



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee  
Regular Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2019  
Theodore A. Pelosi, Jr. City Council Chambers – 7:00 pm**

Mayor Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

The following members were present:

Attorney Richard Rosa	Ms. Gail Sullivan
Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardello (7:07 pm)	Attorney Paul Magliocchetti
Mr. Scott Wood	Mr. Sven Amirian, Vice Chair
Dr. Margaret Marotta Superintendent of Schools was also present.	

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the members.

**Public Comment/Public Hearing on the FY20 Budget.**

Mayor Fiorentini asked the Committee if they wished to waive the time limit and subject criteria for tonight's meeting.

The Committee agreed to waive this requirement.

Mr. Peter Yannakoreaus, 85 Millvale Road alerted the School Committee to an anti-Christian display at Nettle School.

Mrs. Helen Zbnitoff, 19 Village Woods Drive spoke in support of increased maintenance and funding for education. She commended the superintendent and high school principal for their commitment to improving education in Haverhill.

Ms. Erin Parks, 7 Tresolo Road expressed some concerns with the Rightsizing Mode, the proposed solution to the overcrowding in the classrooms. Ms. Parks suggested that there should have been a subcommittee of the parents and teachers who were going to be directly affected by the plan and better communication throughout the process. She related that it has been a topic of conversation at every playdate, school event, and trip to the playground. Ms. Parks requested that the lives of these children should be disrupted as little as possible, keep students with their classmates and allow the students to develop a sense of community by keeping them in the same school environment.

Ms. Joanna Dix, 51 Ashworth Terrace, Haverhill Education Coalition President spoke in support of increased maintenance staff to address our buildings. Ms. Dix provided the following information on Maintenance/Custodial Staff needed to meet APPA Standards for the Haverhill Public Schools with 1,573,218 square feet (classroom standards):

	Maintenance staff	Custodial staff
Level 1 Showpiece	24	185
Level 2 Comprehensive Stewardship	19	94
Level 3 Managed care	14	59
Level 4 Reactive management	13	40
Level 5 Unkempt neglect	9	35

She noted the staffing levels were at the levels of unkempt neglect.

Mr. Michael Veves, Cliff Avenue, a substitute teacher spoke in support of teachers, staff and increased pay for substitute teachers.

Mr. Ismael Matias, Latino Coalition stated his group would assist in recruiting Latinos to work in our school district and suggested a recruitment effort outside Haverhill.

Ms. Mirca Mejias, 41 Freeman Street, Mount Washington Coalition spoke in support of increased education funding.

Mr. Anthony Parolisi, 169 Summer Street, spoke in support of increased funding for education and waiting for increased state funding only indicated that the district was not willing to do it ourselves.

Mr. Timothy Briggs, 30 Hoyt Road, spoke in support of the teaching staff and asked the Committee to stop saying the teaching staff was great; he found it hollow and insulting. He recommended that the members shadow a student for a day to gain perspective on education in Haverhill.

Ms. Kathy Kaczor, 46 Crowell Street, was discouraged with middle school education in the district namely at Nettle.

Ms. Meghann Holcomb, 52 Crowell Street, alerted the Mayor that the handicapped entrance was locked and this was a public meeting. She spoke against the negative middle school experience but positive learning environment at Haverhill High.

#### **School Committee Comments on FY20 Budget.**

Attorney Magliocchetti commented that Haverhill's wages needed to be elevated in order to attract businesses and secure higher paying jobs for our community.

Mr. Wood would support the budget but was opposed to the Right Sizing Model and some other areas of the budget.

Attorney Rosa related that many people chose not to move to Haverhill because of the schools and the per pupil expenditures.

Mayor Fiorentini supported the FY20 budget. He stated that Gateway Communities needed more resources to address its needs. The Mayor noted the funding formula needs to change in order to narrow the education/achievement gap.

#### **Public Hearing on FY20 concluded.**

#### **Interview of Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations' Finalists.**

**Mr. Ian Gosselin**, current School Business Administrator in Methuen, MA was interviewed by the Committee.

Mr. Gosselin gave an Opening Statement.

Ms. Sullivan asked about the Methuen Public Schools' deficit and the tools for predicting end of year balances.

Mr. Gosselin distributed copies of memoranda regarding his notification to the superintendent that a deficit would occur. He recommended utilizing Budget Sense to encumber of all positions.

Mr. Amirian asked for his main reason for applying and why Haverhill.

Mr. Gosselin answered his goal was to be a Superintendent and it is close to his home. Additionally, he would only apply to urban, blue-collar, diverse districts.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello inquired about Mr. Gosselin's experience with MSBA/renovation projects and accelerated repair projects/applications.

Mr. Gosselin replied he had no experience in this area.

Attorney Magliocchetti's question was regarding the Methuen deficit and the reasons for this fiscal shortfall.

Mr. Gosselin stated positions were created without his knowledge with none of the positions tied to funding source.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for an example of creative efficiencies/improvements.

Mr. Gosselin offered the use energy credits i.e., solar credit surplus from North Adams in which his district saved \$67,000 in electricity costs. He also explained that there was an elimination of a lot of paper with the implementation of an electronic UPB submitted through the employee's google account.

Attorney Magliocchetti inquired about familiarity with Budget Sense.

Mr. Gosselin answered five years and that he was very comfortable and felt Haverhill could use Budget Sense in a more versatile and efficient manner.

Attorney Magliocchetti's next question concerned how city charges were handled in Methuen.

Mr. Gosselin replied a written agreement with City {chargeback agreement} had been implemented. He noted that the \$16m chargebacks largest portion was \$13m for insurance costs, along with monies for the SRO, 30% DPW {who maintain our vehicles} and administrative expenses of offices city department. Mr. Gosselin additionally commented that there was a Medicaid agreement instituted with the new Mayor in which the City agreed to scale a percentage of the Medicaid funds back to the schools starting with a return of 25%, 50%, 75% then 100% to the school district's budget.

Attorney Rosa asked the budget size of Methuen, budget safeguards for special education and utilization of Circuit Breaker.

Mr. Gosselin stated the budget was \$80.9m (7100 students); special education was allowed to over-run through Business Office and that circuit breaker funds would be transferred to the expense and no bills would be paid until money was received.

Attorney Rosa noted that Mr. Gosselin has also been a School Committee member.

Mr. Gosselin related that his background in education (teacher and principal) provided a unique perspective for an Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; he had not forgotten what it is like to be in classroom and noted that an old building was not a dirty building. His plan would be to take a good look at all schools.

Mr. Wood suggested that Mr. Gosselin brought a unique mindset along with a good reputation to Haverhill but the position had many challenges.

Mr. Gosselin indicated that the Superintendent's Vision for Haverhill would be the basis for any budget document.

Mayor Fiorentini asked for Mr. Gosselin's part/role in the Methuen budget deficit.

Mr. Gosselin provided the following response that the Superintendent was given a budget number by Mayor and did not propose a budget within those parameters. He stated it was a lean budget and initially thought special education would cause the deficit. Although he in both verbal and written form indicated to the Superintendent his concern over the budget, the superintendent mentioned there was a plan to solve the budget deficit. Mr. Gosselin advocated for building up circuit breaker funds.

**Mr. Gosselin's Interview ends.**

A 5-minute Recess was held from 8:45 pm – 8:50 pm.

**Mr. Michael Pfifferling**, currently School Business Manager for Wakefield Public Schools was interviewed by the Committee.

Mr. Pfifferling gave an Opening Statement which included being a Haverhill native attending Crowell, Nettle, and being a graduate of HHS (Class of 1989). He related that Wakefield Public Schools was his only public-school experience having spent 20 years in the private sector (copier company) before transitioning to being a School Business Administrator.

Mr. Wood asked about his approach to budget preparation.

Mr. Pfifferling replied the budget is an investment in curriculum and it should provide equity but not necessarily be equitable since some schools/areas needed more of an investment based on need.

