

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP/BUSINESS SESSION

OF

MARCH 30, 2020

SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

AND

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

“AN OPEN MEETING ADVANTAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF METHUEN”

RECORDED BY:

MARTHA SIROIS, PUBLIC RECORDER

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WORKSHOP/BUSINESS SESSION
MARCH 30, 2020

Workshop/Business Session of the Methuen School Committee was posted for 6:30PM
“Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the
Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order
imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of
the Methuen School Committee is being conducted via remote participation by the Methuen
School Committee. No in-person attendance of members of the public can adequately access the
proceedings as provided for in the Governor’s Order. Individuals that would like to have access
will be given information at the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (P)
Karen Hallbauer (P)
Jessica MacLeod (P)
Susan Nicholson (P)
Louann Santos (P)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (P)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (P)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

Ryan DiZoglio
Karen Hallbauer
Jessica MacLeod
Susan Nicholson
Louann Santos
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Brandi L. Kwong, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools
Eric S. McGee, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessments and Grants
Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Edward Lussier, Director of Technology
Seth Graham, MCTV Film Crew
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Perry called this Workshop/Business Session to order at 6:49PM due to technical difficulties, with a quorum of Members in attendance, and listed above.

Acceptance of the Agenda

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to accept the Agenda for March 30, 2020
Member Zanni Pesce seconded the Motion

AMENDMENT MOTION: Member Zanni Pesce moved to have 3b. Changed to read “Reading Materials \$50,575.80 from professional salaries to supplies - Approval (we are still waiting on a quote so we need to reduce for now)

Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)
Karen Hallbauer (Y)
Jessica MacLeod (Y)
Susan Nicholson (Y)
Louann Santos (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

AMENDMENT MOTION: Member MacLeod moved to Add before Public Participation a “COVID 19 Update from Superintendent”

Member Santos seconded the Motion

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)
Karen Hallbauer (Y)
Jessica MacLeod (Y)
Susan Nicholson (Y)
Louann Santos (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

AMENDMENT MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to Add a 5a. Compensation during emergency closure extended to May 4, 2020-Approval

Member Hallbauer seconded the Motion

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)
Jessica MacLeod (Y)
Susan Nicholson (Y)
Louann Santos (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

APPROVED AGENDA AS AMENDED:

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)
Karen Hallbauer (Y)
Jessica MacLeod (Y)
Susan Nicholson (Y)
Louann Santos (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Flag Salute

Public Participation

There will be no in-person attendance of members of the public that will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Governor’s Order. The public was asked to email the School Committee during the meeting with any comments/questions they may have and the School Committee Member will read the question to the School Committee.

There was no Public Participation

COVID 19 Update from the Superintendent

Dr. Kwong gave her update which included information on the Grab and Go breakfast and lunch which can be picked up at the Tenney Grammar School as well as 18 stops being done with 3 bus routes throughout the City. They are in talks with the bus company and trying to come to an agreement with them. There were concerns about students that the teachers have been unable to contact. There is a system in place that if there is no contact with the student the teacher is to contact the administrators.

1. Preliminary FY’21 Budget-Discussion

Dr. Kwong gave her presentation.

Member Zanni Pesce-Will the additional administrators in the buildings teach classes?

Dr. Kwong-The Humanities and STEM administrators will do curriculum and staff evaluations.
Member DiZoglio-Are you trying to bring back to the District some of the special education students by adding programs?

Superintendent-They are always looking at that, however space is a problem.

Member Nicholson-Will the Humanities administrator oversee reading and social studies and support the staff? Will the STEM administrator oversee Science and math and support staff?

Superintendent-That is correct.

2. Student Opportunity Act-Approval

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to approve the Student Opportunity Act

Member Hallbauer seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

3. Transfer of Funds

3a. Ice Rink Personnel \$46,667.11 from professional salaries to other salaries-Approval

MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to approve the transfer of funds from professional salaries to other salaries in the amount of \$46,667.11 for Ice Rink Personnel

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

3b. Reading Materials \$50,575.80 from professional salaries to supplies-Approval

MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to approve the transfer of funds from professional salaries to supplies in the amount of \$50,575.80 for Reading Materials

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:

Mayor-Are they allowed to pay a FY'21 expense with FY'20 funds?

