

**Hopedale School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of
Tuesday, January 4, 2022**

Members Present: Kristi Brytowski, Vice Chair
Jennifer McKeon
Alysia Butler
Kaitlin Federico

Members Absent: Lisa Alberto

Also Present: Karen Crebase, Superintendent
Derek Atherton, Jr.-Sr. High School Principal
Karen Cosgrove, Pupil Personnel Services Director
Lynne Davis, School Accountant
Brian Miller, Memorial School Principal
Nora Hodgens, School Committee Representative/Student Council Co-Representative
Ashleigh Bourgeois and Gage Pavia, Student Council Co-Representatives
Anne Sullivan, PACE President

Mrs. Brytowski called the meeting to order at 5:57 pm in the Media Center at 25 Adin Street, Hopedale, Massachusetts, with a quorum present .

1. **Minutes of November 2 and December 7, 2021** - Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the minutes of November 2, 2021 were unanimously approved. Approval of the minutes for December 7, 2021 was passed over until a quorum of the members present at that meeting are in attendance.
2. **Student Representatives' Report** - Ashleigh Bourgeois and Gage Pavia reported on recent and upcoming events, including winter concerts, STUCO meetings, the Winter Cotillion, monthly staff appreciation events, the production of *Alice in Wonderland*, bonding events, and DECA competitions. The Superintendent noted that the Health Department supports continuing student activities with required safety protocols in place.
3. **Superintendent's Comments** – The Superintendent reported on the successful return to school after winter break, current staff and student positive COVID-19 cases, and the distribution of KN95 masks and testing kits to staff members. Ms. Crebase noted that reported cases are expected to increase as those identified during the break are reported to the schools. Additional vaccination clinics are being investigated, vaccination rates among staff and students are being monitored, and weekly meetings with the Town's Health Agent have been scheduled.
4. **Committee Response to Superintendent's Comments** - During a brief discussion it was noted that staff absences are at typical levels.
5. **Financial Items**
 - **Monthly Report of Accounts Payable Warrants:** The Committee reviewed the accounts payable report as presented by Mrs. Davis. Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of ten warrants dated: December 2 (two), 16 (four) and 30 (four), 2021 in the amount of \$505,765.57.

- **Monthly Report of Payroll Warrants:** Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of three payroll warrants dated: December 2, 16 and 30, 2021, in the amount of \$1,469,498.52.
- **Monthly Budget Reports:** Mrs. Davis presented the monthly budget report. In response to a question regarding the substitute teacher line, Mrs. Davis confirmed that a budget transfer will be required before the end of the fiscal year.
- **Warrants for Signature:** There were no warrants distributed for signature.
- **BBC Desk Surplus:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the Committee unanimously voted to declare 175 student desks and chairs, valued at less than \$5,000, as surplus. Mrs. Davis noted that there would be a cost to dispose of the desks if other Town departments do not claim them.
- **Greener Communities Town Grant Update:** The Superintendent reported that the first round of projects under the Greener Communities Town Grant has been determined and include several school-related capital improvements, including replacement of pump motors and weatherization. Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to support the grant expenditures as outlined in the report from Greener Communities.

6. **Committee on Policy:** Mrs. McKeon presented the following policies for a Second Read and final adoption:

GCBB - Employment of Principals

GCF - Professional Staff Hiring

GCIA - Philosophy of Staff Development

Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the members unanimously voted to approve the policies as presented.

7. **Committee on Budget:** The Budget Subcommittee held a meeting on December 16, 2021 and endorsed the preliminary budget to be presented later in the meeting.

8. **Agenda Items:**

- **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 the impact COVID-19 has had on fundraising, social activities, and enrichment programs. Currently, PACE is supporting SEED grant requests from staff, future field trips, and potentially a spring Boosterthon. Goals for the organization include increasing activities for students and continuing the successful collaboration with SEPAC. The members and administrators thanked PACE for their support.
- **Mask Update and Discussion:** The Superintendent reported that the DESE mask mandate is likely to be extended beyond January 15, 2022 and that the schools are continuing to collaborate with the Health Department. This agenda item will be revisited each month.
- **School Year Calendar Review:** The draft of the 2022-2023 district calendar was reviewed. In response to the Hopedale Education Association's recommendation to add two Jewish holidays to the calendar, the Superintendent has asked that they survey their membership regarding the extension of the school year. The Committee requested that the scheduling of the early release day in May be reviewed to determine whether it can be added to the Memorial Day weekend.
- **Superintendent's Recommendation for School Choice Spending FY22:** The Superintendent presented a recommendation to expend \$55,000 to fund the repair and painting of the Jr.-Sr. High School auditorium ceiling, installation of a ramp at the Memorial School playground, painting at Bright Beginnings Center, and grounds improvements, including tree removal. Upon a motion by

Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously approved the recommended expenditures from the school choice revolving account.

- **Annual Review and Approval of Fees:** The Superintendent presented the 2022-2023 proposals for revolving account and building use fees with a recommended increase for transportation fees only. Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the membership unanimously voted to approve a \$25 increase in the transportation fee with a \$50 increase in the family cap.
- **Superintendent Mid-Year Progress Report:** The Superintendent reported on progress to date on her goals for the current school year to 1) lead the school district forward by adopting and implementing the Acceleration Roadmap: Pathway to an Equitable Recovery [Professional Practice], 2) foster a sense of belonging and inclusion for students while continuously monitoring students' understanding to ensure strong grade-appropriate instruction [Student Learning], and focus on implementation of the district strategic plan and school action plans [District Improvement]. Ms. Crebase highlighted the implementation of assessments to identify learning gaps due to the pandemic, college and career planning for junior and senior high school students, seeking Innovative Pathways designations for the district's biomedical science and business programs, increasing counseling and academic supports, and the implementation of the district's strategic plan and the aligned school action plans.
- **Preliminary Presentation of FY23 Budget:** The Superintendent presented the 2022-2023 draft budget which reflects an increase of 5.78% (\$735,001.00) due to contractual obligations, mandated increases for special education services, general needs, an increase in FTE for the Facilities Director, and additional building level staffing needs. A brief discussion followed regarding school choice enrollments and future steps.

9. **Correspondence** – The Committee reviewed the quarterly report from the BICO Board of Directors.

10. **Audience to Citizens** – No members of the audience requested to address the Committee.

The next meeting of the Committee will be February 1, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary
APPROVED: February 1, 2022