



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee Hybrid  
Regular Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2021**

**Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mr. Wood, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and requested a roll call of the members:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Present in person	Attorney Rosa	Present in person
Ms. Sullivan	Present in person	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Present in person
Attorney Magliocchetti	Present in person	Mr. Wood, Vice Chair	Present in person
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Present in person @ 7:19 pm		

Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent were present in person.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Wood, Vice Chair read an act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency was signed by Governor Baker and allows for remote meetings and hearings by public bodies through April 1, 2022. This meeting will be available via live streaming over HCTV and WHAV. The full meeting recording will be posted on the HCTV website.

**Communications/Reports.**

**Public Comment (In-person).**

Mr. Adam Rodis, 1 Brandon Road, Haverhill, MA 01832, spoke about mask mandates and referenced materials that were emailed to the School Committee last week. He advocated for parental rights and that the mask mandate was not a law. Mr. Rodis asked for reconsideration of the mask mandate and advised that vaccinations also not be a mandatory requirement.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello noted that the mask mandate would be revisited at the September 23, 2021, meeting.

**Student Advisory Council Report ~ Hailey Prunier.**

Ms. Prunier provided the following remarks:

- Completion of Student Profile Sheets;
- Meet the Faculty Night;
- New Associate Principal Dr. Farese and College and Career Counselor in the Guidance Department;
- Encouraged getting involved in extracurricular activities;
- Preparation for plans after college;
- Wishes for a great school year.

**Superintendent Comments/Reports.**

Superintendent Marotta provided an **Opening of Schools Update with the COVID Update:**

- the updated enrollment number of 7,913, last year's number was 7,771;
- 519 Kindergarten numbers, which is a typical number for the district;
- ongoing registrations for school at the Registration Center;
- difficult time for students with adjusting to the school environment;

- extended a thank you to the School Committee for the allocation of school adjustment counselors and interventionists;
- thank you to parents and teachers;
- great start to the school year;
- rocky start with transportation;
- COVID numbers include 6 positive staff and 34 positive students;
- Quarantining and test/stay for close contacts;
- Increase in student cases;
- Actively socially distancing, masks, hand washing and hand sanitizing;
- Pool testing will start next week with permission forms being sent out to parents;
- Positive cases have no symptoms;
- Thankful to DESE for the the employees and the funding that is required for pool testing;
- Moody on Main opened today and was a success with the addition of six (6) classes;
- No parking at school and Good Shepherd Church has allowed the district to lease spaces and therefore, a recommendation is being presented to solve the staff parking issue.

Lease of the parking lot at Good Shepherd Church (Moody Preschool).

Mr. Pfifferling recommended approval of the lease. This item was delayed in order to provide copies to the School Committee.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked about the vaccination rate for staff members. Dr. Marotta replied that last year the rate was 80% but with new staff being hired. there are no current verified numbers at this time.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked about supply lists. Dr. Marotta replied that the district should provide the supplies and would provide an advisory to the schools.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello commented that the supply list distributed was a short one. She applauded the teachers and parents' work during COVID.

Attorney Rosa inquired about enrollment numbers and if they were equal to 2019. Dr. Marotta replied it was her belief that the numbers would return to the October 2019 level and this impacted funding.

In response to Mrs. Sapienza Donais' question on supplies, the Superintendent noted that the budget included funding for supplies.

Vice Chair Wood announced that the Committee had received the lease and asked for a motion.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the Commercial Parking Lease with Good Shepherd United Methodist Church in Haverhill. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Attorney Rosa inquired if the language recommended by Attorney Cox were included in the lease document.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling answered that it was not included in the lease agreement. He noted that the recommendation was to include the Church and City as additional insured in the snow removal contract.

Attorney Magliocchetti accepted this language as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Wood requested a roll call vote:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

0 members absent

### School Committee Reports/Communications.

#### **Ms. Sullivan: Micro Academy.**

Ms. Sullivan asked Dr. Marotta to provide additional information on this academy, which was a grant opportunity for districts interested in diversifying staffing that reflects the student population.

Dr. Marotta provided the subsequent features on the grant:

- Last spring DESE released a grant opportunity for staffing diversity;
- Development of the best plan in order to receive a \$35,000 grant;
- The district collaborated with Lynch Leadership Academy (LLA) to develop a micro academy for diverse leaders in the school;
- Partnering with LLA to select five (5) burgeoning leaders along with PD for those staff members as well as mentor sessions;
- Great idea to diversify our staffing to reflect our student population in order to reflect our community;
- Encourage persons of color and diverse backgrounds to become leaders;
- Broader array of individuals.

#### **Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello: Principal Timothy Betty Summer Home Visits.**

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello introduced Whittier Principal Tim Betty. Mr. Betty provided a summary of the 48 home visits that took place this summer (57 students) and opportunity to meet parents in an informal setting. He associated the subsequent success of the recent Open House with the home visits. He acknowledged the participation of teachers and other staff in the summer visits.

Dr. Marotta reported that other principals have done home visits.

In reference to the weekly attendance contest, Superintendent Marotta commented that there was a balance between good attendance and students who should remain out of school due to illness.

Mayor Fiorentini asked about the attendance rates.

Dr. Marotta noted that attendance rates were high throughout the district.

Principal Betty commented that attendance is good and specifically noted the improvement of the attendance rate for a chronically absent student who he played basketball this summer.

Attorney Magliocchetti emphasized the collaboration between the school and home.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais was proud of Mr. Betty's success.

Subcommittee Reports ~ None.

Old Business.

Request from Attorney Magliocchetti for an Update on AC at Tilton and Golden Hill, Silver Hill, Pentucket Lake and Bradford Elementary Schools (Director of Facilities Stephen Dorrance will provide a report).

Attorney Magliocchetti referenced the air conditioning project that had been authorized for those schools and recognized Mr. Dorrance.

Mr. Dorrance indicated that at the June 10, 2021, meeting the following statements were made:

- Working with consultants;
- Engineered solution (best path);
- Big challenge as a result of the schools' configuration and existing conditions;
- Recommended a movement towards splits.

He reported on issues with the split solution especially the added noise to the classroom and was therefore not currently a recommendation. He offered there were five (5) possible solutions. Mr. Dorrance acknowledged Mr. Jay Faxon's attendance who was a local contractor present for any technical questions. He stated the short-term solution was window air conditioners for the third floor of the school buildings and acknowledged hesitancy of pursuing this option for many reasons.

Attorney Magliocchetti inquired about the costs associated with this solution. He pointed out the permanent solution was the redoing air conditioning systems in the schools which was extremely expensive to implement since it would require bonding. Attorney Magliocchetti stated a solution needed to be found to address the matter.

Mr. Dorrance noted that this solution would involve weekend work at premium time since work needed to be done when school was not in session (completion within a couple of months).

Attorney Magliocchetti underscored the need for a temporary solution.

In response to the Attorney Magliocchetti's question on the amount of money budgeted for HVAC work, Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling answered \$200,000 for the mini-splits (elementary and Tilton School).

Dr. Marotta related that additional monies had been allocated for central HVAC for offices, gyms and the main hallways.

Attorney Magliocchetti inquired specifically about the total amount that needed to be budgeted for HVAC work in the district.

Superintendent Marotta believed another sum of money (\$800,000 had been approved for HVAC roof top units etc. Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling concurred with this clarification.

Mr. Dorrance indicated that some units had been salvaged as part of this work.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked specifically the amount that was remaining out of the \$800,000 allocation.

Mr. Pfifferling was not prepared to answer that question this evening.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to earmark \$200,000 for a maintenance reserve fund until a decision is made regarding window units. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood requested that the motion be withdrawn at this time to allow for further discussion.

Attorney Magliocchetti withdrew his motion.

Mayor Fiorentini recommended window units and not expending \$800,000. He also did not want the schools called "cookie cutter" schools.

Mr. Pfifferling noted that window units helped in some way during hot days.

Attorney Rosa clarified the original proposal (splits with wiring) was \$4,000 per unit including the installation at the four unique schools and Tilton.

Mr. Dorrance recommended purchasing commercially rated unit (\$2,500/unit). He was hesitant about specifying an amount since there could be a cost with rewiring to allow for installation. Mr. Dorrance specified that splits do not bring in fresh air and that was a significant consideration during these types.

Mr. Pfifferling noted the 1990's buildings were not designed for air conditioning in the classroom.

Mr. Dorrance suggested removal of existing uninvents with heating/cooling units, which would require cooling pipes.

Attorney Rosa asked about purchasing commercial units and the six (6) year life span and if that would be the time for replacement.

Mr. Dorrance concurred with the assumption that commercial units would double the life span. He related that the codes would be more aggressive in the next several years. Mr. Dorrance remarked that some of the equipment was nearing the end of its useful life.

Attorney Rosa asked if Mr. Dorrance was advising window solution for Tilton School. Mr. Dorrance responded no, suggested an alternative for these buildings.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais commented that the Consentino School teachers were pleased with their units and if this was a solution for the other schools.

Mr. Dorrance described the third-floor classrooms and the amount of volume in those locations. He referenced the extensive volume at those schools.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked about floor units. Mr. Dorrance replied that idea could be explored as a solution.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais commented that there were also second floor and at Silver Hill School cafeteria concerns.

Mr. Dorrance suggested low velocity larger ceiling fans and advised against blowing air over students' heads. He would investigate standing fans.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello asked about status of Hunking School's air conditioning and the difference between air conditioning and conditioned air.

Mr. Dorrance responded that there were no concerns at Hunking School. He noted that these were interchangeable terms.

Mr. Faxon offered that Hunking School had a displacement air system that was low velocity and all fresh air system. He provided a detailed description of the mechanisms of this efficient system. Mr. Faxon suggested that window units were the only solution for Tilton Lower School.

Mr. Dorrance provided some Tilton Lower School solutions.

Mr. Faxon noted the pitch roofs of the 1990's elementary schools and the significant amount of air changes in these buildings. He offered that window units might be the answer.

Vice Chair Wood did not advise spending significant funds on air conditioning.

Mayor Fiorentini recommended installation of window units at Tilton School.

Attorney Magliocchetti questioned the available funds (out of \$800,000).

Mr. Pfifferling responded that there were two projects: 1) to install air conditioning (\$200,000) and 2) to fix air-conditioned interior spaces (\$800,000).

Dr. Marotta stated that the available funds would be provided at the next meeting. She asked if the district should move forward with the plan for installation of window units at Tilton Lower School.

Attorney Magliocchetti proposed the maintenance reserve fund is in case other issues arise over the winter. He recommended revisiting this issue in the spring.

Mr. Dorrance recommended starting the incremental work such as wiring during school breaks.

Attorney Magliocchetti described the rationale for the maintenance reserve account.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to earmark \$200,000 for a maintenance reserve fund until a decision is made regarding funding. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. Vice Chair Wood requested a roll call vote.

Mayor Fiorentini asked if there were monies available for installation of window units.

Mr. Dorrance responded that the costs were not clear and suggested returning to the Committee with costs.

Mayor Fiorentini made a motion to table the matter. There was no second and the motion died as a result.

Mr. Wood repeated the motion to earmark \$200,000 for a maintenance reserve fund until a decision is made regarding funding. The Vice Chair noted that no work would begin on any projects.

Attorney Magliocchetti confirmed that there was a determination of the funding.

Mr. Dorrance reiterated that bidding could not proceed without available funds. He related prices would be sought from reliable sources.

Attorney Rosa advised setting aside the funds.

Ms. Sullivan recounted the long and confusing discussion. She offered that the \$200,000 was allocated for the splits and then there was decision not to pursue this option. Ms. Sullivan agreed that no action should be taken unless there is a plan and advised strongly against purchasing window units in September and was in favor of the motion. She recommended staying on message.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked for clarification on the \$200,000.

Attorney Magliocchetti related that the funds had been assigned for a specific purpose and that option was no longer a viable solution. He noted any actions would need to be brought to the Committee for action.

Vice Chair Wood asked Mr. Dorrance for the future actions.

