



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2017**

Ms. Gail Sullivan, President called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Mr. Sven Amirian, Attorney Paul Magliocchetti, Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardello (arrived 7:10 pm), Mr. Shaun Toohy (left the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.), Mr. Scott Wood, Vice President, Mr. Jared Fulgoni, Assistant Superintendent, and Mr. James Scully, Superintendent of Schools. Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson was recorded 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 announced there would be a School Committee Candidate Forum on October 11, 2017 sponsored by the Haverhill Education Association, the Haverhill Education Foundation and Haverhill Community Television and would be held at Harbor Place. She stated that seating was limited for the hour-long forum, which would include panel questions and followed by a meet and greet with the candidates. Ms. Zbitnoff noted the forum would be live-streamed and broadcast over Channel 22.

Alicia Smolar 2 Edwin Street commented if it was possible to have the school committee minutes posted on the parent page on Facebook.

Ms. Sullivan interjected that Public Comment was not an exchange but an opportunity to comment.

Ms. Smolar asked about the MSBA visit to Consentino School on September 21, 2017.

Superintendent Scully responded that the issues that Ms. Smolar had pointed out at the last meeting were in the process of being addressed.

Ms. Smolar reported that Bartlett School had been tagged. Mr. Scully responded that the Facilities Department and the Essex County Sheriff's Depart In conclusion, she commended Mr. Mele and the Grade 6 Team were appreciated for their hard work and dedication.

Keira Ross, 12 Kelly Street commented on a Facebook petition regarding an alleged dress code infringement by her sister. She noted that there was no disrespect meant to the high school administration. Ms. Ross related that there were harmful enforcement issues such as students being made a spectacle i.e., wearing an oversized class 2013 t-shirt for the remainder of the school day; missed class time for dress code violation; bias in enforcement of dress code singling out overweight or busty females; unfair application of the rules and the statement that one teacher specifically stated to female students that certain male teachers found some female students dressing provocative.

Mr. Wood stated that if there was an issue with the clothing being a distraction to students in the classroom, then should be addressed. He did not see the post, but the issues could be resolved via handbook and policy manual.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello saw the post and was baffled by the decision and would work with her colleagues to resolve issue.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to refer the dress code to the Policy Subcommittee. Mr. Toohey seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

Mr. Amirian	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	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

Peter Yannakoureas asked if he was allowed to speak.

Attorney Magliocchetti related that in the recently updated policy manual public comment was limited items on the agenda. He stated that a person should consult the School Committee and/ Superintendent to put an item on the agenda.

Ms. Sullivan allowed Mr. Yannakoureas to speak for 3 minutes.

Peter Yannakoureas spoke against the teaching of evolution because it was a religious topic and diverted away from the real God. He further commented that it was a horrible religion and Darwin believed his own lies.

Mr. Wood called a point of order.

Nicholas Yannakoureas noted his agreement his father's viewpoint that Darwinism should not be taught in school and then read a passage from the Bible.

Student Advisory Council Report - Isabela Yepes

Ms. Yepes apologized for not attending the last meeting. She updated the committee on high school events:

- Hillies who were inducted into the National Honor Society and the National Business Honor Society on September 14th – Foreign Language Honor Society in a few weeks
- Spirit Week began on September 25 which including fun events such as Bonfire, Homecoming Dance
- Progress Reports will be issued with new design formulated from input from staff and students
- On Saturday September 30th there is a Homecoming Game Hillies vs. Methuen at Trinity Stadium beginning at 2:00 p.m. and there is also the VIP – Walk for Peace from 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. beginning at Swasey Field and ending at Silver Hill School
- Huge thank you to Ernie DiBurro for donating a new clubhouse at Trinity Stadium for male and female athletes

Ms. Yepes commented that a meeting between Principal Kitsos and the Student Council to address the issue of changing dress styles would be held next week.

Mr. Scully stated that Mrs. Kitsos needed to enforce the existing dress code.

Ms. Sullivan asked for a copy of the Student Handbook.

Attorney Magliocchetti indicated that the committee should receive the handbooks prior to printing.

Mr. Scully stated copies would again be provided to the committee.