Mr. Gosselin-If they place the order in FY'20 and receive it in Fy'20 they can do this. The CAFO and Mr. Cronin Opined this transfer. He will get them the copies of the Opine.

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

4. Ice Rink Closure-Approval

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to approve the closing of the Ice Rink until August 1, 2020

Member Zanni Pesce seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:

Mayor-Why August 1st and not June 1st?

Mr. Gosselin-Usually they close on April 15th for the summer. They were going to try and carry it through the summer but financially that will not be possible.

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (N)

VOTE: 6-1-0 APPROVED (Mayor Perry Voted No)

5. Discussion on the expectations of hourly staff being paid wages

MOTION: Member Santos moved to have a Discussion on the expectations of hourly staff being paid wages

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:

Amendment to the Motion-Member DiZoglio would like to amend the motion to include per diem employees.

Point of Information-Member Zanni Pesce brought to the attention of the Chair that they should be discussing #5, not #5a. They are out of order of the agenda.

Member DiZoglio withdrew his Amendment to the Motion.

9:30PM

MOTION: Member Zanni Pesce moved to extend the meeting past 9:30PM
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

5. (Discussion Continued)

Member Zanni Pesce-Has the Superintendent heard anything from the State on the legality of paying these people out of contract?

Superintendent-She has not heard anything from the State on this. She is continuing with the recommendation of the Commissioner and other groups who have told her to pay these employees. Other districts have also chosen to do this with their school committees, voting at every meeting to continue this. They are offering work to hourly employees. So employees are thinking why would they come to work if they are getting paid. The expectation is if the district is offering them some time to work they will join the rotation unless they have specific reasons why they can not work. She would like the School Committee to set the expectation that if they do extend the pay for the hourly employees or per diem that they are willing to work in a rotation if that is what the district is asking them to do. If they do not then it will be recognized that they are turning down the work and those employees will not receive pay.

Member MacLeod-If the employee is offered hours and they refuse to work those hours, they should not be compensated. She would also like this to be revisited. They have to be responsive to the ever changing situation.

Superintendent-They are doing fair rotating schedules. There are so many people working so hard for all the right reasons. She would like language to make it clear to all the staff .

Mayor-He would like to see everyone get paid but he wants all the employees of the city and the schools to understand if this crisis gets out of hand, the potential of repurposing employees has to be discussed.

5a. Extending Compensation during emergency closure to May 4, 2020

MOTION: Member Zanni Pesce moved to extend compensation to hourly employees to May 4, 2020 as long as they contribute hours as needed and asked for by the District.

Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

5b. MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to amend the agenda to add a 5b to extend compensation to regularly scheduled per diem employees to May 4, 2020 as long as they contribute hours as needed and asked for by the District.

Member Santos seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:

Member DiZoglio-Have any of these employees already filed for unemployment?

Superintendent-Yes some have filed for unemployment.

Member Zanni Pesce-How will this work for those employees that have already filed?

Superintendent-Unemployment would go through Human Resources and Colleen McCarthy so that would be regulated somehow between Colleen and Unemployment.

Member Zanni Pesce-Have they not issued any unemployment yet?

Superintendent-That is correct. The last pay period was last Friday.

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

6. Other Business from the Committee-NONE

***ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss at this Workshop/Business Session, Mayor Perry entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:53PM.

MOTION: Member Zanni Pesce moved to adjourn this Workshop/Business Session @ 9:53PM.

Member Santos seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Y)

Karen Hallbauer (Y)

Jessica MacLeod (Y)

Susan Nicholson (Y)

Louann Santos (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Y)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

**Respectfully submitted,
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools**