

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP/BUSINESS SESSION

OF

MAY 4, 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
MAY 4, 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:

Vice Chairperson Zanni Pesce called this Workshop/Business Session to order at 6:30PM, with a
quorum of Members in attendance. She asked the secretary to please call the roll

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Present)
Karen Hallbauer (Present)
Jessica MacLeod (Present)
Susan Nicholson (Present)
Louann Santos (Present)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

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

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

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
Colleen McCarthy, Director of Human Resources
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder

Acceptance of the Agenda

MOTION: Member Hallbauer moved to accept the Agenda for May 4, 2020
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: None

AMENDMENT MOTION:

Member Nicholson moved remove item #3 from the agenda
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (YES)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to approve the Agenda as amended for May 4,
2020
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (YES)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Flag Salute

Public Participation

Member Pesce read the following: 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. Individuals that would like to participate at this meeting may do so in writing before 3 p.m. Monday, May 4, 2020 via email to derunge@methuen.k12.ma.us which will be read to the public.

Public Participation emails received and read by the School Committee

Jonathan Becker, MEA President

Jason Symmes, MPS staff member

Jason Smith, MPS staff member

Brittney Caprio, MPS staff member

1. COVID 19 Update from the Superintendent

Superintendent gave her Covid 19 Update

2. FY’21 Budget Update

Superintendent has no new FY’21 Budget Updates

3. This item was removed from the agenda

4. Remove payment of hourly and per diem employees OFF the table

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to remove OFF the table payment for hourly and per diem employees

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (YES)

Jessica MacLeod (YES)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (YES)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (YES)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

5. Payment of hourly and per diem employees-Discussion-Approval

MOTION: Member Hallbauer moved to approve payment of hourly and per diem employees

Member Santos seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:

Superintendent reviewed the chart in the packet.

Ms. McCarthy-There is a correction to the chart in the packet. Lunch Monitors cost from May 4th through the end of school year based on number of people currently being paid is \$21,216.00. \$5.00 is an incorrect amount.

Vice Chair Zanni Pesce-Is the Methuen Cares Center being staffed by city employees as well as school employees?

Superintendent-Yes. Some city employees are being paid to work there as well.

Vice Chair Zanni Pesce-Does this fall under the schools or the city?

Superintendent-It was set up by the city but it is a joint partnership between the city and the schools. School backpack program as well as Debbie's Treasure Chest supplies are also being distributed out of the center. They are also handing out school breakfast and lunch.

Vice Chair Zanni Pesce-It is amazing that they have been able to do this for the community. She does not feel that the jobs these employees are doing warrants the pay they are receiving. She feels a lot of these employees would qualify for unemployment benefits and it would save the district money.

Superintendent-She wants them to know this is similar to the bus contract. If they let these employees go they may find other jobs and will not be available when they need to call them back when schools reopen.

Member MacLeod-She is looking to parceling out the per diem workers and determining what's appropriate within each one. The decision they make now should have a shelf life. They should be able to come back to decisions they had made 7 weeks ago which are not relevant now. They made a decision based on what they thought would be a 3-4 week closure, not a 3 month closure. They are not waffling, they are trying to do what's best in a very difficult situation.

Member DiZoglio-He understands everyone's comments and if this was any other type of situation he would be more fiscally responsible. He does not feel people can go and find another job quickly. He does not want to see these funds go to pay other salaries.

Vice Chair Zanni Pesce-She is not putting down paying these employees to allocate these funds anywhere else. She also does not want anyone to think employee appreciation and retention is not important. Our district needs each and every one of these employees. Her decision is strictly for cutting costs and being fiscally responsible.

Superintendent-If we do not pay these employees, it does not come without a cost. It comes with an unemployment cost that the district will incur.

Member Nicholson-She agrees with committee members that they need to take care of their employees. She also agrees with the Superintendent about being worried that they may lose some employees at a time when they need them working in the schools with students. She feels

during these times they need to support financially and emotionally these employees. She would like the Vice Chair to repeat the motion so the committee knows what they are voting on.

Member Santos-The Superintendent stated that the cafeteria workers have a contract. What would happen if they were to be laid off?

Ms. McCarthy-They have a reduction in force process. If they decided not to pay the cafeteria workers they would not be able to serve lunch tomorrow.

Member DiZoglio-He would like to take each line separately and vote on them separately. Can all of these employees collect unemployment?

Ms. McCarthy-There is a State process to see if each individual is eligible for unemployment. Everyone has the right to apply.

Superintendent-She suggested that they vote line by line.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION

Member Hallbauer withdrew her motion to approve payment of hourly and per diem employees

Member Santos withdrew her second to the Motion

MOTION: Member Santos moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the cafeteria workers

Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (YES)

Jessica MacLeod (YES)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (YES)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 5-0-1 Approved

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the crossing guards

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (Present)

Jessica MacLeod (Present)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 3-0-3 FAILED

MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the lunch monitors
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 5-0-1 APPROVED

MOTION: Member MacLeod moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the media aides
Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 5-0-1 APPROVED

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the 1:1 LPN
Member Nicholson seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (NO)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (Present)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (Present)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 2-1-3 FAILED

MOTION: Member MacLeod moved to approve payment of the per diem wages up until the end of the school year for the building based educators that are not acting as long term substitutes.

Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 5-0-1 APPROVED

MOTION: Member MacLeod moved to approve payment of the per diem wages up until the end of the school year for the long term sub program assistants

Member Santos seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)
Karen Hallbauer (YES)
Jessica MacLeod (YES)
Susan Nicholson (YES)
Louann Santos (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)
Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 5-0-1 APPROVED

MOTION: Member Santos moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the Before and After School program coordinators

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (Present)

Karen Hallbauer (Present)

Jessica MacLeod (NO)

Susan Nicholson (NO)

Louann Santos (NO)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 0-3-3 FAILED

MOTION: Member MacLeod moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the Before and After School assistant program coordinators

Member DiZoglio seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (YES)

Jessica MacLeod (NO)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (NO)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 3-2-1 FAILED

MOTION: Member DiZoglio moved to approve payment of the hourly wages up until the end of the school year for the Before and After School group leaders

Member MacLeod seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION:NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (YES)

Jessica MacLeod (NO)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (Present)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (Present)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 3-1-2 FAILED

Superintendent-The Before and After School program is a revolving account so it does have any effect on the operating budget. Crossing guards is non-net money so any savings will go back to the City. The employees you voted no to continue to pay are we removing them from any rotating schedule and will not be paying them for any work they are doing.

Vice Chair Zanni Pesce-Yes, that is correct.

6. Other Business from the Committee- NONE

***ADJOURNMENT:**

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

With no further business to discuss at this Workshop/Business Session, Vice Chair Zanni Pesce entertained a motion @ 8:22PM to go into Executive Session Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares-All Units. We will NOT reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the executive session.

MOTION: Member Santos moved to adjourn this Workshop/Business Session @ 8:22PM and go into Executive Session
Member Hallbauer seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

ROLL CALL

Ryan DiZoglio (YES)

Karen Hallbauer (YES)

Jessica MacLeod (YES)

Susan Nicholson (YES)

Louann Santos (YES)

Jana Zanni Pesce, Vice Chairperson (YES)

Mayor Neil Perry, Chairperson (Not Present)

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

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