Superintendent Comments/Reports.

School Business Manager Brian O'Connell presented an updated financial status report to the Committee [HPS Financial Report - Expenditures and Budget Status - 9-22-2017.pdf](#) He felt cautiously optimistic that with the current diligent cost management system the school district would continue to operate efficiently and effectively. Mr. O'Connell offered to answer any questions once the members had time to review the report in more detail. In the immediate future, the Business Manager will present a complete first quarter financial report.

Mr. Wood asked that an adjustment (addition) be made in the high school alternative school salaries of \$25,000 since that amount had been revised during budget discussions for a total of \$225,000. Additionally, he wanted a breakdown of how the money was spent and where it was going directly.

Ms. Sullivan asked for the status on the state and federal grant accounts.

Mr. O'Connell responded a report would be forthcoming.

Dr. Darshan Thakkar, Chief Academic Officer addressed the committee on professional development which included Renaissance, a tool which would give educators progress in real time. Dr. Thakkar noted that rolling out a program of this scope required staff training. He stated 200 educators were trained over a four (4) sessions were held in June followed by additional professional development over six days (3) August and (3) September.

In response to Ms. Sullivan's question on compensation, Dr. Thakkar responded that the teachers were compensated.

Dr. Thakkar explained that there were three (3) teachers in each school who were already trained so that they could champion the program at the building level. He further related the three goals of Renaissance were (1) reading grade level grade 3; (2) grade 8 prepared for high school and (3) graduating from high school. Dr. Thakkar stated that the hope of the program was to develop expertise monitor and leverage capabilities of this program to improve instructional practices in the district.

Ms. Sullivan asked how the program would be assessed.

Dr. Thakkar responded that there were many types of reports that educators could utilize to analyze student's progress, instant assessment of learning difficulties, and a list of interventions for teachers and tools that would help in the personalization of instruction by teachers.

Mr. Fulgoni presented a keynote presentation [Family Engagement SC Agenda Item 09.28.17.pdf](#) that outlined a family engagement conference held at Harvard Graduate School of Education, which had been funded by Dr. Maddox and included a global audience.

He noted that Dr. Thakkar and Ms. Everett had also attending this weeklong conference.

As part of his presentation, Assistant Superintendent Fulgoni provided an example of a dropout campaign that Cambridge Public Schools had initiated with the poster stating "7000 HHS students drop out every school day – their empty desks form a line four miles long". Mr. Fulgoni noted that it was not successful and actually increased the dropout rate; he asked for suggestions.

Ms. Sullivan responded that the campaign had been framed negatively.

Mr. Fulgoni stated that collectively the school district could be transformed by a positive and productive message that did not necessarily cost money. He noted that one of the attendees spoke about best practices that she had learned from Mr. Scully when he was the Lawrence Superintendent.

Superintendent Scully had long advocated for a Parent Center at a location that was not a school building and that would provide a multitude of services for parents and children; this option would be a better alternative than the current arrangement.

Ms. Sullivan replied it was a wonderful event and an important endeavor. She committed to reaching out to the Mayor and other elected officials.

Ms. Everett commented that it was an excellent presentation and opportunity.

Ms. Sullivan thanked Ms. Everett for her comments and attending tonight's meeting.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello noted that previously she had worked in a Family Literacy Program (this grant funding had been stopped) to help parents earn their GED and learn skills to help their children in the learning process.

Superintendent Scully announced a job description and title change for the Compliance Officer to an Assistant Director of Special Education.

Mr. Wood made a motion to suspend the rules. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

A unanimous vote was held by a show of hands.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to adopt the title change. Mr. Wood seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

Ms. MacDonald gave brief snapshot of the Special Education Department:

- Summer School @ High School provided savings and was a great success;
- 30 new hires due to resignations and retirements - recent resignations have resulted in an aggressive search for replacements;
- Autism and behavioral classes were restructured to get the numbers down;
- Tutors in high school to prevent dropouts including a tutoring center;
- Additional professional development possibly grant funded i.e., Landmark for coaching, full day training for literature;
- Slower than planned roll out of life skills curriculum;
- Contracted services to ensure all services are delivered including providing makeup services;
- Reaching out to Dr. Mona Potter at MacLean's Hospital to address the overarching issue mental health issues;
- Two tuition students coming into our district;
- Implementing a basketball team for disabled and non-disabled students
- Minor apartment issues have been addressed; retrofitted the area with Ms. Kitsos, who is a great partner
- Touch screen for students in lessons
- Pay and caseload are a part of the retention issues

Superintendent Scully related that during an interview today salary was the number one issue. He noted that the candidate would be taking a pay cut (he is paid \$22,000 more) and working more days (he works 17 less days). Mr. Scully commented very talented people are being lost.