Mr. Dorrance stated that the installation of window units where possible in the schools.

Vice Chair Wood noted that there needed to be a subsequent motion to direct the Director of Facilities regarding upcoming actions.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

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

3 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion fails

4 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mayor Fiorentini to table this matter to the next meeting. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

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

5 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes

2 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Mr. Wood clarified that the vote gave not direction to the Director of Facilities and tabled the air conditioning matter (including funding) to the next meeting.

Vice Chair Wood advised the Superintendent to not pursue any actions on air conditioning.

Mayor Fiorentini made a motion to reconsider the vote on tabling.

Vice Chair Wood clarified reconsideration.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote on reconsideration:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Ms. Sullivan	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood, Vice Chair	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 Mayor Fiorentini to request the School Department to return at the next meeting with estimates (costs) along with a plan for window units starting at Tilton School.

Attorney Magliocchetti made a friendly amendment to specify the air conditioning units for the third floor at the four unique schools and Tilton School. Mayor Fiorentini accepted the friendly amendment.

Attorney Rosa asked about quotes including the second floor.

Mr. Dorrance replied that quotes could be obtained for both the second and third floors.

Attorney Rosa asked for a friendly amendment to include the second floor. Both Mayor Fiorentini and Attorney Magliocchetti accepted the friendly amendment.

A motion was made by Mayor Fiorentini to request the School Department to return at the next meeting with estimates (costs) along with a plan for window units (third floor) at the four unique schools and Tilton School.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote on reconsideration:



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

7 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Transportation Update requested by Attorney Magliocchetti.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for an update.

Mr. Pfifferling noted the struggles with transportation at all levels.

He thanked:

- HPS bus drivers, monitors, crossing guards;
- NRT bus drivers;
- WRVTHS Superintendent Maureen Lynch, WRVTHS Business Manager Kara Kosmes and WRVTHS Transportation Coordinator Jessica Chadwick;
- the district's transportation department Jeanne, Matt and Lorraine;
- NRT staff in Haverhill Office: Jimmy, Sue and Jarod and in Methuen (Special Education) Office: Christine and Holly;
- HPS staff, parents and students for patience and understanding

Mr. Pfifferling noted that the Registry was assisting with getting drivers licensed however, Haverhill has not received any new drivers. He related that there 760 change requests since the beginning of school which resulted in rerouting and printing of new bus passes. He reported that a few busses were over capacity at Haverhill High School and Whitter Middle School (double loops) due to driver absences and resulted in delays at middle and elementary schools.

The Assistant Superintendent reported on other transportation services such as: two prekindergarten locations Moody on Main and Moody on the River (full and half day programs, private schools (Sacred Hearts & Hillview Montessori), homeless transportation (in-district and out of district), loop program for middle school students to the high school, early college program at NECC, Gateway Program at Crowell School, YMCA, YWCA and Boys/Girls Club daycare centers (before and after school) Discovery Club, HHS late busses (five days a week) and athletic programs/practices. In conclusion, Mr. Pfifferling related the many challenges at the beginning of the school year and the constant communication with NRT.

Attorney Magliocchetti referenced with the bus driver shortage. He noted that the transportation subcommittee would be beginning weekly meetings to prepare for the challenges and the upcoming bid cycle for the transportation contract.

New Business.

A motion was made by Mayor Fiorentini to approve Warrant Number EV20210910 & EV20210910B totaling \$889,109.98 [DETAIL WARRANT EV20210910 AND EV20210910B.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Ms. Sullivan	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood, Vice Chair	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 Mayor Fiorentini to approve the Superintendent's Recommendation to declare the enclosed items surplus and disposed of in accordance with city ordinances [Surplus 09.09.21.pdf](#). Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

#### Items by Consensus.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2021, Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2020 and the Remote Special Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2020 and Approval of Use of Facilities as indicated in the agenda material. Mayor Fiorentini seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Ms. Sullivan	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood, Vice Chair	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 go into executive session (9:11 pm) to conduct a Level III Grievance hearing from members of the SEIU Custodial Unit. The committee will not return to open session. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Wood called for a roll call vote:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained