

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts
NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
2021 JAN -4 P 1:17

Date of School Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Present: Committee Members: Chairperson Kathleen Stern, Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mr. Dan Sheedy
Also present: Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, Director of Pupil Services Jeanne Sullivan, School Business Manager Matthew Wells, Technology Director Karen Winsper, Student Representatives Cooper Smith and Carolyn Daly
Absent: Vice-Chairperson Carolyn Gallagher, Mr. Deniz Savas

Call to Order: Chairperson Stern called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being video recorded by Norton Cable Access for public record and asked if anyone else was recording at this time.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairperson Stern opened the meeting by addressing what a wonderful job the Norton Police and Town Hall did holding the election at the Middle School for the first time.

Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice Program for the 2020-2021 School Year – Dr. Baeta:

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to open the public hearing on the School Choice Program

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

The School Choice Program requires a public hearing and then a vote by the School Committee on whether or not to participate the following school year. The current climate of school competition, need for revenue, and the opportunity to provide 21st century learning opportunities for all students clearly allows for us to have a School Choice Program for the 2020-2021 school year with a closing date of September 1, 2020. Further, the School Committee will consider class size issues in K-5 as part of this initiative to include the potential to add staff. A vote and a letter to DESE must be completed by June 1st of each year.

Looking at enrollment projections for the 2020-2021 school year it is recommended that applications be accepted as follows: Kindergarten – Grade 5 – (5) seats; and Grades 6 – 10 no cap. Dr. Baeta and Committee discussed the decline from Kindergarten seats from 10 to 5. This is due to not fully knowing the Kindergarten enrollment and the class sizes. A recommendation date of May 1st can be a cut-off date to determine if the seat count can be adjusted before the notice to DESE.

As of February 7, 2020, there are 138 students enrolled in the School Choice program in the following grades: Kindergarten (10); Grade 1 (14); Grade 2 (14); Grade 3 (12); Grade 4 (11);

Grade 5 (13); Grade 6 (16); Grade 7 (15); Grade 8 (9); Grade 9 (8); Grade 10 (4) and Grade 11 (8); and Grade 12 (4). Please see the enclosed newspaper notice of hearing for School Choice and School Budget.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to close the public hearing on the School Choice Program

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to accept the Superintendent's recommendations on the School Choice Program for the 2020-2021 school year

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Public Hearing on FY 2021 School Budget – Dr. Baeta:

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to open the public hearing on the FY 2021 School Budget

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Dr. Baeta presented a PowerPoint presentation to review the Superintendent's recommended FY '21 school budget based on the outcome of the February 29th meeting. He reviewed the reductions and additions towards obtaining this recommended budget. The Revolving and Grant accounts were also incorporated into the budget recommendation. This budget reflects a 7.66% increase for a total recommended budget amount of \$32,252,090.00.

There were questions and answers from the audience.

The FY'21 school budget will be presented to the Finance Committee on March 16, 2020.

In accordance with the Town Charter, the Notice of Public Hearing was published in the *Sun Chronicle*.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to close the public hearing on the FY 2020 School Budget

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes:

Vote to approve Minutes of February 6, 2020 Open Session meetings.

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Vote to approve Minutes of February 29, 2020 Open Session meetings.

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Warrants:

Mrs. Cohen reported that she reviewed and approved the following warrants to be entered into the public record:

- February 6, 2020 \$872,789.70
- February 20, 2020 \$455,065.05
- February 27, 2020 \$241,786.97

Student Representative Update:

LGN and JCS:

- It was Read Across America Day on Monday, March 2nd and both schools celebrated with a Dr. Seuss week. They wore green one day, held a wacky Wednesday and a crazy sock day.
- LGN had a Bruin's night before February vacation.
- LGN held the Winter Carnival on Saturday, February 29th
- JCS will hold an open house for incoming Kindergarten on Thursday, March 12th
- JCS had Mr. Rappold from Personal Best speak to the students about bullying.

HAY:

- Principal Geoghegan followed six students through their day to Shadow a Student by stepping into the shoes of a student.
- Grade 5 will have a field trip to The Hall at the Patriot Place.
- For Read Across America Day, the HAY hosted English Honor Society members from the High School to read books to various classes in the morning.

NMS:

- The Middle School was officially renamed a NELMS Spotlight School. Congratulations to the staff and students who make it so great.
- The Spring Fling is March 13th
- Six students will be competing in the National History Day District Level this weekend to earn a place at the State Finals in April. The two projects the groups will be presenting are a play about racial conflict in Tulsa, Oklahoma and a film about Grandma Gatewood, the first woman to hike the Appalachian Trail solo.

NHS:

- The High School displayed art work at the Patriots Place Art Show from February 14th thru the 16th. The art display is now being displayed in the High School Library until the end of March.
- The Junior class had their ice cream social for raising the most money for the Parent Advisory Board.
- The DECA field trip last week went great and a number of students will be participating at the internationals.
- Global Fair and Spread the Word Inclusion day happened today
- Kathy Bailey Memorial Basketball game is Friday, March 6th at 7:00 pm.
- Mr. NHS is Wednesday, March 11th at 7:00 pm.
- Course selection night and AP night are Thursday, March 5th
- The boys' basketball team continued to be on a roll winning last night's game to move onto the Division 3 Championship game on Saturday in Taunton.
- Starry Night Dance for freshmen and sophomores is Friday, March 13th
- The Drama Club is performing Freaky Friday on March 20th and 21st

Review and Vote to Approve Updated Vaping Language for NHS Student Handbook – Dr. Baeta:

Principal Dolleman recommends the following addition to the Smoking and Tobacco Use Guidelines on Page 31 of the Norton High School 2019-2020 Student Handbook. This has gone thru legal counsel as well.

“With the aim of protecting the health and safety of the entire school community, Norton High School may utilize vaping detectors in school bathrooms. Vaping detector technology detects vapor from tobacco and marijuana, as well as detecting loud noises typically associated with aggression, disruption or vandalism, with no audio or video recording taking place. Vaping detectors may be used in concert with hallway surveillance cameras and/or staff supervision to assist the District in determining who engaged in inappropriate and/or prohibited activity. The District will handle any suspicion of vaping activity, aggression, disruption or vandalism, detector related or otherwise, in accordance with its student search and student discipline policies and procedures. A student found to have tampered with a vaping detector will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with student discipline policies and procedures, as well as being responsible for any property damage caused by the Student’s tampering.”

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to approve the updated Vaping Language to the Student Handbook

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Vote to Approve FY 2021 School Budget – Dr. Baeta:

The Superintendent’s recommended school budget for FY21, as discussed with School Committee at the February 29, 2020 budget meeting is \$32,252,090.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to approve the FY21 School Budget

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

FY20 Year-to-Date Financial Report – Mr. Matthew Wells:

Mr. Wells updated the Committee on the current negative balance with drivers adding to this:

- the utility and gas expenditures – projected on last year expenditures but need a few more invoices to determine the actual usage and determine what impact the window project will have on this expenditure
- substitute teachers – preparing a supplemental for Town Meeting
- SPED transportation – preparing a supplemental for Town Meeting
- The Cafeteria account seems to be operating evenly but there are funds in appropriation that we would like to move back into the account.

He presented the Revolving and Grant accounts which are moving along as projected. There were questions and answers from the audience.

Discussion and Vote on Athletic Complex Option – Dr. Baeta:

Dr. Baeta presented a slide show with the recommendation from the Field Study Committee for the new Athletic Complex Option G. He discussed the current complex and the necessary improvements needed. He reviewed the new layout with scenarios, costs associated for this project and future revenue to utilize towards maintenance. This project is recommended at \$8,667,499.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to approve the Athletic Complex Option G

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

VOTE: 3 yes Motion Carries

Other Business:

- Dr. Baeta congratulated all winter athletes.
- It Takes A Community basketball game will be held Friday, March 6th at 7:00 pm.
- Dr. Baeta thanked the Global Education students who presented and would like to change the presentation next year to be before a School Committee meeting.
- Dr. Baeta announced that international trips, out-of-state trips, and field trips are all under review at this time. Decisions on postponements or cancellations will be made as needed.

Motion to Adjourn Open Session and enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussion SRO Agreement and Update on Contract Negotiations not to return to Open Session:

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

ROLL CALL VOTE: Stern – yes; Cohen – yes; Sheedy - yes

3 yes Motion Carries


The meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Next Meeting Dates: Thursday, March 19, 2020 – Norton Middle School Library at 6:30 pm

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

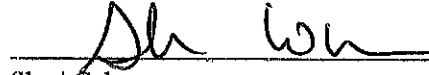
- The Sun Chronicle advertisements for Public Hearing of School Choice and FY21 Operating Budget
- Superintendent's FY2021 Budget, dated March 4, 2020
- Proposed Changes to the NHS Student Handbook
- Year-to-Date Financial Report, printed for February 2020
- NHS Athletic Campus Master Plan

Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph F. Baeta, Ed.D.
Secretary Pro Tem



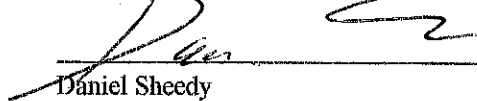
Kathleen Stern, Chairperson

Carolyn Gallaher, Vice-Chairperson



Sheri Cohen

Deniz Savas



Daniel Sheedy

dmk