

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

RECEIVED
NORTON TOWN CLERK
2022 APR 20 AM 11:39

Date of Meeting: Thursday, February 10, 2022

Location: Norton Middle School Library and Remote Participation

Present: Committee Members: Chairperson Deniz Savas, Vice Chairperson Dan Sheedy, Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mrs. Carolyn Gallagher, and Mrs. Kathleen Stern (remotely). ***Also present:*** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, and Director of Technology Karen Winsper. Present remotely: School Business Administrator Matthew Wells, Director of Facilities Wade Lizotte, Coordinator of Special Education Casey Russo, Norton High School Principal Ethan Dolleman, and Student Representatives Zoe Duran and Malia Savas.

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

Announcement that meeting is being recorded

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to approve the Minutes of the January 13, 2022 Open Meeting

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Carolyn Gallagher – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes;
Deniz Savas – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Abstain 4 - 0 - 1 Motion Carries

Warrants:

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

School Expense Warrants:

- January 20, 2022 \$ 653,079.65
- February 3, 2022 \$ 425,974.89

School Payroll Warrants:

- January 13, 2022 \$1,216,790.92
- January 14, 2022 \$ 360.00
- January 27, 2022 \$1,100,961.60

Malia Savas and Zoe Duran shared with the Committee responses they received when students were asked the following questions: How has learning this school year been compared to past years? Is it nearly back to normal? What has changed from the start of this year to now? How do you feel about these changes? What do you hope will change within the second half of the year? Are there any favorite parts or highlights of this year you'd like to share?

NHS – It has almost been back to normal and closer to what they remember. Ninth graders excited about switching classes and being able to take electives and having more freedom. Students hoping for no masks, particularly for sports. Several students said that hallway decorating was awesome and the highlight of the year.

5 - 0 Motion Carries

Mr. Savas stated that language in the second paragraph Policy DI – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting should be amended from “The accounting system used will conform with the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System as well as **good** accounting practices...” to “The accounting system used will

conform with the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System as well as **generally accepted** accounting practices...”

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to Approve Section D Policies as Presented with Amendment

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

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

Review of 2022-2023 School Calendar:

Mrs. O'Neill presented a preliminary 2022-2023 school calendar noting it was based on a typical model with the first day of school the day after Labor Day. The calendar includes a day off on the November 8th election day, although Norton Middle School is the only school affected on this day. Last day of school would be June 14th if there is school on November 8th, not including the five built-in school days for weather related closings, etc. Early release days noted are subject to change. Under review is moving conferences to the mid-point of the first semester.

Regarding November 8th Election Day, Dr. Baeta stated that we would work with Norton Police Department and the Town Clerk to get the right manpower for that day. It would be a hardship for families to have that day off being the Veteran's Day holiday is observed during the same week.

This agenda item will be revisited in March.

Review and Vote on Coordinator of Health Services PreK-12 Position:

Dr. Baeta discussed the Coordinator of Health Services PreK-12 job description that was shared with the Committee, noting that this additional position would be under the Unit A – Norton Teachers' Association contract and would be filled by one of the current seven district nurses. Dr. Baeta said that this position was not just about COVID but that there are a number of issues with students. This position would allow NPS to be more supportive of families, while still maintaining one floating nurse and one nurse at each school. The position is currently in our budget with the only extra cost being the additional extra 10 days included with the job.

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to Approve Job Description and Position of Coordinator of Health Services PreK-12

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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

Other:

Per the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education's recent announcement, Dr. Baeta recommended that the Committee vote to rescind the current policy on masking. Masking would be optional for students and staff upon return from the winter break on February 28th. Dr. Baeta's only concern was possibility of bullying and harassing. Dr. Baeta spoke with the Norton Board of Health who supports the change. Protocols will still be in place, with families working with school nurses when students are sick.

Mr. Savas noted that masks would still be needed on buses as this is a federal mandate. Dr. Baeta said there may be more information regarding this next week.

Regarding athletics, Dr. Baeta stated that MIAA controls sports and that we control the buildings. There are only a few more weeks of indoor sports. There should be a clear statement from the MIAA and hopefully there would be one after vacation week. We are not able to make decisions regarding sports.

Dr. Baeta said that he had no intentions of having building administrators policing who is or isn't wearing masks.

Norton Teachers' Association President, Shannon Taylor, addressed the Committee thanking all for what they have done, from educators to custodians, and food service workers. The Labor Management Committee meets every week and people feel supported having Dr. Baeta as their leader.

Mr. Savas thanked all. He noted that it has been almost two years dealing with COVID and as a whole the District did a good job.

Dr. Baeta is anxious to get back to the teaching and learning we know, without every decision being based on COVID. He is looking to get a feel from students, noting that our student leaders will help guide us by keeping the student body involved.

A few students and the parent of a wrestling athlete shared their feelings about masking.

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to Rescind Mask Policy

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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

Dr. Baeta read a letter from DESE regarding the 2022 Special Education Determination and congratulated Mr. Cerce and his office for the great work.

Mrs. Cohen stated that the athletic complex committee was going before the Conservation Committee meeting and asked for support.

Motion to Adjourn:

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to Adjourn

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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

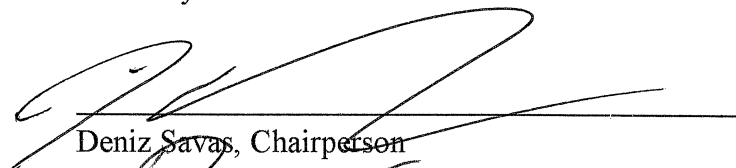
The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

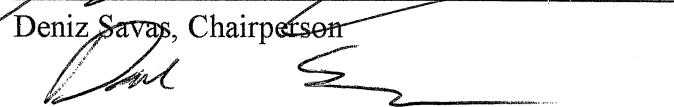
Next scheduled meeting date: March 5, 2022 (Saturday Budget meeting); March 10, 2022 regular meeting.

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- Section D – Revised Fiscal Policies
- Draft version 2022-2023 school calendar
- Coordinator of Health Services Prek-12 job description
- Face Masks Policy EBCFA

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


Deniz Savas, Chairperson


Dan Sheedy, Vice-Chairperson


Sheri Cohen


Carolyn Gallagher


Kathleen Stern

tlr