

RECEIVED
NORTON TOWN CLERK
2021 APR 16 AM 10:51

Date of Meeting: Thursday, December 17, 2020

Location: Remote Participation

Present: Committee Members: Chairperson Carolyn Gallagher, Vice-Chairperson Deniz Savas, Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mrs. Kathleen Stern, and Mr. Dan Sheedy. ***Also present:*** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, School Business Administrator Matthew Wells, Director of Facilities Wade Lizotte, Director of Technology Karen Winsper, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Vincent Cerce, Coordinator of Special Education Casey Russo, and Director of Athletics and Student Services Aaron Sumner

Call to Order: Chairperson Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Minutes of December 3, 2020 Open School Committee Meeting
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher - Yes 5 - 0 Motion Carries

Warrants:

Mrs. Cohen reported that the following School Expense Warrants and School Payroll Warrants were reviewed and approved to be entered into public record:

School Expense Warrants:

- December 4, 2020 \$ 383,984.33

School Payroll Warrant:

- December 3, 2020 \$ 992,332.48

Student Representatives Update:

Students Malia Savas and Zoe Duran updated the Committee on what was happening in the schools.

- LGN – Held a Santa Parade as well as a Zoom Read Aloud with families. Looking for volunteers for a future Read Aloud.
- JCS – Held Flurry of Wishes Holiday Spirit Week. JCS and LGN participated in virtual holiday singalong.
- HAY – Held Spirit Days which included crazy hair and sock days and a pajamas day. Also held Boosterthon dance party fundraiser.

- NHS – Clubs and organizations have been running including Math Honor Society, Book Club, and Yoga Club. Tri-M Honor Society held game tournaments, a virtual coffee house, and “music grams” to support programs.
- NMS – Student Council held food drive for Cupboard of Kindness. NMS is the organization’s biggest supporter. Next week the school will hold its Ugly Sweater Contest – an annual event for the last 10 years.

Mr. Savas commended Dr. Baeta for calling a “traditional” snow day on December 17th, noting that he liked the use of the word traditional.

Presentation on Best Practices of Instruction in our Current Learning Models:

Dr. Baeta introduced NPS teachers Mrs. Jessica Iozzi – NHS GRIT Program Teacher, Mrs. Jerusha Bjork – LGN Grade 3 Teacher, and Ms. Sarah Alves – Digital Learning Academy Grades 2-3 Teacher. Dr. Baeta noted that he wanted to provide updates to the Committee of what is happening in our classrooms by having staff step forward.

Mrs. Iozzi shared a Powerpoint presentation which included pictures of her classroom. She explained what GRIT stood for: Growth, Resiliency, Integrity, Teamwork, and gave a classroom overview. Mr. Cerce added that in his opinion this is the best therapeutic classroom he has seen in his 25 years in education.

Mrs. Bjork remarked how her students have become very independent and are learning to do things on their own. They have been very responsible with their Chromebooks, bringing them back and forth from school to home. Through the COVID guidelines, it has been wonderful being able to go outside for snacks and short recesses. Outside play equipment has been taken away so the students have learned games such as Red Rover. They have created a Twister like game using the map of the United States outside. She feels the Mondays all together is beneficial. Attendance has been great. Able to keep pace with curriculum and is right on track. With hybrid model easier to juggle Special Ed and Title I services. Has had more communication with parents through email. Saw more parents than ever during conferences. Technology and new programs have been great. A few FlipGrid videos made by students were shared.

Ms. Alves shared a Powerpoint presentation with the Committee. Her students are 2nd and 3rd graders from both the JCS and LGN schools. The presentation included Ms. Alves’ top priority, building a community, morning meeting, fostering reflective learners, teamwork, academic instruction, and technology. Dr. Baeta noted that based on emails received from DLA parents, things are going well.

The Committee commended the teachers on their hard work and efforts, noting that it was nice to see good things happening in our schools.

Vote to Approve Norton Teachers’ Association Contract Extension for 2021-2022:

The NTA has agreed to negotiate a new 3-year contract after the first of the year to include Paraprofessionals.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Norton Teachers’ Association Contract Extension for 2021-2022 and allow for Dr. Baeta to sign on behalf of the School Committee

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

ROLL CALL VOTE: Deniz Savas – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

Vote to Approve Norton Para-Professional/Library Media Tech Employees' Association Contract Extension for 2021-2022:

This extension updates salary schedule and longevity.

MOTION: Mr. Savas to approve Norton Para-Professional/Library Media Tech Employees' Association Contract Extension for 2021-2022 and allow for Dr. Baeta to sign on behalf of the School Committee

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Kathleen Stern – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

Vote to Approve Superintendent's Contract Memorandum of Agreement:

Dr. Baeta noted that one and a half years ago contract negotiations began and a six-year contract extension through 2026 was voted. The contract included updates to salary, course reimbursement, etc. This Memorandum of Agreement addresses cost of living increase and salary for the current year.

Mr. Savas apologized to Dr. Baeta for putting this on the back burner and taking so long to address.

Members of the Committee offered kudos to Dr. Baeta for stepping up and doing an excellent job.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Superintendent's Contract Memorandum of Agreement

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

ROLL CALL VOTE: Dan Sheedy – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

Discussion and Vote on Winter Sports in the Event of Remote Learning:

Mr. Sumner updated the Committee on athletics and potential changes. The MIAA is in favor of holding sports this winter. DESE wants districts to vote on the local level regarding holding sports if we are in full remote learning.

Mr. Sumner noted that protocols are being followed to keep participants safe. No practices are being held over the holiday break at NPS facilities. Practices at outside facilities would be taking place.

NPS has had significant quarantines, not direct COVID-19 cases. Student activities like Art Club, etc. have been taking place.

The Committee agreed that sports should not be taken away from students, minimizing our belief in SEL. Sports are a huge part of students' live and is good for mental health. We should not take away normalcy from our kids in the event we have to go full remote due to staffing issues.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to approve the continuation of sports in the event of Remote learning
SECOND: by Mr. Savas

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

Other:

- Mrs. Gallagher spoke about her disappointment in the recent letter from MASC / MASS that was sent to Governor Baker regarding their disappointment in his urging districts to bring back more students to in-person learning. She noted that neither organization speaks for her and that she was not asked to participate. The letter was written as a blanket statement. In Norton, our unions and administrators work in collaboration. We come together to work towards what is best for our families.

Mr. Savas stated that the MASC does not speak for him and that he works for the citizens of Norton. The letter was ill advised and that the Committee has a good relationship with the unions. The letter had nothing to do with Norton. He also stated that MASC and MASS forget one thing – dealing with change in working conditions is the union's job and what they are supposed to do.

Mrs. Stern noted that the letter started good and then went to anti-union. Mrs. Cohen said we have something special in Norton, no animosity. We agree to disagree.

- Discussion and Vote on Five Year Capital Improvement Plan – As required by the Town, December 22, 2020 is the deadline to submit our plan. This plan does not include the athletic complex.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Dan Sheedy – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

- Discussions ensued regarding possibility of having to go into full remote learning. Staffing is a major concern due to quarantining, etc. A class to class schedule would be followed and wouldn't be like the remote learning from last March. Schools would be open for staff with the possibility of babysitting. Decision regarding going remote would be based solely on current facts and information. A decision would be made on Friday evening (December 18th) regarding what model would be followed the following week. A survey will be sent to parents regarding the December 18th remote day. Every family should be prepared for the potential of being home for 14 days. Champions has indicated they would remain open.
- Athletic Complex Changes – Work on the complex plans have been ongoing for three years, with attention to being fiscally prudent while updating our facilities. Discussion ensued regarding updates to the plans.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to amend original Option G to Option H for a total of \$5,793,778
SECOND: by Mrs. Stern

ROLL CALL VOTE: Deniz Savas – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Dan Sheedy – No; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 1 Motion Carries

Mr. Sheedy noted that he is not against sports. The work on this has been tiresome and he is tired of taking cuts and the cheap road. His no vote was more an anti “cheap” vote.

- Food service would continue on Mondays 12:30 – 3 p.m. and using buses; would need to regroup if we go remote, perhaps moving to a daily or a few times a week delivery schedule.
- The Boy Scouts are formally recognizing the food services department at NHS on Friday, December 18th.

Motion to Adjourn:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Adjourn Meeting

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Kathleen Stern – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes
5 – 0 Motion Carries

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Next meeting date: Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

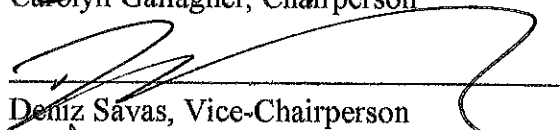
Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- GRIT Classroom Powerpoint presentation
- Digital Learning Academy Grades 2 & 3 Powerpoint presentation
- Norton Teachers’ Association Contract Amendment
- Norton Para-Professional/Library Media Tech Employees’ Association Contract Amendment
- Superintendent’s Contract of Employment Memorandum of Agreement
- MASC / MASS Letter to Governor Baker
- Spring FY2021 Capital Budget Requests memo
- Athletic Complex Schematic Cost Estimates

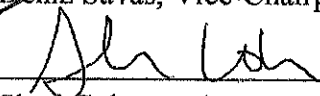
Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph F. Baeta, Ed.D.
Secretary Pro Tem



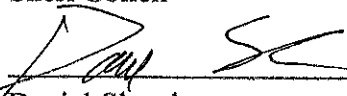
Carolyn Gallagher, Chairperson




Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairperson



Sheri Cohen



Daniel Sheedy



Kathleen Stern

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