

APPROVED

April 29, 2020

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

The April 29, 2020 School Committee (SC) meeting was called to order by Brett Argall at 7:00 PM. He reported that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting is being streamed live on YouTube, broadcast through Facebook, and recorded for future rebroadcasting. Participants were invited to join the meeting remotely (Zoom).

School Committee Members present: Brett Argall (Chair), Lisa Brown (Secretary), Becky Charniak, Kelli Grady (Vice Chair), Julie Moulder

School Committee Members Absent:

Non-Voting: Business & Operations Manager Cortney Keegan, Superintendent Kevin Superintendent Maines, Cindy Socha, Jon Bell, Donna Sousa, Josh Romano, Brian Delaney, Nealy Urquhart, Heather Morin, Rep. Joseph McKenna, Senator Ryan Fattman, Tracy Novick (MASC)

Student Representative Report

There was no report.

Public Comment & Communication

There was no comment.

Old Business/New Business

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: There was no new business.

Superintendent's Report

Senator Fattman and Representative McKenna-Discussion

Sen. Fattman reported on the results of the consensus revenue hearing, which occurred two weeks ago. It is not known what to expect, however it is estimated that FY2021 could have a \$4.2-\$7 billion budget deficit. It is thought that the FY2020 budget will not be impacted, as it exists. At the very least, FY2021 will be a 1/12 budget. They hope to have a budget proposed by 7/1/20. There may be federal assistance for states' and municipalities' budget deficits.

Rep. McKenna stated that The House does not have a procedure for how to conduct remote business, and that procedure must be in place before a budget can be taken up. There have been talks of a joint House and Senate budget moving forward. A discussion was held.

Sen. Fattman spoke about the difficulty of getting personal protective equipment.

Mr. Argall asked the Senator and Representative to search out assistance for technology resources. Sen. Fattman asked how Douglas is performing with regards to remote learning. Superintendent Maines stated that they have been able to meet the technology needs for the families that have requested it. A discussion was held. Mr. Delaney stated that DMS has a 98% online engagement, and he thanked Sen. Fattman and Rep. McKenna for the grant for the Chromebooks. Rep. McKenna stated that personal technology may qualify as an emergency resource.

Ms. Charniak asked that a social aspect of remote learning be explored.

Mr. Argall stated that the 5/4/20 Town Meeting has been postponed, to possibly September. He asked the Senator and Representative if they had any information regarding postponing town meetings. Rep. McKenna knows that flexibility has been granted, however he has not heard any more specific information. Sen. Fattman will look into the law.

Superintendent Search Update

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Ms. Charniak stated that a Search Committee of 9 individuals met last night consisting of Ms. Charniak, Ms. Moulder, Ms. Socha, Ms. Urquhart, Mr. Riordan, Ms. Miller, student representative Will Champagne, and two parents.

Ms. Novick reminded the SC that the Search Committee is a public body and bound by public ethics laws. The meetings going forward will occur in Executive Session. She stated that the committee will do the initial review of applicants and submit a list of finalists to the SC. The committee is currently creating a list of topics to ask during the interviews. Once Ms. Novick has that list, she will help organize a thoughtful interview. The application is posted and there are 7 applicants. Applications close on 5/8/20. Once they close, the screening committee will receive access to the applications, review them 5/9/-5/10 and meet 5/11. Interviews will be scheduled over the week of 5/11-5/15. Once the finalists are public, remote visitations to the finalists' districts and finalists' remote visitations with Douglas will be scheduled, and then final interviews scheduled. The plan is to have the process complete by the first week of June, 2020.

Ms. Novick stated that the survey is closed, but staff can still submit input to her or Ms. Charniak. Methods of accepting input were discussed. Superintendent Maines will email the survey to staff again in case they still wish to provide input.

School Committee & Sub-Committee Report

Accounts Payable Report

Ms. Brown reported that on 4/23/20 she signed 4 batches totaling \$102,500.03.

Consent Agenda

Minutes: April 20, 2020

-Ms. Brown made a motion to approve the April 20, 2020 School Committee meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Grady seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

Payment of School Department Employees through 6/30/2020

Ms. Keegan stated that DLS has provided guidance, and custodians are back to work in force, starting today.

-Ms. Charniak made a motion that the School Committee approve payment of salaries and wages for all regular employees of Douglas Public Schools during the Coronavirus health emergency. For hourly employees, they will be paid their regularly scheduled hours with the School Department. "Regular Employees" is defined as those who have been appointed by the Superintendent of Schools for a specific, ongoing position with assigned, regularly occurring hours. This does not include any day-to-day staff. This approval is for the period beginning Monday, May 4, 2020 through June 30, 2020, which is the end of the fiscal year. Further votes may or may not be necessary going forward as the situation changes with guidance from the State or government as the situation evolves. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

A discussion was held regarding the work that school staff is doing during the health emergency and the fact that the school still needs to meet 95% of net school spending requirements.

Accept and Approve Executive Session Meeting Minutes: 10/2/19, 10/16/19, 11/6/19, 11/20/19 & 12/18/19

-Ms. Grady made a motion to approve and release into public record the School Committee Executive Session meeting minutes dated 10/2/19 as presented. Ms. Charniak seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

-Ms. Grady made a motion to approve and release into public record the School Committee Executive Session meeting minutes dated 10/16/19 as presented. Ms. Charniak seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

-Ms. Charniak made a motion to approve and release into public record the School Committee Executive Session meeting minutes dated 11/6/19 as presented. Ms. Grady seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

-Ms. Charniak made a motion to approve and release into public record the School Committee Executive Session meeting minutes dated 11/20/19 as presented. Ms. Grady seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

-Ms. Grady made a motion to approve and release into public record the School Committee Executive Session meeting minutes dated 12/18/19 as presented. Ms. Charniak seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

Accept and Approve Budget Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes: 12/13/18, 2/28/19, 3/12/19, 5/1/19, 8/6/19, 10/23/19, 1/15/20 & 4/15/20

-Ms. Brown made a motion to approve and release into public record the Budget Sub-Committee meeting minutes dated 12/13/18, 2/28/19, 3/12/19, 5/1/19, 8/6/19, 10/23/19, 1/15/20 and 4/15/20 as presented. Ms. Grady seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Abstained, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

School Business and Operations Manager Report

Transfers and Reclassifications

There were no transfers or reclassifications.

General Budget Discussion

Ms. Keegan will present a General Fund Budget Report at the next meeting. The General Fund balance is currently lower than it has been at this point in the last five years. They have exceeded the \$1.246 million in School Choice that was budgeted for FY2020.

Just under \$80,000 has been spent for unanticipated repairs that had to get done. The Town has said that they may fund some of the cost of those repairs, however at this time, it may not be proper to request those funds.

The administrative team is working on the FY2021 budget to bring it down, and they are looking at projections for year-end balances. Mr. Argall stated that the Board of Selectmen have not come to a conclusion about Town Meeting or next year's budget. They are leaning towards moving Town Meeting out to the fall and working under a 1/12 budget for July and August. They will be meeting again on 5/19/20. The Town Administrator is looking to hold salaries flat. The School Dept. may have to work with a Net School Spending number.

Mr. Argall feels that the date of 6/4/20 for the budget public hearing is still appropriate. He is still waiting for guidance on how to hold the meeting virtually.

Other Topics

Mr. Argall asked if the SC wants to assemble a committee to work out how to re-open the schools. Superintendent Maines feels that the time to start discussing this would be July. A discussion was held.

Topics for the 5/7/20 agenda: Pre-K fees, spring sports stipends, the evaluation process, and the SC meeting calendar. The next two meetings after 5/7 will be 5/21 and 6/4. Superintendent Maines will ask Lauren Tibbets to schedule 6/17, 7/15 & 7/22.

Adjournment

-Ms. Moulder made a motion at 8:45 PM to adjourn the School Committee meeting. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Brett Argall-Aye, Lisa Brown-Aye, Becky Charniak-Aye, Kelli Grady-Aye, Lisa Moulder-Aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary