

**Hopedale School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of
Tuesday, May 4, 2021**

Members Present: Alysia Butler, Chair
Lori Hampsch, Vice Chair
Lisa Alberto
Jennifer McKeon
Kristi Brytowski

Also Present: Karen M. Crebase, Superintendent
Lynne Davis, School Accountant
Katelynn Brunt and Madison Sullivan, Student Council Representatives
Nora Hodgins and Ashleigh Bourgeois, Student Council Representatives (2021-22)
Kelly Alley, School Adjustment Counselor
Kathryn Atchue and Valerie Marcotte, Summer School Directors
Derek Atherton, Jr.-Sr. High School Principal
Karen Cosgrove, Pupil Personnel Services Director
Donna Hennessy, Memorial School Assistant Principal
Timothy Johnson, Jr.-Sr. High School Assistant Principal
Kristen Poisson, Bright Beginnings Center Principal

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law, GL chapter 30A, section 18, and the Governor's March 15 and August 7, 2020 orders imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, the regular business meeting of the Hopedale School Committee was conducted via remote participation. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm under these provisions with a quorum present. She invited members of the public to monitor the meeting by using the information provided on the Town's website and announced that the meeting was being recorded and streaming live. Members of the public are welcome to email questions to schoolcommittee@hopedaleschools.org. A video of the meeting will be available on the Town website.

1. Minutes of April 6 and 27, 2021 - Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto and seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of April 6 and 27, 2021.

2. Student Representatives' Report – Jr.-Sr. High School: Katelynn Brunt and Madison Sullivan introduced next year's representatives, Nora Hodgins and Ashleigh Bourgeois, who reported on recent Student Council meetings and conferences, the Stuff-a-Bus collection of non-perishable items for the Milford Food Pantry, and future plans for fundraisers and elections. They also recognized recent DECA successes and announced the upcoming musical production of *The Addams Family*. The Committee thanked Ms. Brunt and Ms. Sullivan for their service and welcomed Ms. Hodgins and Ms. Bourgeois.

3. Superintendent's Comments – The Superintendent noted that the Annual Town Meeting has been scheduled for May 22, 2021. She provided an update on the low incidence of COVID-19 in the schools and community, the implementation of full in-person learning in preschool through Grade 12, distribution of meals, and MCAS scheduling. Ms. Crebase announced that Hopedale has been accepted into the Green Communities grant program and thanked Waters Corporation for their generous donation of PPE to the district. Finally, the Superintendent and the Committee extended their gratitude to outgoing member Lori Hampsch for her dedicated sixteen-year service on the Committee.

4. Response to Superintendent's Comments – There was a brief discussion concerning MCAS assessments.

5. Financial Items/Budget -

- **Monthly Report of Accounts Payable Warrants:** The Committee reviewed the warrant report. Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the members unanimously voted to ratify the receipt of a credit for FY20 in a warrant dated April 1, 2021 in the amount of \$81.45 and the payment four FY21 accounts payable warrants dated April 1 (two), 15 and 29, 2021 in the amount of \$369,577.12.
- **Monthly Report of Payroll Warrants:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch which was seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of two payroll warrants dated April 8 and 22, 2021 in the amount of \$984,447.15.
- **Monthly Budget Reports:** Members reviewed the monthly budget report for April 2021.
- **Warrants for Signature:** There were no warrants distributed for signature.
- **Approval of Grant:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee unanimously accepted a grant in the amount of \$5,933.40 from the City of Worcester Executive Office of Economic Development, Workforce Development Operations Division and MassHire Central Region Workforce Board for a high school paid internship program.

6. Committee Reports -

- **Committee on Budget:** Mrs. Hampsch reported that the subcommittee recommended a reduction in the FY2022 budget in response to a request from the Finance Committee. The reduction to \$12,706,522 was accepted by the full Committee at their recent Budget Workshop and presented to the Town as the school department's final budget request.
- **Committee on Policy:** Mrs. McKeon presented the following policies for a Second Reading and approval:
KDA - Guidelines for Posting Information on JSHS Sign
KF - Community Use of School Facilities
KF-R - Community Use of School Facilities
KH - Notification of Non-School Related Activities
Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon which was seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the policies.
- **Committee on Health and Safety:** The Superintendent reported that the Committee's focus will be on staff and student wellbeing with a theme of re-engaging and reconnecting. A survey was recently distributed to staff to determine topics for upcoming professional development and preferences for staff activities.

7. Agenda Items -

- **School Highlight:** Ms. Poisson introduced Kelly Alley who serves as school adjustment counselor and special education team chair at Bright Beginnings Center. Ms. Alley reported on several activities she has implemented at BBC that have been well received by students and families. She has begun a six-week Lunch Bunch for pre-kindergarten students with a focus on social skills; and a before-school group for pre-kindergarten students during which self-regulation is practiced through game playing, bubble work, and the creation of zen gardens. The Committee thanked Ms. Alley for her innovative programs and hoped that she would continue them into the future.
- **Public Hearing Date Confirmation:** By consensus, the Committee scheduled their Annual Public Hearing for Saturday, May 22, 2021 at 9:15am on the grounds of the Community House prior to the Special Town Meeting.
- **Spring Coaches:** The Superintendent announced the following coaches for the 2021 Spring Season: Softball: Varsity Shanna Lathrop and JV Andrew Dietrich; Baseball: Varsity Kevin Bresciani and JV Zach Brown; Girls Lacrosse: Varsity Kayla Merrigan and JV Maureen Hodgins; Girls Tennis: Varsity Art Rizzo; Boys Tennis: Varsity Alex Laumeister; Track and Field: Boys Varsity Joe Dragan, Girls Varsity Tim Maguire and Assistant Coach Sarah Comeau. It was noted that Boys Lacrosse will be held with Milford High School.
- **Senior Class Last Day:** Mr. Atherton presented a request from the Class of 2021 that the Committee approve May 21, 2021 as their final day of formal classes. Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the request.

