



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes of August 29, 2019**

Theodore A. Pelosi, Jr. City Council Chambers – 7:00 pm

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He stated additional seating was available in the auditorium. He requested a roll call of members.

Attorney Rosa	Present	Ms. Sullivan	Present
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Present	Attorney Magliocchetti	Present
Mr. Wood	Present	Mr. Amirian, Vice Chair	Present
Mayor Fiorentini	Present		

Dr. Margaret Marotta Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations were also present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the members.

Public Comment.

The following individuals spoke concerning various transportation issues: delays, tardiness, late pickups/arrivals, missing breakfast due to late arrival, eliminated bus stops, lack/poor communication, unsafe walking conditions, no/lack of crossing guards, high traffic areas, unsafe walking areas, and errors in bus schedules.

Ms. Megan Schnaible	Mr. Steve Costa
Ms. Amanda Ward	Mr. Ed Modeen
Ms. Caroline Norris	Ms. Janet Stevens
Ms. Accalia Abreau	Ms. Meghan Holcomb
Ms. Patty LaFontaine	Ms. Kathy Kaczor
Mr. Robert Hanson	Mr. Joseph Bevilacqua
Ms. Dawn Lemieux	Mr. Charles Dowell
Ms. Joyce Thibodeaux	Ms. Christina Figueroa
Ms. Laurie Moran	Ms. Priscilla Kwo

Attorney Anthony Metaxas representing Mr. John McCarthy, NRT President stated his client was very familiar with Haverhill and its requirements and NRT's history in the bus industry was exemplary.

Mr. McCarthy apologized for the myriad of bus issues that have occurred since schools have opened. He commented that bus routes were being adjusted and that his staff was working diligently to address and correct the problems. NRT Staff also present were: Ms. Christine Vrees, Ms. Susan Bellerose and Ms. Michelle Perez.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello questioned who is responsible for route decisions and commented on the massive bus route problem throughout the city.

Attorney Magliocchetti commented on the tardiness of posting of routes. He related that when a child goes off to school for the day, the parent is trusting someone else with his/her life. Mr. Magliocchetti noted a major problem with sidewalks along with snow removal during the winter and suggested a revisiting of the transportation guidelines in the district.

Mr. Wood stated that the transportation issues had disrupted education in the city. He commented that when the vote was taken to transfer the contract, it was not indicated that there would be major changes in routes and/or bus stops. Mr. Wood related that communication had been awful both with NRT and within the school system.

Dr. Marotta commented that parents had entrusted their children to the school system and that the transportation issues had brought upon unnecessary grief across the city. She thanked those who had voiced their concerns and noted that the district had failed its students over the past couple of days. The Superintendent acknowledged a lack of communication along with dramatically underestimating the impact. Superintendent Marotta expressed one of the significant issues was that the transportation software used by NRT and the District were not compatible and that NRT wanted all data run through their software system.

Mr. McCarthy related that after the first day of school, routes were adjusted and NRT has been working diligently and will donate two busses immediately.

Ms. Vrees noted GPS would be installed on all vehicles.

Ms. Bellerose commented a dry run of all 34 routes was conducted. She offered that the district changes had resulted in longer and more difficult routing.

Mr. McCarthy noted that the Registry did inspections of all vehicles. He noted that over-capacity busses had been an issue in the past and therefore to transport students more safely the routes had been adjusted. Mr. McCarthy recommended utilizing a transportation consultant to examine the routes.

Ms. Perez from NRT offered utilizing “Here Comes the Bus” and recommended further discussion with the City of Haverhill.

Ms. Sullivan apologized for the anxiety caused to parents because of the chaotic bussing situation.

Both Mr. Wood and Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello commented that the right size plan brought massive changes within the district.

Mr. Amirian countered that the massive changes were to reduce class size due to overcrowding in several schools.

Mr. Amirian commended the parties for working collaboratively and long hours for a solution. He noted that the Committee would be looking at rider eligibility issues.

Dr. Marotta acknowledged the principals, teachers and staff for hard work during these difficult opening days of schools by working collaboratively.

City Council President John Michitson asked to be recognized by the Chair. Mayor Fiorentini acknowledged Council President Michitson.

Mr. Michitson commented about listening to citizens’ issues/concerns with the route changes and questioned was the bus company’s software optimizing profit. He questioned why the route changes were not foreseen as

problems, since it appeared that in order to transport our students there would be more routes and therefore more expensive.

Mr. McCarthy commented that busses were overcapacity and it was illegal to transport children in overcrowded busses. He noted that if the bus routes were returned to the way it was last year, there would be a need for more busses.

Mr. Michitson continued to question the route change and predicting that there would serious problems with the changes.

Ms. Bellerose reported that redistricting had occurred with the opening of the Hunking, the closing of the Kindergarten Centers and redeployment of ELE's and other student populations to Bradford Elementary.

Mrs. Dianne Connolly, Director of MTSS announced that today all bus students had departed Golden Hill by 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Wood commented that several hours into the meeting, it was clarified that the massive bus changes were due to the right-sizing plan.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello concurred with Mr. Wood, but noted that the massive school/program changes within the district had resulted in the extensive bus route changes along with a communication issue.

Attorney Rosa noted that if busses were overloaded it was a violation of the law. He related that the changes in the district were needed due to the overcrowded classrooms and the need to replace the old Hunking School due to deterioration and unsafe conditions of the school.

Mayor Fiorentini asked that this item be continued to the next meeting.

Public Comment continues.

Ms. Gina Ricart, 6 Cogswell Street, Bradford, MA spoke about her concern with the choices for free lunch and free breakfast, especially the amount of sugar and lack of protein.

Superintendent Marotta indicated that all meals were packaged with different ingredients than the commercially available products and met government standards.

Ms. Ricart reiterated the need for better options.

A third-grade teacher acknowledged the need for quality products as options for both breakfast and lunch.

The Superintendent commented that the program was being piloting and trouble-shooting was taking place as well to ensure optimal nutritional content. Dr. Marotta indicated that Whitson's staff would be asked to attend the next meeting.

Dr. Thomas Grannemann, 51 Leroy Avenue, Bradford, MA 01835 revised his comments from the last meeting. He noted the Mayor had provided updated figures showing a \$30M investment in Consentino School.

Mayor Fiorentini thanked Dr. Grannemann for providing the update.

Superintendent Comments/Reports.

Right Size Updates and Costs.

Dr. Marotta noted the following enrollments:

- 23-K (Pentucket Lake and Walnut Square) – additional K at Walnut Square with full-time esp at Kindergarten level
- Range of 21-25 in Grades 1-2-3-4
- Range of 27-28 with one (1) class of 29 at Hunking Grades 5-8 trending in lower class size

Mr. Wood had requested the total costs associated with the right-sizing proposal.

Dr. Marotta costs for the move including changes to buildings such as a handicapped ramp. The Superintendent indicated that some of work were requirements by law.

Due to the lateness of the meeting, a motion was made by Mr. Wood to table the Superintendent's Evaluation until the next meeting. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held on the motion.

Attorney Rosa	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Mr. Amirian	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

The Superintendent's Evaluation to remain on table until 9.12.19.

Subcommittee Reports.

Attorney Magliocchetti noted a Policy Subcommittee would be scheduled shortly regarding transportation issues.

New Business – Approval of Warrants [Warrants 082919.pdf](#)

Attorney Magliocchetti noted that Warrant #3 would need to voted separately.

Attorney Rosa questioned the expenditure of \$143,265 to HTS Engineering Inc. for maintenance and rehab of Valent Roof Top HVAC Units.

Dr. Marotta believed the expenditure was for Hunking School (three-year maintenance repair contract) but would provide more detail to the Committee at a later date.

Mr. Wood questioned the warranty status. Dr. Marotta replied the warranty does not cover repair and replacement of filters, etc.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrant Number EV20190830 totaling \$457,035.27, Warrant Number EV20190830B totaling \$676,953.24 and Warrant Number JE20190830 (P-Card July 2019) totaling \$18,050.35 as indicated in the agenda material. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held on the motion.

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20190830A totaling \$253.98 as indicated in the agenda material. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held on the motion.

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

1 member abstained

Items by Consensus.

The Superintendent recommends approval of Use of Facilities [SC 082919 UOF.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the Use of Facilities as indicated in the agenda material. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held on the motion.

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

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to adjourn the meeting (10:35 pm). Mr. Wood seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held on the motion.

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

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative
0 members abstained