

**Hopedale School Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting of  
Tuesday, January 7, 2020**

Members Present: Alysia Butler, Vice Chair  
Lisa Alberto (arrived at 6:48 pm)  
Craig Adams  
Jennifer McKeon

Members Absent: Lori Hampsch

Also Present: Karen Crebase, Superintendent  
Francis Hodgens, Student Representative to the School Committee  
David Alberto, Jr., JSHS Student Council Representative  
Lynne Davis, School Accountant  
Elizabeth Callahan, SEPAC Chair  
Anne Sullivan, PACE President  
Derek Atherton, Jr.-Sr. High School Principal  
Karen Cosgrove, Pupil Personnel Services Director  
Brian Miller, Memorial School Principal  
Kristen Poisson, Bright Beginnings Center Director

Mrs. Butler, serving as Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm in the Media Center at the Jr.-Sr. High School, 25 Adin Street, Hopedale, Massachusetts, with a quorum present.

1. **Minutes of November 5, 2019** - Upon a motion by Mr. Adams which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the meeting minutes for November 5, 2019 were unanimously approved.
2. **Student Representative Report – Jr.-Sr. High School:** DJ Alberto reported on recent and upcoming activities, including: DECA babysitting fundraiser, winter cotillion, tree lighting, FinFit Fair, start of the winter sports season, Toys for Tots collection, winter concerts, DECA district competition, auditions for the spring musical, winter pep rally, Alumni Day, Power of One celebrations, and the exchange program trip to Italy.
3. **Superintendent's Comments** – The Superintendent noted that the meeting scheduled for December 3, 2019 had been cancelled due to inclement weather. She reported on the Jr.-Sr. High School annual turkey dinner, the production of *Clue*, the induction ceremony for the Business and Mathematics Honors Societies, the FinFit Fair and December school events. Ms. Crebase announced that the new school bus parking lot located by the water treatment plant has been completed and is in use. She also reported that the Town of Hopedale website now includes a School Committee page for posting policies, agendas, minutes and budget information. Congratulations were extended to the field hockey and cross country teams on their competitions at the state level, and to the Jr.-Sr. High School for being named among the top 5000 STEM schools in the country. Ms. Crebase informed the Committee that she has been appointed to the Town Administrator Search Committee and will provide updates throughout the hiring process.
4. **Committee Response to Comments** – On behalf of the Committee, Mrs. Butler congratulated Mr. Atherton for the school's STEM recognition.
5. **Financial Items**
  - **Monthly Report of Accounts Payable Warrants:** The Committee reviewed recent accounts payable warrant reports as presented by Mrs. Davis. Upon a motion by Mr. Adams which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of nine warrants dated October 31, November 7, 14, 20 21, 25 and December 6, 12, and 23, 2019 in the amount of \$669,837.87.

- **Monthly Report of Payroll Warrants:** Upon a motion by Mr. Adams which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of four payroll warrants dated November 7, 21, December 5 and 19, 2019 in the amount of \$1,902,979.30.
- **Monthly Budget Report:** Mrs. Davis presented the monthly budget reports for November and December 2019.
- **Warrants for Signature:** There were no warrants distributed for signature.
- **School Choice Spending Recommendation:** The Superintendent presented a proposal, as recommended by the Budget Sub-Committee, for the purchase of an additional van to help reduce general budget transportation costs. Upon a motion by Mr. Adams which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the Committee unanimously voted to allocate up to \$30,000 from the school choice revolving fund for the purchase of a van.

## 6. Committee Reports

- **Committee on Policy:** Mrs. McKeon reported that MASC's suggested policies JH, JHD, JI, JIB and JIC were recently reviewed and are not being recommended for adoption at this time.
- **Committee on Fields:** Mrs. McKeon reported that there have been no recent meetings. Fran Hodgins added that he has been sworn in as an official member of the committee.
- **Committee on Public Relations:** Mrs. Butler reported that she and Mrs. Hampsch attended the recent MASC Conference. At the session on the Role of the Chair, communication, chair responsibilities, running meetings and the open meeting law were discussed. The session on Student Representatives focused on legal requirements of the position, participation at meetings, and communication with the student body.
- **Committee on Budget:** Mr. Adams reported that next year's preliminary budget has been prepared and will be presented later in the meeting.

## 7. Agenda Items:

- **SEPAAC Update:** The Committee welcomed Elizabeth Callahan, Chairperson of Hopedale's Special Education Parents' Advisory Council (SEPAAC) for her annual report. Mrs. Callahan reviewed SEPAAC's mission and provided a summary of its activities. She reported on SEPAAC's meeting schedule, the annual educator recognition event, scholarships for graduating seniors, grants to teachers, fundraisers, participation on the search committee for the district's new PPS Director, coordinating the annual Basic Rights Workshop, and planning events for parents. Goals for the current year include continuing to collaborate with local parent organizations and area SEPAACs. The Committee noted their appreciation of the organization's work and support.
- **Memorial School PACE Update:** The Committee welcomed Anne Sullivan, President of Memorial School's Parent Advisory Council on Education (PACE) for her annual report. Mrs. Sullivan reviewed recent fundraisers, social activities, and programs sponsored by PACE. These include the annual kindergarten social, holiday shopping, the vendor fair, the Halloween dance, enrichment activities, Boosterthon, book fairs, SEED grant requests from staff, maintaining an online family directory, and field trips. Mrs. Sullivan reported that this year's goals for the organization include welcoming new volunteers and collaborating with SEPAAC. The members and administrators thanked PACE for their support.
- **Facilities Update:** The Superintendent reported that several internal and external locks and doors have been replaced throughout the district, playground improvements have been made at Memorial School and building access security has been enhanced.
- **Greater Milford Community Health Network Area Grant:** Upon a motion by Mr. Adams which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to approve and accept a \$9,000 grant from the Greater Milford Community Health Network to be used for implementation of the Pyramid Model at Bright Beginnings Center.
- **Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation Review:** The Superintendent presented a mid-year progress report on her annual goals of professional practice, student learning, and district improvement. Progress on the standards of instructional leadership, management and operations, family and community engagement, and professional culture were provided. Highlights of the report include Ms. Crebase's

work on overseeing contract negotiations, collaborating on enrichment activities at the elementary school and working with high school staff on the college and career curriculum and an upcoming evening event for parents.

- **School Committee Mid-Year Review on Goals:** Mrs. Butler reviewed progress on each of the Committee's six goals. Goals concerning professional development, revision of the policy manual, community outreach, contract negotiations and budget development are in progress. Later this month, work will begin on a revised strategic plan and the review of procedures for School Committee and Superintendent evaluations.
- **2020-2021 School Year Calendar Draft:** A preliminary draft of the 2020-2021 district calendar was reviewed. A discussion followed regarding the lateness of the Labor Day holiday and whether consideration should be given to starting school earlier than usual. The Committee requested that the Superintendent survey staff and students regarding their preferences. The calendar will be shared with the union leadership and staff, and brought forward again for further discussion.
- **Annual Review and Approval of Fees:** The Vice Chair presented a review of current fees, anticipated receipts, and anticipated expenditures for the athletic, transportation, extended day, food services, and preschool programs. Based on an analysis of each program, the only recommended change was an increase from \$3.50 to \$3.75 for adult lunches in the cafeteria. A discussion followed regarding athletic fees. Mr. Adams noted that the percentage of support for athletic programs from the school budget has increased in recent years and that new fields may require additional support from fees in the future. Consideration of increases in fees for preschool tuition and lunches were also raised by the members. The Superintendent reported that, at this time, the preschool and food services programs are sufficiently funded with the current fee schedule. Ms. Crebase will meet with the athletic director to reconsider the athletic fee recommendation. The fee schedule will be considered for approval at a future meeting. Ms. Crebase also presented a review of building use fees for the current year. Based on an analysis of the fees, no change was recommended for the 2020-2021 school year. It was noted that the fees were adjusted in 2018 and the funds are used for building improvements.
- **Preliminary Presentation of FY21 Budget:** The Superintendent presented the preliminary FY 2021 school budget and noted that it reflects level services due to the financial constraints of the Town's budget. The proposal reflects a 3.50% increase over the FY 2020 appropriated budget in the amount of \$442,015. The proposed increase includes projected contractual obligations and mandated special education costs for out-of-district tuition and transportation. General needs include maintenance, instructional technology and instructional supports.

8. **Correspondence** – The members reviewed a note from the Guertin Family, the Memorial School December and January calendars, and the December HPS Technology Newsletter.

9. **Audience to Citizens** – Mr. Miller invited the community to the elementary production of *Where the Sidewalk Ends* during the upcoming weekend.

10. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for February 4, 2020.

**Adjournment** – The Vice Chair announced the need to enter executive session to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and with respect to collective bargaining with union personnel or litigation since an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the Committee. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members voted by roll call vote to enter executive session for the stated purpose as follows: Mrs. Butler- yes; Mr. Adams- yes; Mrs. Alberto- yes; and Mrs. McKeon- yes. The Chair stated that the Committee would not be reconvening in public session and declared the meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary  
APPROVED: February 4, 2020