



WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of April 29, 2020
Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
600 Franklin Street, Whitman MA
The meeting was held remotely via teleconference

Meeting convened: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 8:17 p.m.

Members present: Robert Hayes, Christopher Scriven, Frederick Small, Robert O'Brien, Jr., Michael Jones, Daniel Cullity, Christopher Howard, Steve Bois, Dawn Byers and Alexandria Taylor

Members absent: None

Administrators present: Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent of Schools
George M. Ferro, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Schools
John Tuffy, Interim Business Manager

The virtual meeting was being held remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. The meeting will be recorded and members of the public are able to access the meeting via live stream audio at www.whca.tv/watch/ and on WHCA's Educational Access Channel 98.

Chair Hayes opened the meeting and announced the School Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, remotely via teleconferencing, and was being recorded and broadcast live on WHCA's Educational Access Channel 98.

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call for Attendance

Roll call was taken, all members in attendance. Chair Hayes announced that Whitman Hanson Education Association (WHEA) Representatives, Kevin Kavka and Cindy McGann, were in attendance.

Chair Hayes took the meeting out of order to enter into an Executive Session. The Committee will return to the open meeting once out of executive session.

Executive Session

Chair Hayes announced The Committee will enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; WHEA Bargaining Units.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Scriven seconded; voted by roll call to enter into Executive Session at 7:04 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; WHEA Bargaining Units.

Mr. Bois – Yes

Ms. Byers – Yes

Mr. Cullity – Yes

Mr. Howard – Yes

Mr. Jones – Yes
Mr. O'Brien - Yes
Mr. Scriven – Yes
Mr. Small – Yes
Ms. Taylor – Yes
Mr. Hayes – Yes
The motion passed unanimously.

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted by roll call to come out of Executive Session at 7:50 p.m.

Mr. Bois – Yes
Ms. Byers – Yes
Mr. Cullity – Yes
Mr. Howard – Yes
Mr. Jones – Yes
Mr. O'Brien - Yes
Mr. Scriven – Yes
Mr. Small – Yes
Ms. Taylor – Yes
Mr. Hayes – Yes
The motion passed unanimously.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2020

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted by roll call to accept the meeting minutes of April 22, 2020, as presented.

Mr. Bois – Yes
Ms. Byers – Yes
Mr. Cullity – Yes
Mr. Howard – Yes
Mr. Jones – Yes
Mr. O'Brien - Abstain
Mr. Scriven – Yes
Mr. Small – Yes
Ms. Taylor – Yes
Mr. Hayes – Yes
The motion passed with one abstention.

Old Business

Operating Budgets and Local Assessment

FY2020 current budget: revenues/losses; potential grant opportunities

Mr. Szymaniak reported preparations of the impact to revenue resources for the current school year remains under review. The Superintendent noted a substantial loss of tuition revenue in the preschool and kindergarten revolving accounts. He added that revenue loss must be identified prior to calculating any net savings in the current budget. Mr. Szymaniak will also be determining any local expenses that may be eligible under a grant reimbursement program through a Coronavirus relief fund/CARES Act. The Superintendent will meet with Mr. O'Brien to discuss MA Emergency Management (MEMA) grant program opportunities for regional school districts.

Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Guidelines on FY2021 Regional School District Interim or 1/12th Budget Process, dated 4/23/2020

Mr. Szymaniak discussed the guidelines and process if the operating budget for the regional school district is not determine by July 1. Now that town meetings have moved to June, there is a possibility that a budget may not be

approved by the towns by July 1. Mr. Szymaniak reported he has notified DESE that at this time, the School Committee has not voted to certify their budget.

If the operating budget for a regional school district has not been approved by *July 1*, the superintendent of schools shall notify the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall establish an interim monthly budget for the regional school district and certify an amount sufficient for the operation of the district which shall be *one-twelfth* of the regional school district's budget for the prior fiscal year *or such higher amount* as the Commissioner may determine.

The Superintendent explained the interim budget would be prepared based on the following criteria; the current FY2020 budget revenue, FY2021 budget projections, FY2021 minimum local contribution and FY2021 Chapter 70 state allocation (current cherry sheet). It was reported the local assessment is due to the towns no later than April 30 for May town meetings. Mr. Szymaniak reported that most regional school districts may not have their budget voted by July 1 due to the delay of town meetings across the state. Mr. Tuffy will confirm whether the FY2021 Chapter 70 aid is \$30 or \$20 per pupil. Mr. Szymaniak expects a one-twelfth budget would be based on FY2020 numbers. The Committee discussed the fiscal impact and revenue loss, not only locally, but also at the state level, due to Coronavirus public emergency. The Superintendent reported since town meeting dates are currently fluctuating, the deadline date for certifying the budget of April 30 may be subject to change, stating the Committee should move forward slowly and garner as much information as possible to set an equitable budget. There was a discussion to examine all revenues and expenses, specifically, add to a future agenda for discussion of athletic user fees for supplementary revenue; however, it was disputed that may cause a student population loss to choice out.

Discussion to rescind the statutory assessment methodology for FY2021

The Chair recommended passing over the discussion to rescind the statutory assessment methodology for FY2021.

VOTE: Mr. Scriven motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted by roll call to pass over the discussion to rescind the statutory assessment methodology for FY2021.

Mr. Bois – Yes

Ms. Byers – Yes

Mr. Cullity – Yes

Mr. Howard – Yes

Mr. Jones – Yes

Mr. O'Brien - Yes

Mr. Scriven – Yes

Mr. Small – Yes

Ms. Taylor – Yes

Mr. Hayes – Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Adopt and Certify FY2021 School Budget

The Chair recommended passing over this item. The School Committee was informed by Mr. Scriven there may be new information coming soon regarding a compromise between the two towns with regard to funding the FY2021 local assessments. It was further reported select town officials will be meeting on April 30 for additional discussion of the impact the statutory method of assessment will have on Hanson and to see if some type of compromise that may be made between the towns to fund local assessments. The Committee considered waiting to receive as much information as possible to establish a fair and equitable vote to certify the FY2021 budget. Revisiting athletic fees and obtaining data on students that have left the district for academic reasons was discussed. It was recommended to bring the review of user fees through the Policy Subcommittee for consideration.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mrs. Taylor seconded; voted by roll call to pass over certifying the FY2021 school district operating budget.

Mr. Bois – Yes

Ms. Byers – Yes

Mr. Cullity – Yes
Mr. Howard – Yes
Mr. Jones – Yes
Mr. O’Brien - Yes
Mr. Scriven – Yes
Mr. Small – Yes
Ms. Taylor – Yes
Mr. Hayes – Yes
The motion passed unanimously.

Local Assessments

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Scriven seconded; voted by roll call to pass over certifying the local assessments for FY2021 budget.

Mr. Bois – Yes
Ms. Byers – Yes
Mr. Cullity – Yes
Mr. Howard – Yes
Mr. Jones – Yes
Mr. O’Brien - Yes
Mr. Scriven – Yes
Mr. Small – Yes
Ms. Taylor – Yes
Mr. Hayes – Yes
The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting was scheduled for May 13, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

VOTE: Ms. Taylor motioned; Mr. Scriven seconded by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Mr. Bois, Yes
Ms. Byers, Yes
Mr. Cullity, Yes
Mr. Howard, Yes
Mr. Jones, Yes
Mr. O’Brien, Yes
Mr. Scriven, Yes
Mr. Small, Yes
Ms. Taylor, Yes
Mr. Hayes, Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Signature of School Committee Secretary

Meeting Handouts:

- Meeting agenda for April 29, 2020
- Meeting minutes of April 22, 2020
- DESE Guidelines on FY2021 Regional School District Interim or 1/12th Budget Process, dated 4/23/2020