information (i.e. # of teachers, students etc), Ms. O’Connor summarized the summer work completed by the SPED Administrator Team, as well as provided a brief summary of the Therapeutic Learning Centers, language-based instruction, Independent Development Center, Graduate Program, and various district initiatives.

### **Proposed Fundraising Advisory Committee**

- Brian Callahan briefly reviewed why the committee was proposed.
- Juliet Walker stated the objectives of the committee should be to inform the budget and recommend policies.
- Brian Callahan stated (1) all things obtained through fundraising should be part of the operational budget and (2) anybody who wants to give NPS money has to follow the policy / rules.
- Juliet Walker suggested that deliverables are due by March 1<sup>st</sup>, with an option to extend to the end of the year.
- Brian will provide a list of members for the next school committee meeting and will schedule the first meeting before November.

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Brian Callahan and seconded by Steve Cole it was

**VOTED:** to form a Fundraising Advisory Committee as stated in Policy BDF, to develop guidelines to School Committee decisions related to fundraising for athletics, clubs, student body activities, and external organizations such as PTO and NEF, particularly when the purpose of the fundraiser is to supplement the operational budget.

### **Motion Passed**

**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

*\*\* short break \*\**

### **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:**

#### **Finance Subcommittee:**

- They have not met.

#### **Policy Subcommittee:**

- Juliet Walker reviewed the summary of policy revisions that were presented for a second reading for policy manual Sections D through H (details in the packet), with the following exceptions:
  - *EC – Buildings & Grounds Management:* hold for review by City
  - *EEAG – Student Transportation:* hold to review insurance requirements for personal vehicles
  - *EFD – Meal Charge Policy:* hold for another review with staff
  - *FF – Naming New Facilities:* hold; referred to legal counsel for review
  - *GBEBD – Online Fundraising and Solicitations – Crowdfunding:* hold for review
- Steve Cole would like to have the aggregate # for Principal raises presented annually for approval by the school committee as shown in Policy GCBB – Employment of Principals.

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was  
**VOTED:** to approve the policies presented tonight in Section “D”.

**Motion Passed**  
**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was  
**VOTED:** to approve the policies presented tonight in Section “E”, except policies EC, EEAG and EFD, which are still being held.

**Motion Passed**  
**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was  
**VOTED:** to approve policy FA – Facilities Development Goals as presented.

**Motion Passed**  
**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was  
**VOTED:** to adopt the policies in Section “G” as presented.

**Motion Passed**  
**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**Motion:**

On a motion by Juliet Walker and seconded by Bruce Menin it was  
**VOTED:** to approve the policies in Section “H” as presented.

**Motion Passed**  
**Mayor Sean Reardon absent**

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:**

- Superintendent Gallagher provided dates for the school-based budget workshops: Bresnahan (November 2), High School (November 15) and Nock/Molin November 16.
- A brief summary of the NEASC Accreditation process and recent visit by NEASC to the high school was provided by Superintendent Gallagher. He thanked Team Chairs Erin Hobbs and Catherine Taggart, as well as team members, for their dedication and hard work over the

past year preparing the report and gathering evidence. He explained that the high school will receive a final report from NEASC containing short and long term goals.

- Superintendent Sean Gallagher thanked City Councilor Jennie Donahue for her involvement in getting the Nock auditorium upgraded with assisted listening systems in preparation of the October 13<sup>th</sup> showing of Crip Camp.
- The high school held an open house on September 21<sup>st</sup> and the Molin held their open house on September 28<sup>th</sup>.
- A Cape Ann League Sportsmanship Summit was held on September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Senior Center. Sixty student-athletes from 12 CAL schools attended. The summit focused on various workshops regarding spectator behavior at games.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- October 16<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting has been rescheduled to October 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The first Walk & Roll Wednesday kick off with NYS will be on October 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Julie Walker is concerned about the crossing guard issue and would like to work collaboratively with the Mayor to share information and have better communication. Juliet Walker will reach out to the Public Safety committee.
- James Antonelli is organizing an onsite safety drill with the Newburyport Police and Fire departments. The date is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 21 at the high school.

**Executive Session:**

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Steve Cole it was

**VOTED:** that we move to Executive session for the purpose of discussing possible litigation and legal matters, and not to reconvene in Open Session. (9:23PM)

**Motion Passed**

**Roll Call Vote**

Breanna Higgins	yes
Juliet Walker	yes
Brian Callahan	yes
Steve Cole	yes
Bruce Menin	yes
Sarah Hall	yes
Mayor Reardon	absent

Submitted by: Lizzy Homer & Theo Roberts  
Location – High School

### **NEWS FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL**

It was great to see so many students and families participate in the College and Career Fair last night. Switching to a regional model has helped recruit a larger number of colleges and employers to participate. Thank you to Mr. Smith from our College and Career Resource Center for coordinating this event as we work to support all of our students to develop flexible post-secondary plans.

Last Friday's Fall Rally allowed our students and staff to have some fun while recognizing different areas of the high school. The students brought the energy level up a notch as we celebrated our fall teams along with the unveiling of the Sailbot Championship trophy. The Clipper's Cheer Team led us in spirit cheers, and our Band enhanced the festive feeling of the rally. Also thank you to Alex Sullivan for leading us in the Star Spangled Banner. I want to give special thanks to Mr. Pace for his organization of the rally, and also a big thanks to Stephen D'Ambrosio, Carly McDermott, Owen Kreuz, Eli Raymond, AnnieKate Ames, and Ryan Gasbarro for taking the reins on leading the assembly. Also thank you to Mr. Gallagher for doing his yearly cartwheel feat. We hope your shoulder is doing better.

This week, a team of educators part of the [New England Association of Schools and Colleges](#) visited Newburyport High School. Every 10 years high schools undergo a process to measure themselves against the [Standards of Accreditation](#). The team of educators visited classrooms, met with students, parents, teachers, and administration. Over the course of the next month, we will receive a report that highlights our strengths and offers recommendations to incorporate into our school improvement plan. Thank you to all of the students and parents who participated in interviews across the week. Also thank you to everyone for welcoming our visitors across the building.

### **National Merit Commendation**

Matthew Desimio-Maloney and Aimon Fadil received a National Merit Commendation. They are among 30,000 students nationwide who have shown exceptional academic promise based on results from last year's PSAT/NMSQT exam.