

**TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES**

**OF**

**THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**BUSINESS SESSION**

**JULY 9, 2018**

**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:**  
**DEIDRE RUNGE, PUBLIC RECORDER**

**TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES**  
**METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**BUSINESS SESSION**  
**JULY 9, 2018**

This Business Session of the Methuen School Committee was held at Methuen High School, Media Center, and was posted for 6:00 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:**

Mayor Jajuga called the Business Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed below.

**ROLL CALL**

Robert F. Vogler (P)  
Susan M. Nicholson (P)  
Nicholas DiZoglio (NP) (arrived at 6:08 p.m.)  
Jana DiNatale (P)  
Dennis D.J. Deeb (NP) (arrived at 6:04 p.m.)  
Jana Zanni Pesce (P)  
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (P)

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Robert F. Vogler  
Susan M. Nicholson  
Nicholas DiZoglio  
Dennis D.J. Deeb  
Jana DiNatale  
Jana Zanni Pesce  
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator  
Ms. Colleen McCarthy, Human Resources Director  
Ms. Deidre Runge, Public Recorder

**FLAG SALUTE with the Committee**

<b>MOTION:</b>	Mr. Vogler motioned to amend the Agenda and include 5a – Joint Meeting with Council Discussion Ms. Nicholson seconded the motion to accept at amended
<b>DISCUSSION:</b>	None
<b>VOTE:</b>	5-0-0 APPROVED to include 5a re: the City and School July 10 <sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting - Discussion

**#1 – FY'19 Staffing Update**

Superintendent – I brought Ms. McCarthy here to talk about recalls made because of staff resignations.

Ms. McCarthy – So far, we have been able to bring back seven teachers, which were Physical Education, upper health and music teachers.

**#2 – Upper School fine Arts Update**

Superintendent – Ms. Kwong is going to update you on changes we have made and next steps.

Ms. Kwong – We started scheduling meetings back in March. I want you to know some of the changes are not because of or due to budget. This is to give students the best we have to offer.

Mr. Deeb arrived at 6:04 p.m.

Ms. Kwong – This would have happened back in June but with everything going on, we could not present this to parents. Now that we're pretty sure Fine Arts are coming back I wanted you to see what we would be communicating to parents. There are two letters in front of you regarding advanced math, enrichment, physical education, health and music. 4<sup>th</sup> grade students/parents do not understand upper school schedules so they got their own letter. Band and Chorus time will be done during the specialist blocks. Band will be 3x in a 6 day schedule with 1 Physical Education, 1 Technology and 1 Health class. Chorus will be 2x in a 6 day schedule with 1 Physical Education, 1 Technology, 1 Arts and 1 Health class. This came about because parents were refusing services for their students so they could take band and chorus.

Mr. DiZoglio arrived at 6:08 p.m.

Mr. Vogler – Have we changed the amount of time students will have for these activities?

Ms. Kwong – For band its less. The only students not taking Art are band students.

Ms. DiNatale – Thank you for putting back Arts. Is the enrichment class still in the schedule?

Ms. Kwong – Yes.

Ms. DiNatale – Are kids in the Continental Math League in it every day.

Ms. Kwong – That is the second piece. We are still looking at the intervention/enrichment block.

Ms. DiNatale – Is Spanish coming back?

Ms. Kwong – Yes in the enrichment block.

Ms. Kwong - Right now Ms. Mancini and I will be meeting on August 16<sup>th</sup> with parents. We also need to work with 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents yet. Please do not post these letters we will be sending out when we are sure it is accurate with detailed information.

**#3 – FY'19 (1/12) July Budget Update**

Mr. Gosselin – We got the numbers from the City. We are not in a terrible spot because majority of staff are off until September. Anything that is a must we are paying. As Unemployment starts to add up we will start to struggle if it goes in to August.

Mr. Vogler – Since we have not really been able to call people back (positions) do you have an estimate of how much is unemployment costing us.

Mr. Gosselin – July was \$200,000. If they do another 1/12th budget it will be another \$200k in August.

Mr. Vogler - Some of our people have gotten jobs wouldn't that stop their compensation?

Mr. Gosselin – They would have to report that to us. Once we can offer them a job and they say no we can then take them off unemployment.

Superintendent – Let me clarify the misinformation out there. The school department pays the unemployment not the City.

Ms. DiNatale – What are our anticipated class sizes looking like for next year?

Superintendent - Lower will be 21-23 and upper we are looking at 25-26 with pockets of 28-29.

Ms. DiNatale – Can we look at how we do our budget? I would like it provided in a clear way, what we budget, what we spend and then the 3 years prior. This would give us a clearer picture so we can put it into perspective.