Mr. Wood inquired about his career goal.

Mr. Pfifferling was prepared to step in for the Superintendent but do not want the job. He believed it was a thankless position.

Mr. Wood asked about his experience with a grant writer.

Mr. Pfifferling replied that a grant writer had been hired and he draws down the money.

Mr. Wood inquired about the process for expending monies in the event of a surplus.

Mr. Pfifferling noted a couple of strategies which would include working with the town and finance subcommittee. He noted that some of surplus could go towards one time purchases, pre-buying curriculum, stocking classroom libraries and pre-paying tuitions.

Attorney Rosa inquired about the size of Wakefield's district/budget and how many individuals were supervised by him.

Mr. Pfifferling replied 3550 students and a \$40M budget along with ten direct reports including Food Service, Transportation and the Business Office staff.

Attorney Rosa queried about Mr. Pfifferling's career prior to Wakefield.

Mr. Pfifferling related that worked for a copier company and during his tenure worked with school business managers. He decided to pursue becoming a school business manager and had a MASBO mentor.

Attorney Rosa asked for background on the Reading Post Academy.

Mr. Pfifferling commented that program was offered for sped students (18 year olds plus) who had been placed out of district at a cost of \$750,000. He stated a renovated old library provided a

location to teach students' life with the assistance of job coaches who facilitated this unique program.

Attorney Rosa asked about Mr. Pfifferling about his redesign of transportation.

Mr. Pfifferling indicated that there had been Wakefield to Wakefield (in-town transportation) and he stated to make it more efficient the district leased 3 transit vans which made it budget neutral and resulted in less overcrowding.

Attorney Magliocchetti acknowledged his association with Mr. Pfifferling's sister and mother. He was pleased that Mr. Pfifferling had noted the distinction between equality and equity and asked for examples of efficiencies in Wakefield.

Mr. Pfifferling implemented savings with the copier vendor/lease \$20,000 per year for a total of \$60,000 over three years. He indicated that by utilizing a card to swipe at any copier was the way to obtain copying jobs.

Attorney Magliocchetti noted Wakefield was smaller with only 7 school buildings and that Haverhill because of its size had a more complex transportation system.

Mr. Pfifferling agreed but stated that Wakefield (through a software program) owned the bus routes and took control back from the transportation vendor.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked about his knowledge of Budget Sense.

Mr. Pfifferling commented that Munis & Budget Sense were systems that he had used and was knowledgeable enough to have a global understanding and ability to run reports.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello asked about building experience including submitting MSBA SOI and Accelerated Repair Program.

Mr. Pfifferling elaborated that a slab issue on new building had become an issue and was a member of the team effort to resolve the situation. He stressed communication, transparency, collaboration as keys to a successful project and noted his familiarity with the financial piece of the MSBA projects.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello inquired about his relationship with the School Committee.

Mr. Pfifferling commented that the style of management was not to air differences in public.

Mr. Amirian asked about his greatest strength.

Mr. Pfifferling offered respect and care as strengths and weaknesses as losing filter and becoming emotional.

Mr. Amirian inquired about a five-year plan for Haverhill.

Mr. Pfifferling stated that the MASBO report would be used as a road map, listen to stakeholders, instruction drives the budget, build the budget on the Superintendent's vision. He thought of himself as "one of the Superintendent's soldiers". Mr. Pfifferling offered that he only applied in Haverhill and was "not a jumper".

Mr. Amirian asked what would be the greatest challenge in Haverhill.

Mr. Pfifferling replied getting competitive salaries for our people.

Ms. Sullivan asked what was his proudest accomplishment in Wakefield.

Mr. Pfifferling answered the relationships built in Wakefield and treating people well.

Mayor Fiorentini inquired about special education and how to predict costs.

Mr. Pfifferling indicated Wakefield had a Sped Stabilization account and he compared special education to snow and ice.

Mayor Fiorentini asked about how the budget document was prepared.