- **Senior Activity Dates:** Mr. Atherton highlighted several upcoming senior events including: the Senior Tea, Senior Breakfast, Talent Show, Prom, CPR and Self-Defense classes, the traditional walk through Memorial School, Class Night, Harbor Cruise, Sports Awards, Baccalaureate at Sacred Heart Church, Class Night, and Graduation on June 5 at the Community House. Mr. Atherton thanked the Board of Health for working with the school to review protocols and for supporting the activities which will be held with appropriate safety measures in place.
- **BVT Enrollment Update for 2021-2022:** The Superintendent reported that 18 students who attend the high school have been accepted to Blackstone Vocational Technical Regional High School for the fall, 11 of whom are Hopedale residents. At this time, the number of students who will attend is not confirmed.
- **Bus Registration Update:** The Superintendent reported that bus registration for the 2021-2022 school year is now open. There are currently 116 online registrations for kindergarten through 12th grade.
- **School Choice for 2021-2022:** The School Committee reviewed anticipated enrollments for next school year and the number of school choice applications at each grade level. A discussion followed regarding distancing protocols at Memorial School in classrooms and in the cafeteria, potential new residents, and current class sizes. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the Committee voted unanimously to accept the existing applications for Grades 2 and 3 and to defer action on Kindergarten and Grades 1, 4, 5, and 6 until the June meeting. Mr. Atherton reported that all current applications for Grades 7 through 12 could be accommodated at the Jr.-Sr. High School. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto and seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the reported applications in 7th through 12th grade.
- **Summer School:** The Pupil Personnel Services Director presented a review of the summer extended school year program, SHAPE (Summer Hopedale Academic Program for Excellence). It will consist of three two-week sessions meeting five days per week beginning July 6th through August 13th. Invitations have been distributed to students who receive services during the school year, including ELL services and other supports. Ms. Cosgrove noted that she is working with the program directors, Kathryn Atchue and Val Marcotte, to finalize program plans, student groupings, staffing, and themes.
- **Parent Student Handbook Updates:** The Superintendent reported that handbooks for Memorial Elementary School and the Jr.-Sr. High School have minimal changes. Two changes for the BBC handbook were presented regarding the extended day program. The Committee approved the handbooks by consensus.
- **Extended Day Pay Scale:** The Superintendent presented a new pay scale for the extended day program. New rates are aligned with those in the Unit C collective bargaining agreement and provide steps for continuing employees. Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the payscale for FY2022 through FY2024.
- **Appointment of Karen Crebase to BICO Board of Directors:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee unanimously appointed the Superintendent as the Hopedale Public Schools' representative to the BICO Board of Directors.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Update:** The Chair has been in contact with Hopedale for Change to discuss formalizing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in Town. She will continue to investigate interest in the schools and in the community.
- **Superintendent Evaluation:** The Chair reviewed the process by which each member contributed individually to the Superintendent's annual evaluation and presented the composite narrative. On behalf of the Committee, Mrs. Butler noted the Superintendent's leadership especially during the difficulties of this past year. She reviewed specific ratings based on the DESE Model Rubric and reported that Ms. Crebase's overall performance during the 2020-2021 year was rated as Exemplary. The summative evaluation reflected the Superintendent's progress on her professional practice, student learning and district improvement goals, and her performance on the standards of instructional leadership, management and operations, family and community engagement, and professional culture which received ratings of proficient and exemplary. Highlights included Ms. Crebase's successful return to in-person learning, budget management, community outreach and negotiations with union leadership. Her achievements also include work obtaining grants, spearheading a district 1:1 initiative, and shepherding the district through the state mandated lockdown with a successful remote learning academy, virtual learning models, and hybrid instruction.

- **School Committee Evaluation:** The Vice Chair presented the Committee's 2020-2021 self-evaluation which rated the members' overall performance as proficient. The evaluation tool reviewed the members' progress on their professional practice, leadership and district improvement goals, and their performance on standards of district leadership, management and operations, family and community engagement, and professional culture. Highlights included successful work on policies, budgeting, bargaining, and outreach. Although the state emergency placed restrictions on the Committee's work and access to the public, the members worked collaboratively and successfully to meet their obligations to the community and district.
- **Approval of Unit C Contract:** Mrs. Hampsch reported that the Negotiation Subcommittee and Hopedale Education Association have reached a final agreement on a new three-year contract. Salary increases for the three years are 2%, 2.25% and 2.25%. Differentials, holidays and the retirement incentive have been revised, and an evergreen clause added. Upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch and seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the members voted unanimously by roll call vote to ratify the 2021-2024 Unit C contract as follows: Mrs. Alberto-yes; Mrs. Brytowski- yes; Mrs. McKeon-yes; Mrs. Hampsch-yes and Mrs. Butler-yes.

8. **Correspondence** – No correspondence was presented for review.

9. **Audience to Citizens** - There were no public comments or questions submitted via the School Committee's email account.

The next regular meeting will be held on June 1, 2021.

Adjourn to Executive Session- The Chair announced the need for an executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation since an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the Committee and to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto and seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the members voted by roll call vote to enter executive session for the stated purpose as follows: Mrs. Alberto-yes; Mrs. Brytowski- yes; Mrs. McKeon-yes; Mrs. Hampsch-yes and Mrs. Butler-yes. The Committee would not be reconvening in public session and the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary
APPROVED: June 1, 2021