Mr. Gosselin – Budgetsense (our software company) might have a report I am not aware of available to us.

#### **#4 – Summer School Opening**

Summer programs are up and running.

#### **#5 – Joint Meeting Policy – First Reading**

Mr. Vogler read the policy regarding joint meetings. He told the Committee he would contact Glen Koocher to get the correct file number for the new policy.

Mr. DiZoglio – I like this and I will vote on it but I do think it should also be a joint policy with the Council.

Mr. Vogler – This is simply to request a meeting. If we approve it maybe we can send to them and they can adopt too.

Ms. Nicholson – Yes, we spoke to this at the last School Committee meeting. We will be talking about this Thursday at the Charter Sub Committee meeting also.

Mayor – There should be strong language for involvement between School Committee, City Council and the Mayor's Office. There are going to be audits done and stronger oversight and I would encourage we vote on this.

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler motioned to approve the first reading

Ms. DiNatale seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:** None

**VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

#### **#5a – Joint Meeting with Council July 10, 2018 - Discussion**

Mr. DiZoglio – We have been on the communications between Representative Campbell and Representative DiZoglio. I did want to school committee involved. It is out in the community the school needed 10 million dollars. I did not want people to think that. Reached out to Councilor Kannan and we were all in agreement to bring this on the table and show a united front. I will be there tomorrow.

Mr. Vogler – There are two state representatives with two different opinions. I put together some questions I have. Councilor Kannan will give us plenty of time to ask questions. The questions I put together is so we don't have duplicate questions. I would like you to speak to

legal. In addition, it is being said no other schools are doing this. I have it that “Lynn” is going through a similar situation.

Ms. DiNatale – I think it’s a good idea to have the attorney look at question number eight. I have had conversations with other people like lawyers and agencies that know of this and still getting different answers. We should be looking at best practices and how to precede and what are your, our... obligations. I do think the way we can do better giving information to parents.

Mr. DiZoglio – The financial problems are not because of the School Committee. Media is putting misinformation out there. We are not the only school district with a deficit. Methuen has a 4 million dollar deficit but we are on the low end of what other districts overspent. These are student needs that we have to meet. It is more of a State issue from the mandates not a local City issue. Maybe the delegation should get together as a whole and talk about the Bill stuck in the house..

Mayor – The MA Municipal Association is to equalize funding in education in the Commonwealth of MA and to bring up funding to where it should be. There is a billion dollar surplus I believe a big chunk of that should go to schools. That piece of legislation going tomorrow night is drafted by our delegation and the Governor’s Office and needs but it is up to the Council. The problem is the Legislation is out of office July 31<sup>st</sup>. If we go on beyond July 31<sup>st</sup> and one person objects for no reason it does not pass. The Representatives and Senator feel they have a good control of this Bill.

Superintendent – This is going on throughout the state and we are in the low end. At last count there are 30 districts struggling because of mandates. The two times the business administrator and I were on phone conferences with The Department of Revenue, Mr. Cronin spent only 3 or 4 minutes on the phone regarding the school department. He understands and gets it. They moved on to the City it is a City Issue. I am an Educator it has been very difficult for parents of Special Education Students hearing it is all because of Special Education. You educate all. The buck stops here. The City has to figure it out. It is mandates.

#### **#6 – JCAC-1 Residency Policy for MPS Employees – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. DiZoglio motioned to approve the second reading  
Ms. DiNatale seconded the motion  
**DISCUSSION:** None  
**VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

#### **#7 – JJE/JJR Student Activity Account Guideline for MPS – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Deeb motioned to approve the second reading  
Mr. Vogler seconded the motion  
**DISCUSSION:** None  
**VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

#### **#8 – March 26, 2018 Corrected Minutes req: by School Committee Member Nicholson – Approval**

**MOTION:** Ms. Nicholson motioned to approve the minutes as presented  
Mr. Vogler seconded the motion  
**DISCUSSION:** None  
**VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

**#9 – ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss at this Business Session, The Mayor entertained a motion to conclude the Business Session for the evening at 6:55 pm. to go into Executive Session as per M.G.L. Chapter 39 to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and or litigation and will not reconvene into open session.

**MOTION:** Ms. Nicholson moved to adjourn the Business Session at 6:55 pm.  
Ms. Pesce seconded the motion

**VOTE:** 6-0-1 APPROVED (Mayor abstained)

**ROLL CALL**

Robert F. Vogler (Y)

Susan M. Nicholson (Y)

Nicholas DiZoglio (Y)

Jana DiNatale (Y)

Dennis D.J. Deeb (Y)

Jana Zanni Pesce (Y)

Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (abstained will be leaving the meeting)

Respectfully submitted,  
**Deidre Runge, Public Recorder**  
**Methuen Public Schools**