



Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, January 23, 2019
Cohasset Middle-High School
Community Use Room
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA

In Attendance: Jeanne Astino, Chairman
Ellen Maher
Jennifer Madden
Barbara Stefan
Paul Kearney

Also in Attendance: Louise Demas, Superintendent
Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent
Michael MacMillan, Director of Finance & Operations

Pledge-Recited.

Chairman Astino called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. **Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Present, Barbara Stefan-Present, Jeanne Astino-Present, Ellen Maher-Present, Jennifer Madden-Present.**

Public Comment-None.

Approval of Warrant-Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve Warrant 19-12S, seconded by Paul Kearney. **Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Barbara Stefan-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye. Chairman Astino abstained from the vote.**

Superintendents Report-Superintendent Demas introduced Paula Girouard McCann as the Acting Principal of Cohasset Middle High School.

Middle School Canobie Lake Park Music Trip- Department Head of Visual & Performing Arts Stephanie Moriarty stated they are requesting permission for the annual Music Trip on Friday, June 7 for Middle School Band and Chorus students. They are expecting 100-125 students. They leave at 9 a.m. and return at 8 p.m. **Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve the Canobie Lake Park Music Trip on June 7, 2019, seconded by Mrs. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Barbara Stefan-Aye, Jeanne Astino-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye.**

Middle High School Program of Studies-Middle School Associate Principal Kerry Agashe stated they have replaced the core belief with the Middle School vision statement and they have updated some of the ELA resources. She added that the bulk of the changes are to Social Studies. Department Chair of CMHS Social Studies Jim Willis reviewed the changes that were recently approved at the state level. The changes will be implemented in September. They have already started preparing the 6th graders for the shift next year. High School Assistant Principal Brian Scott stated the High School has renamed the Learning Centers to Student Strategies for Learning to comply with changes in Special Education guidance. They have also added a new course-Mindful Art Studio. He thanked Mr. Willis for all his preparation work. Mr. Scott reviewed the changes. Mrs. Stefan asked how the GPA Review is going. Mr. Scott said they have a lot of data and have had 4 or 5 committee meetings. He is glad to have Paula Girouard McCann on board as she has a lot of experience and input to offer. Mrs. Stefan asked how the Chemistry classes are working out. Mr. Scott said they are working out great; it is a 2.5 credit course. Dr. Sullivan added that they are looking at a program with UMass Lowell that would allow students to add college credits. It would be based out of Scituate and a great option for Junior and Senior students.

Middle School Update-Superintendent Demas updated the SC on the NELMS Study. The teaming and curriculum have been worked out by Dr. Sullivan and staff. During budget negotiations they looked at the Middle School structure and discussed looking into giving the Middle School its own identity. It was a discussion that included having a dedicated principal. There is a mandate from the State to increase support in Health. Dr. Sullivan advised the SC that Kerry Agashe will discuss their team's site visit to Norton at the next meeting.

Finance-Monthly Update-Mr. MacMillan stated the budget report shows they have spent 42% this year vs. 38% last year but that is because this year includes all encumbrances. Without the encumbrances they are right on target. The summary budget to actual expenditure is also a little off because of the encumbrances as well. The grants are coming in nicely. The revolving accounts are a little down from last year. **Vehicle Maintenance Update**-Mr. MacMillan stated there are not a lot of changes. He has sent the letter of intent for the bus lease. That process is moving along. The maintenance is still up a little due to the extension on the leases.

FY20 Budget Overview-Mr. MacMillan discussed the budget priorities for FY20. He reviewed some of the contributing factors that are driving the budget: Contractual salary increases, Instructional materials, an additional 1.6 FTE ESPs and medical services as required by IEPs and out-of-district transportation. At this point they are working to close the gap with the Town Proposed Budget and trying to identify further savings. They are working to develop the next steps for custodial services with the town and preparing for changes to the Middle School model. Mrs. Maher stated the BoS reviewed the budget last night. They had a conversation about custodial & facilities becoming one. She has concerns about the schools giving up control of the custodians. Mr. MacMillan responded that he and Superintendent Demas have had preliminary discussions with Chris Senior. They haven't made any decisions. There are benefits for the school if they merge facilities & custodians, primarily related to training. The discussion was more about efficiency and effectiveness. They would not be giving up control to the town. Superintendent Demas added this is a longer discussion and they have told the Town Manager they would like to see something in writing before they agree. Once they have something in writing they will present to the SC. The SC had a brief discussion. They decided if they did do this, they would like it to be a trial run and the school would have the option to pull out. Mr. MacMillan compared it to the Technology merge between the town and schools in which both groups got more benefits. Mr.

MacMillan continued his review of the budget. Mohamad Omran-19 Ledgewood Farm Drive asked if they have looked into possibly leasing electric school buses to cut down on the costs. Mr. MacMillan stated electric buses cannot be leased and the district decided to lease for many good reasons. The buses they use are flat nose buses which are much safer. The electric buses are not offered in that model.

Superintendent Demas stated they had Kindergarten registration on January 16th and 17th and they are currently at 100 students.

School Budget Message-Draft#3-Mrs. Maher reviewed the edits. **Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve the school budget message, seconded by Mrs. Stefan. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Barbara Stefan-Aye, Jeanne Astino-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye.**

FY20 Capital Budget Update-Mr. MacMillan reviewed the list of all Capital Projects they have been working on. They are scheduled to meet with Capital Budget Committee on Monday, January 28, 2019. There are no surprises. Everything on the list has been discussed before. Mr. Omran asked if they have considered tracking return on investment and cost benefit in their analysis. Mrs. Maher stated that Capital Budget asks all those questions when they review the requests. Vice Chairman of Capital Budget Brian Host stated some things cannot be bandaged. It makes sense to make the investment for the return on investment.

SC comments and Communications-Reports from Sub-Committee & Liaisons-Mrs. Maher went to the Middle School Council meeting yesterday. They have started the process of the GPA review. Kerry Agashe gave a presentation on the Middle School Action Plan. They are very energized and excited. Capital Budget Committee is meeting on Monday at 7 p.m. to discuss the schools' requests. Mrs. Madden stated the Policy Committee met on Friday and they should have some first reads coming to the SC. She attended the MLK Breakfast and it was very inspirational. Mr. Kearney handed out his draft of the Cohasset School Appreciation Committee for everyone's review. Chairman Astino asked that the Committee read the document and she will schedule on upcoming agenda. Mr. Kearney attended the Safe Schools Committee meeting and great work is being done.

Minutes-**Motion by Mr. Kearney to approve the minutes of 11/28/18 as amended, seconded by Mrs. Stefan and the vote was unanimous (5-0).**

Motion by Mrs. Stefan to approve the minutes of 12/5/18 as amended, seconded by Mr. Kearney and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chairman 48 hours in advance of meeting-Mrs. Astino stated that they have received a letter from Superintendent Demas stating that she will be retiring at the end of her contract in June. They have started the process to hire a new superintendent. Mrs. Maher stated she has started the research related to this process and the SC needs to decide how to proceed and what the next steps are. They should announce to the community what type of search they will use. There is a lot of work to be done. The Committee had a brief discussion and decided to invite in people from a couple of organizations to help with the search process. The Committee will meet on 2/6 at 6 p.m. and start the regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. They will also schedule more firms for 2/6/19.

Motion by Mrs. Maher to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Kearney and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Documents Used at the Meeting

Middle School Canobie Lake Music Trip	E-1
Middle School Program of Studies	E-2
Finance Monthly Update	F-1
Vehicle Maintenance	F-2
FY20 Budget Overview	F-3
FY20 Capital Budget Update	F-4
Minutes	H-1