



Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

Cohasset Middle-High School

Community Use Room

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA

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

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

Chairman Astino called the meeting back to order at 7:05 p.m.

Pledge-Recited.

Superintendent's Report-Superintendent's Award-MASSUPT-Superintendent Demas stated two students are receiving this award for Academic Growth & Student Leadership in Learning this year; Matthew Lucitt and Rebecca Kristal. The Committee congratulated the students.

Athletic Winners-Athletic Director Steve Rotondi stated they had a great season in all athletics and thanked the students for the great transition as the new director. The Co-Captains of the Cheerleading stated they had a great season and finished 2nd at the SSL Competition. They went to the Regionals for the first time. The Girls Soccer Captains stated they are the South Shore League Champions and discussed their great season. The Field Hockey Team are the South Shore League Champions again this year and made it to the Finals. The Boys and Girls Cross Country has partnered with the Town of Hull and have had a great season. Both teams are the South Shore League Division Champs. The Boys Soccer team won the South Shore League Title and the South Sectional. The Cohasset Football team won the Division 7 South Sectionals and made it to the Semi-Finals to finish out the season. Boys Golf had a great season with an 8-3 record. The Committee congratulated all the athletes for their hard work and achievements.

Public Comment-Chairman Astino advised everyone that Superintendent Demas would be reading a statement and that the Committee would not have a question and answer session that night. The Chair added that if anyone had further questions they should submit them in writing to the Superintendent. Superintendent Demas read aloud a prepared statement regarding allegations against Mr. Knight from a second student. The new charges are based on information and investigation developed by the

Cohasset Police Department, working with the Norfolk District Attorney's Office, involving an alleged second victim. Superintendent Demas stated Assistant Principal Brian Scott has been out the past two days. He will probably be out until 12/11 to take care of a minor issue. He did inform her that he would like to come back to his role as Assistant Principal instead of Interim Principal, a role he has been performing over the last couple of months. Superintendent Demas thanked Mr. Scott for all his help. She thanked Dr. Sullivan and Stephanie Moriarty for stepping up as well. Mrs. Demas stated they are in the process of completing an agreement with a Veteran Retired High School Principal who would be available, if needed, for the remainder of the year. Dima Omran-19 LedgeWood Farm Drive asked if the school has encouraged any student that may have been harassed by Mr. Knight to come forward. She stated she is worried some children are afraid to come forward. Also, she asked why there wasn't communication about Mr. Scott earlier. She asked why the district administration is avoiding answering questions. Chairman Astino stated no one here is avoiding answering questions. The Committee has allowed public comment on this topic over the past few months. There are some questions they do not have the answers to. They are unable to comment if they do not have the answers. Jessica Duncanson-132 Chief Justice Cushing Highway stated she sent questions via email to the district and looks forward to the answers. She said she was disappointed with the district and asked why they allowed Mr. Knight to resign and didn't share the information with the public until November 17th. She spoke to the DCF Supervisor twice and has received information that was also shared with the district. She asked why the district is not sharing information. Superintendent Demas stated the district has not received any information from DCF. SC Attorney Roseann DePietro stated the DCF doesn't give the information to the school or district; they give it to the individual. Mohamad Omran-19 LedgeWood Farm Drive stated on the school website the mission statement talks about the Superintendent Evaluation. He asked at what point the SC will discuss the Superintendent and act to dismiss. Chairman Astino stated the SC has had many discussions and there is no reason to take action against the Superintendent. Mr. Kearney added he has been a critic of Superintendent Demas in the past, but she is doing a great job given the circumstances. He added that the whole community is suffering and needs to work together to get through this situation and that the only person responsible is the person accused. He asked that the community show support for the Superintendent and the teachers. They are all doing a great job. Mohamad Omran agreed the teachers are doing a great job. Jessica Duncanson asked why the public was not notified about Mr. Knight's resignation when it happened.

Approval of Warrant-Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve Warrant #19-08S, seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Barbara Stefan-Aye, Jeanne Astino-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye.

Educator Spotlight-Lead Nurse Sandy Crough thanked the Committee for the new position. She said it is working out well. Between the four nurses they share 115 years of experience. She reported they have increased their Professional Development. She shared some of the improvements with this new position in place. They have had a new AED's installed in all the buildings, bus driver training with EPI Pens, all health equipment has been calibrated and they have monthly nurses meeting. She stated they have a new software, SNAP, for the nurses. They had three flu clinics this year for staff at each building. Mrs. Maher asked if the nurses training ties into SEL. Mrs. Crough responded that they do. She stated

they have some PD coming up on depression and anxiety. Mrs. Madden asked if they are seeing increases in visits due to vaping. Mrs. Crough stated she doesn't believe they have.

Interface Referral-Superintendent Demas gave a presentation of the INTERFACE Referral Service at William James College. She discussed how important the service is and is hoping to publicize it more. The mission is to provide resources & referral guidance to mental health & wellness services. They work with children, families, adults and mental health professionals with subscribing towns and communities. Mrs. Demas reviewed the process, their core values and their collaborative support. Mrs. Maher asked if the town would support having a table at the annual Health & Recreation Fair. Mrs. Demas responded that they would. Dr. Sullivan advised the Committee they have a full PD day on Friday in which they will be focusing on SEL and Wellness and their goals for the year. They will also be watching the Mr. Rogers film which is an excellent SEL tool and they are having therapy dogs come in. The 6th grade teachers will be traveling to Norton Middle School as part of the NELMS recommendation.

Superintendent Goals-Superintendent Demas advised the Committee she submitted her goals. The Committee did not have any comments.

2019-20 School Calendar-Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve the 2019-20 School Calendar, seconded by Mrs. Stefan and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Mrs. Stefan excused herself from the remainder of the meeting.

Finance-Monthly Update-Mr. MacMillan stated they are trying to be more disciplined about encumbering any expenditures. This month's report shows all encumbrances. This will give them a more accurate look at the accounts. Mrs. Madden asked how that would affect the reserve fund. Mr. MacMillan responded that it does not affect it. Mrs. Maher asked what the status of spending is at this time. Mr. MacMillan stated at this time they have put a restriction on expenditures. They are still buying materials if they need to. He stated they have enough funds for the foreseeable future and there shouldn't be a problem. Mr. MacMillan stated everything looks fine with the Revolving Grants Summary. They are expecting funds to come in for the METCO grant and other funds to come in to offset some other debt. The fees for the Afterschool Care fund will be transferred over and that will be zeroed out. Mrs. Maher suggested after this budget cycle they may want to work on the Kindergarten Revolving fund because they are going to get to a point where it is not going to be as self-funding as it has been. Mr. MacMillan agreed and believes they do have it on the SC calendar to review fees at an upcoming meeting. Mr. MacMillan stated he has worked with the Superintendent and all the building principals and they are now prioritizing the budget. They will bring to SC at the schedule upcoming meeting.

Bus Maintenance Update-Mr. MacMillan reviewed the log with the SC. He has called the lease company today about the new leases. They were dragging their feet, so he advised them that they want the agreement and need to move forward.

School Committee Comments & Communications-Transfer to Special Education Stabilization Fund-Motion by Mrs. Maher to recommend transferring \$25,000 from Free Cash into the Special Education

Stabilization Fund, seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Jeanne Astino-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye.

Reports from Sub-Committee & Liaisons-Mrs. Maher reported that the Budget & Finance sub-committee met and worked on the Policy for the Special Education Stabilization Fund. They will bring a draft to the SC for review. Mrs. Maher stated Mr. MacMillan has created one document for all the leadership to create their requested budgets. It is a much more detailed report. They worked on fitting requests into the budget priorities.

Minutes-Motion by Mrs. Maher to approve the minutes of 11/14/18 as amended, seconded by Mr. Kearney and the vote was unanimous.

Motion by Mrs. Maher to resume Executive Session Exemption #3 for Strategy related to litigation adjourned, seconded by Mr. Kearney. Roll Call Vote; Paul Kearney-Aye, Jeanne Astino-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Jennifer Madden-Aye.

The SC went back into Executive Session at 9:20 p.m.

Documents Used at the Meeting

INTERFACE Referral	F-1
Superintendent Goals	F-2
2019-20 School Calendar	F-3
Monthly Update	G-1
Bus Maintenance	G-2
Minutes	I-1