



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
Remote Special Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2020**

Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:37 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.

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."

Sports and other Activities during Remote Learning – Attorney Rosa.

Attorney Rosa began by stating that the vote taken at the last meeting had basically resulted in the elimination of the Winter Sports Season. He introduced Mr. Thomas O'Brien, Director of Athletics to provide more detailed information on sports during COVID.

Mr. O'Brien thanked the Committee for its willingness to reconsider its sports decision. He offered a comprehensive report on the status of athletics during a pandemic [Thomas O'Brien Sports Information 12.15.20.pdf](#)

In response to Attorney Magliocchetti's question on the latest date for implementation of a game schedule, Mr. O'Brien answered January 4, 2021.

Attorney Magliocchetti explained that in consultation with Ms. Sullivan, a proposed contract had been developed and circulated among the members. He emphasized the need for zero tolerance and memorializing the expectations. Attorney Magliocchetti related it was a very difficult decision and supported a January 4th start date. He requested Dr. Maddox provide input.

Superintendent Marotta commented that testing was available and results were received within two (2) days.

Attorney Magliocchetti questioned when a team would be shut down. Both Mr. O'Brien and Dr. Marotta responded a shutdown would occur once a student athlete had tested positive.

Mrs. Sapienza thanked Mr. O'Brien for his report and supported the signing of a contract. She was concerned with students congregating in groups, without proper protocols and supervision.

It was noted that Dr. Maddox, School Physician had joined the meeting, but was having technical difficulties.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello had hoped that this information had been available prior to last meeting's vote.

Ms. Sullivan, a member of the Joint COVID Taskforce noted that information was now available and expressed concern with the lack and delay in testing. Dr. Maddox responded that the testing issues had been resolved.

Mr. Wood asked if Dr. Maddox was aware of the North Andover Youth Hockey COVID situation and if there was anything that could be learned from this case. He reiterated support for students being in school and involved in activities. Mr. Maddox emphasized the importance of supervised activities in preventing the spread of the virus.

Mayor Fiorentini recommended acting on low-risk sports, but had a problem with high-risk sports such as hockey and basketball. The Mayor wanted students in the classroom and could not support the reintroduction of sports activities. He presented information on the surge of COVID cases in the community, especially among younger people. Ms. Mary Connelly, Community Health Nurse reported on several youth hockey teams being quarantined after positive cases. Mayor Fiorentini proposed looking at low-risk sports and delaying high-risk sports until January.

Ms. Gabriela, Vargas, Student Council President asked about the punishment for violating social distancing protocols amount student athletes.

Mr. O'Brien responded in-season behaviors could be addressed, however, outside of school and the season behaviors were difficult.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello felt athletics helped address mental health issues, i.e., depression among our students. She asked the Superintendent to outline the Cohort C designation.

Superintendent Marotta outlined who Cohort C students were: substantially separate special needs with intensive needs, level I and 2 ELL, foster care, homeless and teachers' children. She related that there were children with a wide range of needs.

Attorney Rosa stressed that the high-risk sports MIAA modifications for hockey and basketball had lessen the risks of playing each sport. Mr. O'Brien added that some sports could not be implemented with modifications to ensure safety.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to reconsider the vote. 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

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve low-risk sports, with a contract signed by parents and students, strict compliance with rules and regulations and a one-strike policy. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Attorney Magliocchetti highlighted the low-risk sports as swimming, skiing and gymnastics. He also stated that the sports could begin immediately. 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
 0 members voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

Attorney Magliocchetti made a motion to approve the high-risk sports (hockey and basketball), with a contract signed by parents and students, strict compliance with rules and regulations and a one-strike policy and remote conditioning will continue until the sports season practices begin on January 4, 2021. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Brien reported that remote conditioning was ongoing with student athletes. Mr. Wood was convinced that proper protocols would be followed by the coaches and athletes. Mrs. Sapienza Donais' preference was for sports to start immediately and accept a friendly amendment. Attorney Magliocchetti was not comfortable with this modification. Mayor Fiorentini noted it was not a friendly amendment. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello would not support the motion since sports should begin immediately.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to amend the motion. Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	No
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	No
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	No		

4 members voted in the affirmative
 3 members voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the high-risk sports (hockey and basketball), with a contract signed by parents and students, strict compliance with rules and regulations and a one-strike policy the sports season practices will begin as soon as Mr. O'Brien determines it is feasible. Mrs. Sapienza Donais 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	No		

6 members voted in the affirmative
 1 member voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

Attorney Rosa acknowledged High School Principal Glenn Burns to address the other activities that had been postponed as a result of last week's vote. Mr. Burns reiterated the activities that were involved such as, JROTC, clubs, activities, health care assisting, MCAS tutoring and Saturday School. He emphasized that proper social

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

Holiday greetings were exchanged by the members.