



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee  
Remote Special Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2020**

**Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and requested a roll call of the members.

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

Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent were also Present. Attorney Michele Randazzo, Special Counsel for the City and School Department was also present remotely.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Fiorentini read the following Opening Statement: 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."

**Public Comment.**

Mayor Fiorentini asked if Ben Roy was present for public comment and Mr. Roy confirmed his presence. The Mayor stated his awareness of the reasons for Mr. Roy's attendance and asked Vice Chair Rosa to read portions of the Public Comment Policy.

Attorney Rosa referenced the following from the School Committee Policy: Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. He highlighted the following: "administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members."

Mayor Fiorentini recognized Attorney Michelle Randazzo, Special Counsel for the City and School Department. Attorney Randazzo spoke about the open meeting law and noted that no response or definitive action could be taken on comments.

Mayor Fiorentini strongly advised all speakers not to mention any employee by name.

The Mayor then acknowledged Ben Roy. Ben Roy indicated his understanding of the policy. Mr. Roy from Times Up Haverhill read a petition addressed to Principal Burns, Superintendent Marotta, and the Haverhill School Committee to fire Zachary Simmons. The Mayor called him out of order. Mr. Roy was muted and removed from the meeting for violating the Public Comment Policy.

The Mayor read a statement that all allegations are taken seriously and requested that if anyone had an allegation or claim to contact the School Department.

Dr. Marotta reported that all allegations were taken seriously. She related that outside counsel (Stoneman, Chandler and Miller) was assisting in this matter and during her tenure the past two years, there have not been any complaints. The Superintendent stated there was a zero-tolerance policy and the maintenance of a safe environment for our students was a priority. The Superintendent commented that there would be a review of previous administrations to ensure all allegations were handled correctly.

Mrs. Kathy Kaczor, 46 Crowell Street, Haverhill MA, indicated her disappointment with the device policy, especially the privacy portion specifically the recording and monitoring of students in their own homes.

Dr. Marotta commented that the policy did not strike her that way, but would re-read the policy to ensure it was understood in the same manner.

#### Student Advisory Council Report – Gabriela Vargas.

Ms. Vargas reminded students to stay healthy and start going to bed early, since remote learning will be starting in two weeks. She related that schedules would be sent out hopefully within the next week. Ms. Vargas concluded by asking everyone to stay positive and strong.

#### Reopening 2020 Updates – Dr. Marotta & Mr. Pfifferling along with Reopening School Committee Members.

Superintendent Marotta outlined the following information:

- The hybrid model, with details coming out next week for each school;
- 9/15, 9/16, 9/17 remote learning and Kindergarten screening days;
- Online K screening;
- 9/21-10/2 days are largely remote learning, starting with very small groups in the schools, slowly bringing in students, particularly getting students back on our schools with IEP's along with ELL students;
- And negotiations are ongoing with the teachers' union at this time.

Attorney Rosa requested the times that school starts for each school be confirmed and parents need to check their emails for this information. He advised calling the school, if you have not received an email yet.

In response to the Mayor's question on parent letters, Dr. Marotta replied the letters would be going out next week.

Mayor Fiorentini strongly encouraged the return of students to school, noting that it was too difficult for some parents with child care/work issues.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked several questions listed below which the Superintendent answered:

- Question: is there bussing for before and after school care? Answer: Dr. Marotta replied yes there will be bussing. Mr. Pfifferling clarified that typically busing is not provided before school but the district is working on providing this service.
- Question: who is teaching remotely and are they working all day? – Dr. Marotta replied yes, and a full day.
- Question: what protocol for nonunion members who work remotely? Dr. Marotta indicated it was on Corona Virus First Act. She stated that there are on-going negotiations with teachers. She noted that teachers have received the documents and they are available on the web site, additionally staff may call Human Resources.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais noted that the Merrimack Valley was now a hot spot and Massachusetts is in the yellow.

Mayor Fiorentini stated that Haverhill was not a hot spot. He strongly advised taking this seriously and commented that the spread of COVID was due to lack of adherence to the guidelines.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello asked for clarification on the October 5<sup>th</sup> start date. Dr. Marotta reiterated that remote learning would be held from 9/16 until 10/2 will the easing small groups into the schools along with reacclimating students to the classroom. She announced full hybrid learning would begin on 10/5, and letters to parents would be sent out next week.

Ms. Sullivan asked for an explanation of the plan in the case of increased cases. Dr. Marotta replied that a team of medical advisors are working together to set up a series of protocols, reviewing all factors and watching the numbers very carefully every day.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais advised no staff be admitted to buildings without a ventilation certification.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling provided a detailed summary of the facilities work that was ongoing in the districts' schools to ensure a safe environment in terms of air quality. Dr. Marotta related that equipment such as air scrubbers were purchased for rooms without uninvents, this will assure that the air quality meets Astra certification and in other rooms that cannot be certified, they will be closed off and unoccupied. Mr. Pfifferling related that outside contractors such as Cox Maroney and Leftfield had been hired to provide maintenance support to our schools.

Both Attorney Rosa and Mrs. Sapienza Donais were concerned with the lack of repairs and preventative maintenance in our schools.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling offered that a number of factors contributed to the delay in repairs along with preventative maintenance. He noted the following:

- The quarantine from mid-March to Mid-May and adherence to the Department of Labor's guidance on maintenance;
- Lack of the proper compliment of maintenance staff;
- Neglecting preventative maintenance for two decades.

Mayor Fiorentini advised starting with a review of the Matrix Report and scheduling a special meeting to discuss this issue.

#### Subcommittee Reports.

Dr. Marotta noted a meeting had been held with the custodial staff regarding the impact of extra work due to COVID. Both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent recommended the hiring of ten (10) additional custodians.

Mr. Wood noted that after speaking with both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent on custodial staffing levels 10 appointments is a good compromise for a one-year period or until Governor Baker lifts the emergency order, then the staffing levels will be re-evaluated at that time. He related that Chapter 70 funds would be utilized for these positions.

Attorney Magliocchetti offered that custodians are the first line of defense and they need to do a great job every day. He continued that adequate supplies and systems are required in order to properly accomplish all their work assignments.

Mayor Fiorentini was concerned with the additional personnel and that the positions became permanent since it was difficult to lay off personnel. them, they will be permanent.

Dr. Marotta related conversations had been held with the custodial unit and it was the group was against outsourcing work. She supported these custodial positions especially during the pandemic.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the appointment of ten (10) additional custodians for one (1) year or until the Governor lifts the order with the positions being funded from Chapter 70. Mr. Wood seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Attorney Magliocchetti was concerned with the educational needs of students on IEP's. Dr. Marotta replied that the students would be attending school four (4) days a week.

#### Old Business.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling recommended approval of the surplus items as listed [Surplus Recommendation 08.27.20.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the surplus recommendation. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Attorney Rosa recommended allowing Solo Aquatics to rent the Haverhill High School Pool [SOLO RTO-COVID-HHS.pdf](#). He related that swimming is a low risk sport, the locker rooms will not be used and, Solo Aquatics will clean the bathrooms, 2 coaches will be present, waivers will be signed by all parents and protocols will be followed.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for Dr. Maddox's opinion regarding pool usage. Attorney Rosa indicated that chlorine stops the spread of COVID and additionally, the Haverhill Health Department has the right to shut down the pool at any time.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the use of the Haverhill High School Pool by Solo Aquatics. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

New Business.

Recommendation to approve Warrant (s): Warrant Number EV20200911 totaling \$364,624 SC Special Meeting 09.03.20 Warrant.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant (s): Warrant Number EV20200911 totaling \$364,624. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	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 (8:31 pm). Ms. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Yes		

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained