



School Committee Finance Subcommittee Remote Meeting of April 1, 2020

The following statement is included in the record: due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Baker issued an Emergency Order temporarily suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20. Public bodies otherwise governed by the OML are temporarily relieved from the requirement that meetings be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public, so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means."

Attorney Magliocchetti, Chair called the remote subcommittee meeting to order at 2:02 pm. Also present were Mr. Scott Wood, member, Ms. Gail Sullivan, member, Attorney Richard Rosa, School Committee Vice Chair, Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent and Attorney William Cox, Legal Counsel.

Agenda

- 1) Call to Order by Attorney Magliocchetti, Chairperson.
- 2) Update on District Student Opportunity Act Community Forum (3.16.20) by Subcommittee, Dr. Marotta and Mr. Pfifferling.
- 3) Student Opportunity Act Plan Submission (due to DESE by 04.01.20).
- 4) John Greenleaf Whittier SOI.
- 5) Next Meeting: TBD.

Student Opportunity Act.

Mr. Pfifferling reported in a recent email from the Commissioner it was stated that the Student Opportunity Act legislation has not been enacted and there was concern about districts not submitting on time and missing out on the money.

Discussion Points.

- Attorney Magliocchetti related that no funding had been allocated.
- Ms. Sullivan inquired if there was a drawback to submitting on time.
- Attorney Magliocchetti requested that the SOA final version be emailed. He added that it was explained to him that it could be amended if necessary after submission.
- Mr. Wood stated a full vote of school committee was required to submit the SOA.
- Ms. Sullivan agreed with Mr. Wood's opinion.
- Dr. Marotta recommended consideration of delaying submission until legislature approved funding.
- Attorney Magliocchetti responded there was no problem voting in public session and submitting the application, however, based on the email it appeared the money might be there anyway since the virus impact is financially disastrous.

John Greenleaf Whittier Statement of Interest.

Mr. Pfifferling related that an SOI submission for the school prepared for the future and also indicated to MSBA that Haverhill needed a new middle school.

Attorney Magliocchetti suggested following a similar process as with the Consentino School.

Mr. Pfifferling reported that the deadline was now May 6, 2020 and it would need to be voted by that date.

Attorney Magliocchetti recommended supporting the project. He stated that the debt exclusion question could be postponed until the project gets approval. Attorney Magliocchetti requested an examination of the district's middle schools and how each building would be utilized according to Superintendent Marotta's Vision.

Dr. Marotta suggested the possibility of using Nettle as an Early Childhood Site

Ms. Sullivan recommended a detailed plan.

Attorney Magliocchetti said there could be savings and that the plan should consider closing older schools like Walnut Square and Crowell. Mr. Wood was opposed to this option and would also not support closing Crowell School.

Dr. Marotta noted that Moody School was over capacity and providing baseline services. She related a need for an alternative site, possibly building another large school with a K-12 capacity.

Attorney Magliocchetti commented that tough financial times are imminent.

Mr. Wood reported that the Mayor had to sign off on the application and that was potentially a road block.

Mr. Wood recommended putting it on the agenda and agreed with the predictions of a recession.

Mr. Pfifferling indicated the item would be on the next School Committee agenda (4.9.20).

Mr. Wood & Attorney Magliocchetti acknowledged the likelihood that the Mayor will probably submit a 1/12 budget for FY21.

Dr. Marotta commented that a budget number was needed for the budget.

Attorney Magliocchetti suggested using this year's budget number for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Wood agreed with Attorney Magliocchetti's assumption.

Mr. Pfifferling stated a budget proposal would be developed.

Dr. Marotta commented that the City must meet net school spending. Mr. Pfifferling responded that the City's net school funding level was 108%.

Mr. Wood questioned the possibility of receiving the full \$6.9m.

Mr. Pfifferling commented there would be \$3.3m increase for next year's budget.

Mr. Wood asked about other districts budget development.

Mr. Pfifferling noted the previous work on a budget proposal submission. Dr. Marotta responded that in the past few weeks the focus has been on remote learning.

Mr. Pfifferling commented that town budgets are finished and cities' budgets are on hold.

Mr. Wood reported that WRVTHS budget passed and that Haverhill funded approximately 70%+ of total budget.

Dr. Marotta indicated that the Mayor was talking about layoffs, her primary concern was the welfare of students when they returned to classes.

Mr. Wood commented on the chaos that had resulted from the pandemic.

Attorney Magliocchetti suggested developing a budget framework.

Dr. Marotta related a level service budget could be established.

Attorney Magliocchetti inquired on the impact on this year's budget. Dr. Marotta replied the budget impact was unclear and there was a possibility of savings.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked about maintenance workers and custodians taking advantage of this time to get work done in our schools.

Mr. Wood agreed that maintenance workers should be working throughout the shutdown and related precautions needed to be initiated to ensure the district's operation. Dr. Marotta asked for clarification on meaning of the "district's operations".

Mr. Wood responded implementing precautions in order for the workforce to return to work.

Ms. Sullivan agreed some employees should return to work.

Mr. Wood recommended the 6-foot rule along with sanitizing a certain amount each day. He noted that maintenance staff were essential.

Ms. Sullivan also recommended following safety guidelines and related some projects such as painting Hunking's interior could occur during this time.

Dr. Marotta said that a meeting would be set up to discuss a change in working conditions. She specified it would start the conversation and custodians will be back on Monday, April 6, 2020

Mr. Pfifferling concurred that custodians would return to work on call Monday, April 6, 2020 and it was all about setting expectations.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for a plan from Ms. Forgione at the next meeting and for details of work that was getting done.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to adjourn the Finance Subcommittee Remote Meeting (2:43 pm). Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.