Mr. Pfifferling offered that the budget is the financial document that illustrates the Superintendent's vision.

**Mr. Pfifferling's Interview concluded.**

At this time, the Mayor left the meeting to attend a city budget meeting.

Mr. Amirian assumes chairing the meeting.

**Superintendent's Comments/Reports.**

Dr. Marotta announced the following administrative changes:

- ▶ Dianne Connolly, Pentucket Lake Principal will assume a district-level position as the Director of MTSS (Multi-Tiered Support Systems)
- ▶ Maureen Gray will become the Pentucket Lake Principal
- ▶ Toni Donais will be an Administrator at Walnut Square
- ▶ Meg Fitzgerald, Tilton Assistant Principal will be moving to Tilton Upper
- ▶ Shaun Bateman, who is currently the Assistant Principal at Bradford Elementary will be moving to Tilton

**Substitute Teacher Compensation.**

Mr. Amirian asked the Superintendent about the Substitute Teacher Compensation.

Dr. Marotta related that certified substitutes teachers going \$100-\$125 would cost approximately \$24,000. The Superintendent reported \$95,000 was spent on long-term substitutes/substitutes for FY19. She noted that the cost of long-term subs was \$19,000 this past year.

Ms. Sullivan commented that the increase in compensation for certified substitute teachers was doable.

A motion was made to increase the certified substitute teacher pay rate to \$125 per day. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion.

Mr. Wood was not opposed to the motion but questioned the funding source for this item.

Dr. Marotta was asked to determine the cost of the rate change.

Ms. Sullivan offered the following suggestion that the salary adjustments account could be a source of funds since it was highly probable that newly hired teachers replacing retirees would be paid less in salary.

An amended motion was proposed by Attorney Magliocchetti to use \$24,000 from the salaries account to pay for the increase in the certified substitute teacher pay rate. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

Attorney Rosa	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	No	Mr. Amirian	Yes

5 members voted in the affirmative

Main Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

5 members voted in the affirmative

Amended Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

### **School Committee Communications.**

Ms. Sullivan: School Committee Meeting Schedule for July and August.

Ms. Sullivan indicated the summer schedule of meeting usually only included one meeting per month and this calendar had two meetings in August.

Mr. Wood offered that August had five Thursdays and it would be a substantial time between meetings that may have been the reason for two meetings in August.

Ms. Sullivan commented that she will be available to attend the scheduled meetings.

Mr. Amirian offered that as the summer months progressed the committee could determine if a second meeting is necessary in August.

### **New Business.**

Mr. Amirian read the following warrants [Warrants 061319 with Detail.pdf](#) recommended for approval by the Superintendent as indicated in the agenda material:

- 1) Warrant Number EV20190614 totaling \$417,311.24
- 2) Warrant Number EV20190614A totaling \$197,207.19
- 3) Warrant Number EV20190614B totaling \$398,073.48
- 4) Warrant Number EV20190614C totaling \$412,144.49
- 5) Warrant Number JE20190614 totaling \$4,816.02

Attorney Magliocchetti requested to remove Agenda Item 6A #2 be removed.

Mr. Wood requested to remove Agenda Item 6A #5 be removed.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrants 6A #1, #3 and #4 as indicated in the agenda material. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant 6A #2 as indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

4 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

2 members abstained

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrant 6A #5 as indicated in the agenda material. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

5 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

### **Items by Consensus.**

Vice Chair Amirian introduced the following Items by Consensus [School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes 05.23.19.docx](#); [School Committee Budget Working Session Minutes 052919.docx](#) and [UOF 06.13.19 Final & Approved.pdf](#) as recommended by the Superintendent and as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the Items by Consensus. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to go into executive session (10:02 pm) to discuss teacher negotiations, non-unit negotiations including but not limited to special education-related staff and non-unit administrative staff, and the Silver Hill Principal Contract. The committee may reconvene in open session to confirm any actions taken in the executive session. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

The vice chair called for a vote of the members:

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained