



Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes of June 22, 2017
Revised

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Mr. Sven Amirian, Attorney Paul Magliocchetti, Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardello (arrived at 7:07 p.m.), Mr. Shaun Toohey, Mr. Scott Wood, Vice President, Ms. Gail Sullivan, President and Mr. Jared Fulgoni, Assistant Superintendent. Mr. James Scully, Superintendent of Schools were absent.

This message is read before each meeting: those attending tonight's meeting should be aware that the meeting is being audio and video recorded by HCTV (add any other media outlet/party which tells you they will be recording). Any audience members who wish to record any part of the meeting must inform the Chair who will announce the recording. This is to comply with the Massachusetts wiretap statute.

The committee and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment.

Helen Zbitnoff 28 Brandon Road acknowledged her broken heart and noted that the last four months Haverhill had lost its footing regarding education. Ms. Zbitnoff related that the HEA has dismantled our community and that parents wanted answers regarding this uncertainty. She noted from Harvard University educator James Noonan indicating that school closures had negative effects on wellbeing and academic performance. Ms. Zbitnoff stated that decisions should not be made on numbers and that we can do better and we must do better.

Devon Ferreira 20 Grant Street asked that the Committee see through the misrepresentations. She acknowledged that union president had sent several letters and with the comments about segregation there was a roar of silence. Ms. Ferreira felt the union was given permission to emphasize the implications of less racial diversity. Ms. Ferreira commented that no one from the School Committee spoke up and this was a terrifying indication. She stated that parents are pulling out of the school. Ms. Ferreira noted that there was no official communication to SHHMCS parents who would have been immediately impacted and this vote has emboldened HEA who has questionable tax status. In concluding, she related this was not a good way to start the summer and thanked the Committee for its willingness to listen.

Lisa Begley, HEA President emphasized that the SHHMCS vote was conducted according to DESE guidelines and by law. She related that all teachers in the union have the right to vote and that the vote followed the law and was instituted by democratic process. Ms. Begley continued the HEA has never given up on teachers at SHHMCS because they are great educators. HEA President Begley further noted during her attendance at board meetings for the past two years, she had expressed concerns about demographics at for the school since the school did not represent the City nor the other area schools such as, Tilton and Consentino. She clarified that Silver Hill was attempting to emulate Bradford Elementary but even that school had more racial and economic diversity. Ms. Begley mentioned that no brainstorming had taken place to remedy this matter and the school continued with the same demographics. Additionally, SHHMCS chose the day of the vote and due diligence was practiced in all aspects of the vote. Ms. Begley accentuated the school is still open and there will be no immediate changes even though the vote was 114 (yes for charter renewal) vs. 246 (no for charter renewal) and an additional vote for

an Innovation School vote also went down to defeat. In conclusion, HEA President Begley reiterated her support for teachers, the goal of working together in a positive manner and establishing more professional development opportunities for all educators.

Andrea Bowman 110 Boardman expressed that she was heartbroken and distraught that Silver Hill would no longer continue to operate as a charter school. She noted that misconceptions about the school and the ugly debate over the re-chartering process. Ms. Bowman raised her concerns over the loud silence of Mayor and Superintendent. In conclusion, she was utterly shattered by this decision

Sofia Smolar (former student), 2 Edwin Street blamed the HEA for being very unkind and having no personal stake in the City. She stated the school will never be the same and she had only good and happy memories of her time at Silver Hill.

Alicia Smolar 2 Edwin Street felt that Silver Hill had for some become an evil, bad monster that needed to be eliminated. Ms. Smolar commented that the vote would have a negative impact for the City.

Peter Yannakoureas 85 Millvale Road spoke against the teaching of evolution, which according to him was racist, and against Christian values and God.

Assistant Superintendent Jared Fulgoni replied that the curriculum followed the MA Standards.

Mayor Fiorentini concurred with Mr. Fulgoni's comments.

Steve Costa stated that this decision had divided the city and was not for education. He applauded the Mayor for his funding of education and further related that Superintendent Scully had turned the system around and it would be sad day when he retires.

Kerry Rodriguez Sanchez, Executive Director of Parents United, Lowell Street Somerville Massachusetts congratulated parents and asked the committee to listen to parents who were fighting for their children. She felt that the school was being used as a political pawn.

Tessa Boiselle, 19 South Pearson Street, a mother of child who has severe anxiety commented that the children were being punished and that this decision tore the city down. Ms. Boiselle felt the school and its children were being treated as chess pieces on board.

Chris Vallier Pilgrim Road remarked about his volunteerism at schools and the fact he lost faith in the school system.

Shiloh Puello, 16 Golden Street (High School Student) noted that students received the same education in all schools. She further noted that education is a right not a privilege and a kid's determination to make their own future. Shiloh noted her appreciation for all her teachers.

Nolan Moran, a HHS Class of 1986 graduate who attended Tilton noted the same conditions existed 30 years ago. He related that Haverhill High School had provided the foundation of where he was today. Mr. Moran had moved away and came back to Haverhill because it was a stable spot. He asked the committee to develop a plan quickly.

Mr. Amirian stated that this agenda item was a passionate issue for him. He had followed the re-chartering process but was not aware of the severity until one of the concerned parents made him aware of the various concerns. Committeeman Amirian children attended Hillview Montessori because of he and his wife's belief in Montessori model and the stability of K-8 model provided for his children. He related being in the same classroom for three years 1-3 4-6

was a significant benefit of the Montessori schools. Mr. Amirian encouraged the discussion to continue about this important matter.

Attorney Magliocchetti thanked parents and students and commended the invigorating discourse. He repeated previous statements that all teachers are great and face great challenges every day. Mr. Magliocchetti acknowledged the difficult position of Lisa Begley, HEA President and respected the vote of the teachers' association. Additionally, Committeeman Magliocchetti commented that the re-chartering process had engendered very serious debate among teachers and even though he did not agree with the decision.

Mr. Toohey reiterated his previous support of lifting the cap of Charter Schools. He felt that schools that were struggling and running out of options needed this educational option. Committeeman Toohey commented, "If it isn't broken do not fix it". He pointed out his engagement in his children's education namely taking advantage of choice by applying for open enrollment because of childcare (mother-in-law lived on Concord Street). Mr. Toohey concluded by stating " HEA got it wrong".

Mayor Fiorentini asked about a transition plan.

Mr. Fulgoni replied that SHHMCS is not closing and no children are being pulled out, there will be no change in grade configuration, children currently enrolled along with siblings will finish highest grade at the school, which is grade 5. The Assistant Superintendent noted that a thoughtful plan would be established to limit the anxiety of children and to keep families together.

Mayor suggested setting up committee Superintendent, School Committee and parents.

Devan Ferreira, SHHMCS parent mentioned that the charter school had many initiatives that were not found or funded at the level Silver Hill had implemented.

Mayor Fiorentini commented that the successful initiatives could be copied from the charter model.

Ms. Sullivan stated that professional development was a huge issue and that this subject had pitted teachers against each other. She acknowledged the system needs to get better and had been getting by on too little too long. President Sullivan was a strong advocate for staff training and highlighted the difference in the rollout of Lucy Calkins at Silver Hill (with professional development) and other district schools (without adequate or sustainable professional development).

Mr. Amirian concluded that it all comes down to feeling supported by elected officials and that SHHMCS has his support.

Mr. Wood stated his support for all parents in all schools.

Student Advisory Council Report.

Isabela Yepes commented that high school students had successfully closed out another school year and were looking forward to having a great summer. She stated that the high school would be hosting all the summer programs in July and August and wished everyone a great summer.

Mr. Fulgoni announced that the Tilton School had received a \$900,000 grant to continue the improvement initiatives at the school which included maximizing learning time, supports for literacy, professional development driven by specific measures and data points.

Ms. Sullivan noted the grant had broad objects, which focused on Early Literacy in the Grade K-3 structure.

Mayor Fiorentini was proud of the grant but his major priority was extended learning time.

Assistant Superintendent Fulgoni commented that there were different mechanisms for extended learning including structured play for learning.

Dr. Thakkar commented that coaching and tutoring would start earlier in the year and also that summer school would still occur.

The Mayor wanted to visit an Innovation School in Salem, Massachusetts at the beginning of the school year.

Mr. Fulgoni introduced the Haverhill High School Calendar for 2017-2018.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the 2017-2018 Haverhill High School - School Calendar as proposed (calendar attached). Mr. Wood seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

0 members having abstained

The Assistant Superintendent acknowledged for the following retirees with 30 years or more of service:

| | | |
|---------|---------|----|
| Dawn | Caputo | 30 |
| Susan | Stanley | 31 |
| Jean | Ray | 34 |
| Ruth | Cranton | 35 |
| Linda | Leonard | 33 |
| Clarice | True | 45 |
| Mark | Marcoux | 36 |
| Evelyn | Brewer | 38 |
| Debra | Diminco | 38 |

Mr. Fulgoni asked the members to approve school choice program for grades 9-12.

Mr. Amirian indicated that more information and time was needed to consider all the ramifications of this decision.

The committee asked about revenue.

School Business Manager Brian O'Connell explained that school choice brought \$5,000 per student and would only be open if there are available seats. He reported \$200,000 was received but \$1m left Haverhill (200 students) from students leaving the district to attend other

communities' schools. Mr. O'Connell noted that if you have no seats available in K-8 the district, students would not be admitted in those grade levels.

Ms. Sullivan asked if approximately 200 students left the district.

Mr. O'Connell agreed with the statement.

Mr. Wood reported that if 3-4 slots were available in the elementary schools those students would be allowed to attend until they graduate. He wanted priority given to Haverhill students to prevent them from sitting in classrooms that are overcrowded.

Attorney Magliocchetti commented it was a balancing act; an offset to students leaving the district and presently the school system was running \$800,000 in red. He recommended focusing energy and resources.

In response to Mr. Magliocchetti's question, Assistant Superintendent Fulgoni answered the incoming freshman class was approximately 500.

Mr. Wood acknowledged the overcrowding was not in terms of total population but in particular sections or classes. His assumption was that once a school choice student is accepted that student remains in the district until they graduate or leave the district for other reasons.

Mayor Fiorentini's main concern was the parents/students opting out of our school system and wanted the district to make a concerted effort to get parents back in Haverhill.

A parent was allowed to address committee about loss of revenue for allowing or not allowing school choice.

Mr. Amirian needed to have the data to make an informed decision. He asked if the district could change status during the year.

Mr. O'Connell responded in the negative.

Mr. Amirian asked if the decision needed to be made tonight.

Mr. O'Connell stated the decision was usually made by June 1, 2017.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve school choice in grades 9-12 for the 2017-2018 school year.

Ms. Sullivan takes over chairing the meeting so that the Mayor could second the motion.

Ms. Sullivan asked why the decision was late.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to table the school choice vote. Mr. Toohey seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | No | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | No | | |

5 members having voted in the affirmative
2 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Mr. Wood asked what a no action would mean for school choice.

Mr. O'Connell responded the district would automatically be enrolled in school choice.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to reconsider the school choice vote. Mr. Wood seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | No |
| Mr. Wood | No | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | No | | |

4 members having voted in the affirmative
3 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve school choice only for grades 9-12 for 2017-2018 based on the administration's recommendation. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

Mr. Amirian asked for a definitive date for a decision.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked if there was a no vote on school choice could the committee change its mind.

Business Manager O'Connell quoted from M.G.L. Chapter 76 Section 12 B subsection d: Each city, town or regional school district shall enroll non-resident students at the school of such non-resident student's choice; provided, however, that such receiving district has seats available as stated in said report; provided, however, that this obligation to enroll non-resident students shall not apply to a district for a school year in which its school committee, prior to June first, after a public hearing, adopts a resolution withdrawing from said obligation, for the school year beginning the following September.

The committee concurred that withdrawing from school choice was not an option since no public hearing had been held prior to June 1.

Mr. Wood stated an answer would be received shortly from the State.

Ms. Sullivan assumed the chair.

Mr. Wood requested that the Committee acknowledge Haverhill native, businessman and philanthropist Ernest DiBurro's many contributions to the Haverhill Public Schools including most recently the donation of a clubhouse facility at Trinity Stadium for male and female athletics by affixing his name to the clubhouse.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to affix the name of Ernest DiBurro to the clubhouse at Trinity Stadium in recognition of his many contributions to the Haverhill Public Schools. Mr. Toohey seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Attorney Magliocchetti announced that the Policy Subcommittee continued to meet and at next Tuesday's meeting, (June 27, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. in the Superintendent's Office) they would be reviewing Section H.

Mr. Wood made a motion to approve Warrant Number EV201700623 totaling \$645,751.36 as indicated in the agenda material. Mr. Amirian seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |

6 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Mr. Amirian made a motion to approve Warrant Number EV20170623A totaling \$231.82 as indicated in the agenda material. Mr. Toohey seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|---------|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Abstain |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |

6 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
1 member having abstained

Mr. Wood made a motion to approve Warrant Number EV20170623B totaling \$11,111.53 as indicated in the agenda material.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Mr. Amirian made a motion to approve Warrant Number JE20170526A totaling \$5,724.14 as indicated in the agenda material. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | No | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

6 members having voted in the affirmative
1 member having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Discussion on School Choice Continued

Mr. Fulgoni indicated that the Associate Commissioner of Education had responded that a no action on school choice would result in Haverhill remaining a choice district and an extension of two weeks could be granted.

Mr. Toohey stated his concern that the trend of leaving the district would continue and Haverhill would lose any type of revenue.

Mr. Wood commented that if the cost to educate a student was \$12,000+ and the district received \$5,000 from the state; it was actually fake revenue.

Attorney Magliocchetti stated his emphasis was on improving the Haverhill Public Schools so that students would remain in the district.

Mayor Fiorentini was in favor of tabling the matter. He stated it was confusing that we lost students who left the district and we also lost money when we accepted school choice students. The Mayor elaborated that the money leaving was real but the cost to educate school choice students was a marginal per pupil cost as opposed to an actual per pupil cost i.e., we have the building, classroom, teachers etc. already in place. The Mayor advocated taking the time to review the matter.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to table the school choice vote. Mr. Toohey seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Items by Consensus.

Ms. Sullivan introduced the following items by consensus

The Superintendent recommends approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 8, 2017 as indicated in the agenda material.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Mr. Wood made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting (9:40 p.m.). Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Mr. Amirian | Yes | Attorney Magliocchetti | Yes |
| Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello | Yes | Mr. Toohey | Yes |
| Mr. Wood | Yes | Ms. Sullivan | Yes |
| Mayor Fiorentini | Yes | | |

7 members having voted in the affirmative
0 members having voted in the negative
0 members having abstained

Meeting adjourned.