



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
Hybrid Public Hearing on FY23 Budget & Hybrid
Regular Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2022**

Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm and requested a roll call of the members:

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

Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent of Schools were also in attendance at the meeting.

The mayor 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 July 15, 2022. This meeting will be available via live streaming over HCTV and WHAV. The full meeting recording will be posted on the HCTV website.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the attendees.

Public Comment.

Ruby Kimball, 35 Dudley Street, Haverhill, MA senior at Haverhill High School offered testimony about her terrible experiences with the school district and its failures following her sexual assault in middle school by a fellow student including exposure and harassment by the perpetrator. She related that this past year after experiencing mental health and stress issues resulting in substance abuse, there was again a breakdown in the system resulting in her mother being reported to DCF and the failure of the administrative and counseling staff to provide assistance to her during a very difficult time. Ms. Kimball indicated that after college graduation she would return to Haverhill to run for school committee to ensure that no other student suffers or has similar devastating experiences.

Mayor Fiorentini acknowledged Ms. Kimball’s courage.

Public Hearing on FY23 Budget – Community; followed by School Committee Vote on FY23 Budget.

Mr. Pfifferling reported that a new budget document had been distributed which reflected Option #3 and then proceeded with an overview of the FY23 budget [Complete-Book-Final FY23.pdf](#).

In response to the mayor’s question on staffing updates (36 additional staff) included in the budget, Dr. Marotta provided some highlights:

- 8.5 math interventionists
- 2 high school and middle school counselors
- Freshman Team at HHS
- Supports for Gateway Academy to increase enrollment to 100 students
- PATS (Positive Alternatives to Suspension) Program located at YMCA

Mr. Pfifferling stated that the budget had increased by 8.3M due to a revised Chapter 70 formula and ESSER funds.

The mayor thanked the governor and legislature for changing the formula.

The superintendent continued by noting that a conflict resolution specialist at the high school and several ELL teachers due to the increased student enrollment.

In response to Attorney Magliocchetti's question on unfilled positions, Dr. Marotta responded that at one point there were 120 unfilled positions and now there were 60 unfilled positions. She indicated that counselors, security positions, along with high school teaching openings had been difficult to fill this past year.

Attorney Magliocchetti indicted support for assisting in the hiring process.

Mrs. Connolly reported that the summer program was fully staffed with a 1300 student enrollment.

Public Comment on FY23 Budget.

Dr. John Maddox, Lakeview Avenue, Haverhill, thanked Attorney Rosa, Attorney Magliocchetti and Ms. Sullivan for their support of a fully funded budget with student opportunity act funding. He recommended reconsideration of the budget vote by the other members of the school committee. Dr. Maddox asked for the city's consideration of funding health insurance by other sources since there had been significant learning loss as a result of the pandemic.

Mr. Anthony Parolisi, 169 Summer Street, Haverhill, MA, commented on the disinvested of the city's contribution to public education and noted that state funding was to supplement city funding. He made negative comments regarding the continued and lack of investment by the mayor in our schools. Mr. Parolisi stated that these were unacceptable actions and was a direct contradiction to the support for the student opportunity act.

Mayor Fiorentini introduced Ms. Angel Wills, CFO for the City of Haverhill.

Ms. Wills provide a copy of the ESSER fund application outlining health insurance (\$720,000) expenditures by the school district.

The mayor related that the health insurance costs were allocated in the grant application for additional employees; noting the concept was an accurate one. He noted that the school committee had cut the health insurance costs from the budget. The mayor stated that \$739,000 was the cost for 56 employees and that with 23 employees 6.2% increase (\$1.6M) for school department employees. Mayor Fiorentini referenced that the increase of \$8.9M in Chapter 70 School Aid which includes Student Opportunity Act funding. SOA allows for health care costs for employees and retirees (total health care cost for additional employees FY22 \$739,000).

Ms. Wills shared that the FY2023 increase in city contributions to school department is \$1,464,396 or 2.6%.

Mayor Fiorentini believed a reasonable compromise had been achieved with this budget regarding health insurance cost sharing.

Ms. Sullivan reported that the budget proposal eliminated the position of assistant director of facilities and asked for a clarification of his duties.

Dr. Marotta offered the job duties which included day-to-day oversight, cleaning and management of the school facilities.

Ms. Sullivan was concerned with the reduction and its impact on the maintenance of our schools.

Superintendent Marotta had hoped that the director could dedicate his time to the Consentino School Building Committee project because of his specialized knowledge and other maintenance issues. She did express concern with the removal of the position.

Ms. Sullivan requested that the district use a contracted position to address the superintendent's concern regarding building matters and then this position was eliminated in the budget proposal.

Mayor Fiorentini suggested that there might be MSBA funding for the Consentino School Building Project.

Ms. Sullivan expressed continued apprehension with the exclusion of the position and the consultant in the FY23 budget. She emphasized that the superintendent's stated concern had not been addressed in this budget.

Dr. Marotta commented the need for support in this area since there was expertise needed for the project. She offered an explanation of the OPM's role. The superintendent did not believe that the project needed an advocate for Haverhill in terms of the project.

Attorney Rosa noted that there may be a negative impact with not having oversight of the project since there were many impactful decisions included in a school building project.

Attorney Magliocchetti stated that Mr. Dorrance's responsibility with the school building project would be increasing over time. He related that the initial development of the position was to have it funded by city which did not come to fruition. Attorney Magliocchetti advised close supervision in this area.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling noted that \$100,000 was removed from the budget.

Mayor Fiorentini asked if anything could be cut to fund this position.

Dr. Marotta did not have a definitive answer and would take away from student supports.

Mayor Fiorentini asked if there were any available funds to allow for the position's funding.

Superintendent Marotta noted that most of the positions were 10-month positions and should remain in the budget.

The mayor indicated that he would work with the superintendent to address this matter.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the proposed FY23 Budget as presented. Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion.

There was discussion regarding the difference between the consultant and assistant director.

Mr. Wood supported the elimination of the assistant director's position for several reasons.

A roll call vote (approval of proposed FY23 Budget) was requested and the results were as follows:

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

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Introduction of Mr. Ken McDowell, Principal to discuss the selection of Bartlett School and Assessment Center as a recipient of the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, Inc. Awards, i.e., a “Dougie Award” ~ Attorney Rosa.

Attorney Rosa gave background on the grant award (assisting students with autism) along with a three-minute video submitted by the students to for consideration for a Dougie award. He introduced Mr. McDowell who noted that the video [Bartlett School.mp4](#) was a good representation of the school and reported that the school received \$500 this year and \$250 last year.

Attorney Rosa thanked the foundation and its staff.

Introduction of Dr. John Maddox, School Physician and Ms. Jami Dion, Director of Guidance, Counseling and Student Support Services regarding the Students’ Attitudes and Behavior Survey Debriefing and Analysis [A & B Survey SC presentation 6-2-22.pdf](#)

Ms. Dion reviewed the PowerPoint presentation with the committee. She emphasized the shared responsibility with the schools and community.

In reference to Attorney Rosa’ inquiry about assets that had greater impact, Dr. Maddox related that the data could be tied to specific behaviors.

Attorney Rosa noted that more assets were impactful and asked how to get students to take advantage of the assets.

Ms. Dion related students who were connected to a positive role model or peer took advantage of the services and underscored the positive relationship factor especially at younger ages.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello questioned how to reduce risk factors.

Ms. Dion answered that depression, anxiety and mental health issues had risen over the past year and noted there were ties to self-esteem and lack of positive relationships. She was always a need but it was a systemic issue.

Attorney Magliocchetti offered his experience as a big brother during college years at Holy Cross and its impact on his life. He related that COVID was not the only factor, and there was an issue with reliance on medications. Attorney Magliocchetti suggested a focus on the systems that were already in place in the district.

The mayor highlighted the significant reduction in alcohol use.

Ms. Dion responded that during the pandemic there was a limited access in obtaining alcohol.

Dr. Maddox noted the different impacts, such as reduction in substance use and sexual activity along with the increase in depression and anxiety among youth. He cautioned against basing facts on opinions.

Mayor Fiorentini was interested in discussing combating opioid addiction. He asked about the issue of guns in schools and noted that the school district in Texas had implemented all the proper protocols.

Ms. Dion related that access to means was part of determining access if the student had suicidal indications. She noted that there was not a clear plan for homicidal inclinations.

Mayor Fiorentini reported that Dr. Marotta had been appointed to his mental health committee.

Dr. Marotta indicated that Ms. Dion was representing her on this committee.

Superintendent Marotta recommended a full resource mental health facility at the high school.

Whitsons' Annual Contract Renewal ~ Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent.

Mr. Pfifferling recommended approval by the committee and indicated that there would be one remaining renewal in this contract.

Attorney Rosa inquired about the paragraphs 2-4 and asked if there were differences.

Mr. Pfifferling responded that there were 2% increases as part of the original contract.

In response to the guaranteed return, the assistant superintendent answered those revenues above the costs (73%, 43%, 48%).

A motion was made Mr. Wood to approve the contract renewal. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested and the results were as follows:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Motion passes

Financial Transfers ~ Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent.

The assistant superintendent outlined the requested transfers as follows: funds from various salary line items (\$300,000) and summer vacation salary (\$81,792) to security supplies (\$200,000) to purchase security cameras and access control door monitoring devices, contracted services-HHS floor replacement (\$100,000) and technology hardware – high school art department new computer lab (\$81,792).

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling indicated that discussions were being held at the finance subcommittee level regarding prepaying special education tuitions with remaining FY22 funds.

In regards to the mayor’s question regarding remaining funds in FY22 budget to pay for a \$100,000 contracted employee, both the superintendent and assistant superintendent responded that only special education tuitions could be prepaid from previous fiscal year funds.

Mayor Fiorentini wanted to pursue the option of returning the \$100,000 to the city and then have it reallocated to the schools for this contracted position.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the recommended financial transfers. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested and the results were as follows:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative
 0 members voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

School Committee Meeting Schedule (June & Summer 2022) ~ Mrs. Sapienza Donais, Vice Chair. June 9 has been eliminated from the schedule.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to cancel the June 9, 2022, school committee meeting. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested and the results were as follows:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative
 0 members voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

Mrs. Sapienza Donais clarified that July 21, 2022 was the school committee meeting date for July.

Superintendent’s Recommendation for a grade configuration change for the Consentino School Building Project. Superintendent Marotta noted that grade 5 classes from Tilton Upper and Silver Hill would be incorporated into the new Consentino School as part of the MSBA Consentino School Building Project.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the superintendent’s recommendation to have grade 5 classes from Tilton Upper and Silver Hill would be incorporated into the new Consentino School. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested and the results were as follows:

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

7 members voted in the affirmative
 0 members voted in the negative
 0 members abstained
 Motion passes

