

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2020

Committee Present:

Leigh Martin, Sean Nicholson, Phil DeZutter, Vikki Ludwigson, Kerry Laurence, Dorothy Scally

Administration Present:

Joseph Maruszczak, Superintendent of Schools
Maureen Cohen, Assistant Superintendent
Dennis Todd, Director of Student Support Services
Jay Byer, Business/Finance
John Clements, Co-Principal, Nipmuc Regional High School
Mary Anne Moran, Co-Principal, Nipmuc Regional High School
Jennifer Mannion, Principal, Miscoe Hill Middle School
Debra Swain, Principal, Memorial Elementary School
Janice Gallagher, Principal, Clough Elementary School

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Sean Nicholson.
Pledge of Alliance was recited

Chair Nicholson read the following statement: *Consistent with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law MGL Ch. 30A, S. 20 and Regulation 940 CMR 29.10, which allows for remote participation in certain circumstances under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Regulations, the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee will be conducting this meeting remotely. In this particular case, all six members of the Committee are participating remotely and virtually through videoconferencing. This is consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 10, 2020, which eased the requirements of having a meeting in a physical space open to the public and having a quorum of the Committee physically present. Any and all votes will be conducted by roll-call votes. Per usual, this meeting will also be livestreamed and recorded.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: On a motion of Vikki Ludwigson, seconded by Kerry Laurence, to approve the agenda.

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes
Sean Nicholson, yes
Leigh Martin, yes
Vikki Ludwigson, yes
Kerry Laurence, yes

Approval of Open Session Minutes of April 27, 2020

MOTION: On a motion of Vikki Ludwigson, seconded by Leigh Martin, to approve the Open Session April 6, 2020

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes
Sean Nicholson, yes
Leigh Martin, yes
Vikki Ludwigson, yes
Kerry Laurence, yes
Dorothy Scally, yes

Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 27, 2020

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Phil DeZutter, to approve the Executive Session April 6, 2020

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes
Sean Nicholson, yes
Leigh Martin, yes
Vikki Ludwigson, yes
Kerry Laurence, yes

Approval of Open Session Minutes of May 5, 2020

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Phil DeZutter, to approve the Open Session May 5, 2020

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes
Sean Nicholson, yes
Leigh Martin, yes
Vikki Ludwigson, yes
Kerry Laurence, yes
Dorothy Scally, yes

II. COMMUNITY COMMENTS - NA

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Safe School and Communities Grant Award

Dr. Maruszczak announced the district received a Safer School grant in the amount of \$29,404. It was noted this is same amount received last year for Clough. These funds will be used to update the camera/security system at Memorial School. Dr. Maruszczak thanked Jay Byer for writing and administrating this grant with his attention to detail. These funds were available to due surplus of FY19 budget and were awarded before COVID-19

Update- MURSD Lunch Program

Dr. Maruszczak provided an additional update on the meal packages. It was noted Diane Mucci has been providing meal packages that included breakfast, snacks and lunches for 7 days to be picked up by families on a weekly basis. Two weeks ago, the staff distributed 104 meal packages. Last week there were 87 packages delivered. Food Services is committed to working with families regardless of free/reduced status. Also, Diane applied for and was awarded a grant of \$1200 to support the infrastructure during the crisis. Monies will be used to purchase equipment for the transport of food. Dr. Maruszczak thank Diane and her staff for their work and congratulated on received the grant.

School Choice Openings for 2020-2021 School Year

Dr. Maruszczak announced per Policy JFBB- School Choice (attached) and M.G.L. Ch. 76, S. 12B, we should do a public accounting of how many openings there are for the successive school year at every school and grade level. For the 2020-21 school year there are the following openings:

<u>Clough</u>	<u>Memorial</u>	<u>Miscoe Hill</u>	<u>Nipmuc</u>
K: 4	K: 0	Grade 5: 2	Grade 9: 0
K SI: 5	K SI: 0	Grade 6: 2	Grade 10: 0
Grade 1: 0	Grade 1: 0	Grade 7: 0	Grade 11: 0
Grade 2: 0	Grade 2: 0	Grade 8: 0	Grade 12: 0
Grade 3: 0	Grade 3: 0		
Grade 4: 0	Grade 4: 0		

It was noted at this time we do not know which students will going to BVT and the numbers will need to be updated. These numbers will be revisited and per policy, additional openings will be updated on August 10th. There is always variability with school choice openings but current circumstances make the projections more difficult.

Financial Updates & FY21 Budget Outlook

Dr. Maruszczak reminded the School Committee regarding the mandate from DESE to renegotiate the contract with our bussing company. Jay Byer discussed there is a tentative agreement with Tellstone. Jay negotiated a new contract with the business managers from Dudley and Blackstone-Millville. After a month of negotiations, there is an agreement to pay Tellstone 68% of the current contract. It was noted there will be no other additional revenue such as field trips/athletic travel paid for this fiscal year. Jay also stated another condition of the agreement is there is a rate freeze for next year busing contract.

Dr. Maruszczak reiterated the district budget was recertified at a lower level. Operational assessment to the communities were Mendon \$521,820 and Upton 502,261. Initial estimates from the Town was what could be funded was modest overrides.

Since the last meeting, Upton has informed administration the Town will not have an override. Mendon will move forward with an override of \$271,000. For the school budget to be funded, it is critical the modest override be successful in Mendon.

It was noted there is still a good deal of uncertainty in the State budget. There are meetings over the next week to discuss budget planning. With the uncertainty, district could implement a 1/12 budget based of FY20 budget. This will determine our revenue and if there is no state budget, it is probable the district will have this type of budget.

FY2020 Budget Update

Jay Byer commented budget is stable and not much has changed over the last 2 weeks. It was noted it is too early for a phase 4 stimulus funding from the Federal government to assist with the budget.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Search Process- MURSD Director of Student Support Services

Dr. Maruszczak reminded the School Committee Dennis Todd, current director of Student Support Services is leaving for another opportunity as of July 1. He has done an exemplary job and it will be difficult to fill his position.

Maureen Cohen updated the School Committee that she has put together a search committee of 15 people to include all stakeholders. There are virtual meetings set up for interviews in the next couple of weeks. Committee is allowing for additional applications since the timing of a qualified candidate may make a changed as the school year is concluding. Dr. Cohen stated final candidates will go to Dr. Maruszczak in a couple of weeks for another round of interviews.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Nipmuc Class of 2020 Graduation & End-of-Year Celebrations- John Clements & Mary Anne Moran, Nipmuc Co-Principals

Dr. Maruszczak stated the major unfinished business in light of COVID is graduation for the Class of 2020. John and Mary Anne have been planning a celebration for the class and have received input from all stakeholders.

John and Mary Anne discussed the timeline:

- Class of 2020 is most affected by closure. Community has been embracing them.
- Plans are reflective of kids and parents wishes. There was a survey to assist with the plans.
- Most wanted an in-person graduation and did not want a virtual graduation. It was determined there are some opportunities and everyone is holding out hope there can be some in person celebration.
- Last Friday, signs were delivered to the students. Teachers signed up, to deliver the sign and decorated their cars with signs and balloons.
- Tuesday, May 26, after virtual last day of school, there will be a senior car parade to visit all schools in the district. Teachers will be invited to line the driveways of the schools to cheer the students as well as members of communities. The final loop of the parade will be around Nipmuc. Students will have the ability to pick up their caps and gowns. John noted in the past, it not permitted the decorate of the caps. However due to current circumstances, the seniors are allowed to decorate their caps this year.
- Mary Anne detailed the events plan for Senior week. Option 1 and 2 have the same activities however one is planned in July and the other is planned in August.
- Events include a Senior breakfast with teachers and have a last day of school with tie dying event. Graduation rehearsals with a barbeque are also plan during Senior week.
- Plans are also underway for a Senior prom and looking at outside venue for one last time to be dressed up with their classmates. This prom will only include the current Class of 2020.
- Graduation will be outside on the athletic field with tents and allow as much social distancing as possible. July date is July 18 with a rain date of July 19th. The August date is August 8th with a rain date of August 9th.
- All plans are pending healthy guidelines.
- If needed, Option 3 is planning individual/small group graduations based on State guidelines and make the day as special as possible with health and safety guidelines.

John Clemens noted the school received a call from the State Dept of Ed on Friday. On May 16, there is a nationwide 'Graduate Together'. President Obama will be giving a commencement speech. Department of Education asked Nipmuc to represent Massachusetts. John and Mary Anne prepared a 2-minute message recorded which may be part of the national broadcast. Vikki Ludwigson commented it was a good video produced under a short timeline.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

VII. Other Matters Not Anticipated by The Committee Within 48 Hours of The Posted Meeting

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Updates Re. MURSD FY21 Budget: June 1

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Leigh Martin to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a), exemption #3, to discuss strategy with respect to a Memorandum of Agreement with MURTA, because doing so in open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. (The Committee will not return to open session.)

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes
Sean Nicholson, yes
Leigh Martin, yes
Vikki Ludwigson, yes
Kerry Laurence, yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly McElreath