

ZOOM MEETING LINK:

<https://portsmouthschoolsri-org.zoom.us/j/82167724910?pwd=WGITdXFmWTRGK0pEUGkxUFBaS0J4Zz09>

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ms. Copeland, on Tuesday evening, March 9, 2021. The meeting is all virtual tonight. Ms. Copeland, led the group in the pledge of allegiance and requested a moment of silence in honor of our armed forces in harm's way.

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION

RIGL 42-46-5 sections:

(a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

Chair, Ms. Copeland, reported that an Executive Session had been held prior to the Public Meeting this evening, March 9, 2021. No votes were taken.

2. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Ms. Copeland requested a motion to seal the Executive Session minutes of March 9, 2021. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, FF-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes

3. CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

A. Roll Call

Emily Copeland:	Present	Thomas Vadney:	Present
Fred Faerber:	Present	Karen McDaid:	Present
Juan Carlos Payero:	Present	Isabelle Kelly:	Present
Allen Shers:	Present		

Let the record reflect that all School Committee Members are present this evening in person at the Portsmouth High School Library and Ms. McDaid is present virtually on the evening of March 9, 2021.

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Kenworthy, Superintendent; Ms. Elizabeth Vivieros, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Christopher DiIuro, Director of Finance; Dr. Lisa Colwell, Director of Pupil Personnel.

B. Emergency Evacuation Plan

The Emergency Evacuation Plan is to leave PHS and head to the New Gym

C. NSBA

This is the National School Board Association update. We have three people from our district planning to attend this virtual meeting, no travel required – Ms. Copeland, Ms. McDaid and Superintendent Kenworthy. The date for this conference is April 8 thru April 10, 2021

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Policy

Ms. McDaid presented her report on the Policy Subcommittee, which met March 8, 2021. Four policies were reviewed. These included:

- Food Allergies, Special Dietary Needs Policy (EFAB)
- Naming of School Facilities Policy (FF)

Portsmouth School Committee

March 9, 2021

Public Session

- School Committee Member Conduct Policy (BC)
- Committee Member Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy (BCAB)

It was voted by the Policy Subcommittee that all of those policies will move before the full School Committee at our next meeting and we were also pleased to note that these are the last of the policies that we needed to shift over to the new organizational scheme and formatting for policies that did not require changes. There are more policies to be reviewed for the shift to the new formatting of policies.

5. RECOGNITION

A. Aquidneck Land Trust Art & Writing Contest Winners

Superintendent Kenworthy presented awards and recognition to student winners of the Aquidneck Land Trust Art and Writing Contest. The students winning the awards include:

Nathaniel Morgan – For the outstanding Achievement of winning Second Place in the Aquidneck Land Trust Art and Writing Contest. Nathaniel is a winner in the Art portion of the contest and attends Melville School.

Joel Morgan – For outstanding achievement of winning Third Place in the Aquidneck Land Trust Art & Writing Contest. Joel is a winner in the Art portion of the contest and attends Melville School.

Braydon Martin – For the outstanding achievement of winning Third Place in the Aquidneck Land Trust Art & Writing Contest. Braydon is a winner in the Writing portion of the contest and attends Melville School.

Erin Alphonse – For the outstanding achievement of winning Third Place in the Aquidneck Land Trust Art & Writing Contest. Erin is a winner in the Art portion of the contest and attends Portsmouth Middle School.

Congratulations to all of these students. This contest was open to students in Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth in Newport County.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair recognized Sofia Sinclair, 201 Ethel Drive. Public Comment concerned bullying and racial comments heard to have taken place in the Portsmouth School District. Parent/resident of Portsmouth wanted to state her opinion that this type of behavior not be tolerated in Portsmouth and her expectations that the School Committee and the Administrators will deal with this issue in a manner that reflects the seriousness of this matter in our school district. She wants every student to feel heard and protected. Ms. Copeland assured Ms. Sinclair that this item will be on an agenda in the near future.

Mr. Allen Shers recognized by the Chair for Public Comment. Mr. Shers commented on the reputation Portsmouth has had for over the past forty years as the community to locate in when moving to Rhode Island. The influx of the Navy moving their families to this area has benefited our reputation as the place to be residing and raising a family and attending the schools. He discussed the funding formula used by the State to fund schools and school's efforts to provide the education needed and wanted with the limited resources the funding formula has allowed Portsmouth.

Ms. Valerie Seveney commented that the ALT submissions are on their website. That is the way to find them.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A. Personnel Update

Superintendent Kenworthy began his Superintendent's Update with one new hire since the last Personnel Update. Also, appointments for coaching positions were announced. Personnel updates are listed as follows:

• Jessica Flemming	RBT	PMS
• Dustin Almeida	Head Coach- Football	PHS
• Brandon Baldyga	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Michael Brennan	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Bruce Massarotti	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Robert Morgado	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Tom Rocco	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Michael Rodrigues	Assistant Coach – Football	PHS
• Lisa Zabel	Head Coach – Girls Volleyball	PHS
• Jen Ferencko	Assistant Coach – Girls Volleyball	PHS
• Regina Dublin	Head Coach – Cheerleading	PHS
• Kerry Vye	Assistant Coach – Cheerleading	PHS
• DonnaRicci	Head Coach – Unified Volleyball	PHS
• Ryan Soares	Head Coach – Boys Soccer	PMS
• Nancy Mendonca	Head Coach – Cross Country	PMS

B. District Updates (Herren Wellness Week; Expanded In-Person Learning Opportunities)

Superintendent Kenworthy continued his District Updates with a mention of Herren Wellness Week – Project Purple which took place last week. Many activities took place at each school, although the Dodgeball Tournament was not able to take place this year. A fun and informative week throughout our schools and thanks to the Herren Project for their help in our district not only this week in March but ongoing. Superintendent Kenworthy did extend an invitation to the Prevention Coalition. They have had some changes there and some of the committee has not met their new members. Hopefully, they will be at a future meeting before the end of the year to provide us updates.

Ongoing Expanded In-Person Learning Opportunities.

Superintendent Kenworthy provided updates regarding these efforts. As everyone knows, we have had full in-person instruction in Grades PK-6 five-days per week, Grades 7 & 8, students have had two or three opportunities per week that rotate throughout the week, and at PHS in Grades 9 – 12, students have had at least two opportunities per week. This has been constant throughout the year. PMS and PHS have been working with families and struggling students to provide more in-person learning possibilities. We have had more and more students in the second quarter attending full, in-person and we have an active survey-link out to families where we are gathering our last-round of feedback regarding return to full in-person learning and what that would look like. Two challenges still remain when we talk about in-person opportunities. One is the 6 ft. distancing and the other is the challenge with bussing. We have been working on the bus challenges at PMS for Grades 6 & 7 but for PHS, we have been able to extend an invitation for seniors to come back Tuesday through Friday. Hopefully, Superintendent Kenworthy will report how this is moving forward during each meeting.

Educators will become a priority and CVS and Walgreens have opened up making vaccinations available to them. We also understand that the Benny’s location in Middletown will be open for educators to be vaccinated. Anyone who wants to be vaccinated should be able to do so.

Monday, March 15, 2021, is a Professional Development Day for staff and a distance learning day for students. School employees will be participating in the third installment of our Racial Equity and Social Justice training. It is a very well received PD opportunity for our staff. It is a four-part series and we will be participating in Part III on Monday.

The State of Rhode Island fully intends to implement all components of the comprehensive assessment this year. These tests have to be given in school and we will need to make efforts to bring in our distance learners. More information on our testing schedules will be discussed. During April and May, our students will have RICAS, SAT, PSAT, and the R.I. NGSAs Science Assessment. Assistant Superintendent Vivieros will have more information at our next meeting during the TEACHING AND LEARNING presentation as to what will take place in our testing schedule.

Superintendent Kenworthy will put out the details on our updated travel guidance for families. This has been a challenge throughout the year, particularly for our military families. Starting next Monday, we are going to begin to allow the test-out option for domestic travel only. We have been piloting this with staff, it has worked well there, and we are comfortable. Our district has worked with the nursing staff based on the municipal and district case data and the success of our asymptomatic test program that I reported out on at the last meeting. Superintendent Kenworthy will put out the details of this test out option following the recommendations of the R.I. Department of Health.

C. Season II/III Athletic Updates

Mr. Trezvant presented his Season II/III Athletic Updates. The efforts from the school, our surrounding facilities and community made this Winter Season the success it has been. Our winter season had 211 registrations in Basketball; Ice Hockey; Gymnastics; Indoor Track; and Swimming. We did not offer Competition Cheer this winter season. This was deemed in January as a high risk sport. Our Boys Basketball Team had back to back championships. Congratulations to Mr. Occhi and his team. Great season and a special way to end after the disappointment last year due to COVID shutting down the final game. The Girls basketball team showed a lot of growth this year. Our swim team enjoyed a partnership with Roger Williams University allowing us the use of their pool when they were on break. The Abby allowed us to practice at their rink although we were not allowed to have games. The Burrville rink allowed us to hold our home games in their rink. Other rinks across the state also opened up their rinks for us after the Abby decided to allow us to use their facility for practices but not games. It took a lot of coordination from our students, staff, and the staff of the facilities we were using to follow COVID protocols, which were often different at the various facilities.

Providence Career and Tech took our students on the track team into their facility and allowed them to compete. It was a major effort on the part of many communities to make it possible for us to compete. Although our overall results may not have been what we hoped, it was a herculean effort on the part of our athletes to compete and our district could not be more proud of the efforts of our students along with the nursing staff, facilities personnel, custodians, and athletic trainer for keeping everyone safe from COVID.

Without all the people behind the scenes stepping up, we would not have been able to have this successful season. We provided professional style broadcasts of the events free of charge, with students doing the announcing. We were complimented by other schools on how professional our students handled themselves during these broadcasts. I could not be more proud of our students. They represented our PSD very well.

Coming up next is our Fall II Season. 125 students have registered. The sports offered include Girls Volleyball; Unified Volleyball; Football; Sideline Cheerleading. The schedules will be completed by this Thursday, March 11, 2021.

8. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Portsmouth School Committee

March 9, 2021

Public Session

A. February 23, 2021

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for approval of the School Committee Minutes of February 23, 2021. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, KM-yes, AS-yes, IK-yes, JCP-yes. Ms. Copeland requested a change in Business Item *E, *F, *G to read” Ms. Copeland requested approval, not Ms. Caldwell requested approval”. This change was approved and has been made to the minutes of February 23, 2021.

B. February 23, 2021 Executive Session

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for approval of the School Committee Executive Minutes on February 23, 2021. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, KM-yes, IK-yes, JCP-yes.

9. BUSINESS

A. Discuss Second Draft FY22 Operating Budget

Superintendent Kenworthy presented the Second Draft of FY22 Operating Budget. This is a process our district follows every year, going over our budget during three separate meetings. The second meeting discusses the second draft and by the next, third meeting, you will see the final draft and committee members will have to vote to approve our FY22 Operating Budget that will then be sent over to the Town and becomes part of the Town budget at that time and we should have dates later in April where we will have presentation to the Town Council. Mr. DiIuro will go through the details of the budget this evening. We got our expenditures to a 2.2% increase with the town appropriation request at an increase of 3.3% for FY22. We did receive some favorable information on group home aide since last meeting and worked that into our revenues. We went through every other area of the budget except personnel to make sure before we looked at personnel that we had touched every other area. We are at that point in the budget that you are going to see this evening. If it is your direction that we continue to get these expenditures lowered, those will require adjustments in personnel. Mr. DiIuro then proceeded to go over the budget for the School Committee members. It was once again made known that Portsmouth is receiving \$169,000.00 less in state aid and, therefore, starting out in the hole from the beginning of the budget process. Committee Members would like this stressed to the Town Council. If we received those funds, our town appropriation request would be an increase of 2,8%, not the 3.3% we are requesting. No vote tonight. Much effort has taken place behind the scenes to get this budget prepared. The cut in state aid is really the big issue.

B. Discuss/Action Revised Stage II Architect Fees

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Revised Stage II Architect Fees. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, IK-yes, JCP-yes.

C. Discuss/Action Hathaway Outdoor Classroom

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Hathaway Outdoor Classroom. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. Ms. Copeland requested a motion to approve the concept of supporting the Howard Hathaway Outdoor Classroom and enabling the project to go out to bid. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

D. Discuss/Action FY21-22 School Calendar

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action FY21-22 School Calendar. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, IK-yes, JCP-yes.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Portsmouth School Committee

March 9, 2021

Public Session

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for adjournment of the meeting this evening. Mr. Faerber made a motion for adjournment of the meeting of March 9, 2021. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, TV=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes, JCP=yes

- March 23, 2021
- April 13, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Massarotti, Recording Secretary for:

Thomas Vadney, Clerk