Mr. Wood noted that according to DESE, Haverhill had a better retention rate than state and other communities. He asked that positions be identified where there are deficiencies.

Mr. Scully specified special education and high school administration as two of the areas.

Ms. Sullivan asked about the softball issue and had hoped that the Mayor would be in attendance to speak to the issue. She related that there were two softball proposals and the Mayor would be meeting to softball parents to outline his position and go over the proposals.

Mr. Scully concurred that was also his understanding.

Ms. Sullivan stated that the softball fields would be included in the Mayor’s capital budget.

Mr. Amirian spoke with Tom O’Brien last year and would like to hear his input because in their conversation Mr. O’Brien had great input and enhancements about this project.

Mr. Scully would share Mr. O’Brien’s information on revenue stream including the \$75,000 generated at the Stadium annually. He would obtain the revenue numbers that were shared with the Mayor for the committee.

Attorney Magliocchetti announced that the Policy Manual revisions had occurred over the past months and new laws and regulations asked for a vote to approve tonight.

A motion was made by Mr. Amirian to approve the Policy Manual. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

Mr. Wood stated that the policies on the website had errors and was posted incorrectly.

Attorney Magliocchetti noted that those policies were draft only and would be replaced after tonight.

Ms. Cassano noted that the policy revisions had been emailed to the Committee.

Mr. Amirian reiterated that three members (Attorney Magliocchetti and Ms. Sullivan) had reviewed the policy manual over a period of approximately five meetings with MASC. He was satisfied with the changes and the review had been done in thoughtful and thorough manner.

Ms. Sullivan commented that an excellent review had been conducted. She suggested the full committee was not present (2 members were absent – Mayor Fiorentini and Mr. Toohey) and one member was uncomfortable voting specifically Mr. Wood had not examined the actual manual.

Mr. Amirian withdrew his motion.

New Business.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20170929 totaling \$299,75.52 [Detailed vendor warrant EV20170929.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material Mr. Amirian seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20170929A totaling \$166,111.82 [Detailed vendor warrant EV20170929A.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20170929B totaling \$533,017.14 [SC Agenda Packet 092817 Warrant Approval 4C.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material. Mr. Amirian seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

A motion was made by Mr. Wood that the equipment be declared surplus and disposed of in accordance with city ordinances as listed in the agenda material [SC Agenda Packet 092817 4D Surplus Items.pdf](#). Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

Items by Consensus

Mr. Wood had a question regarding use of facilities and asked that it be taken separately.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to approve the (4) field trip request(s) [Tori Pettis FT SC Agenda Packet 092817 5 B #1.pdf](#); [Souleymane Wane FT SC Agenda Packet 092817 5 B .pdf](#); [Ted Kempinski FT SC Agenda Packet 092817 5 B .pdf](#); [Antoinetta Diskin FT SC Agenda Packet 09.28.17 5 B .pdf](#) the professional educational conference/workshop forms (15) [PEC Workshop Forms SC Agenda Packet 092817 5 C.pdf](#) and the minutes of the September 14, 2017 meeting [HSC Regular Meeting Minutes 09.14.17 Final - Approved.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

Mr. Wood indicated that waive \$10 processing fee and \$100 rental fee for the Haverhill High School VIP since this was a student activity.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to decrease the fees charged to the Haverhill High School VIP group by \$110. Mr. Amirian seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the amended use of facilities [SC - Use Of Facilities 9.14.17 revised 09.14.17.pdf](#) as indicated. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to adjourn the meeting (9:00 p.m.). Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The chair called for a vote of the members:

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

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