

School Committee Minutes
Upper Town Hall
Monday, March 23, 2020

Members attending: John Ruark, Sharlene Cronin, SusanMary Redinger, Suzanne Allen, Shannon Molloy, Maureen Babcock and Linda Dwight.

John Ruark called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

John Ruark read a statement indicating that the meeting was being held remotely and the meeting was being held via video conferencing. Members in attendance were identified through a roll call process.

Vision Statement

Shannon Molloy read the Vision Statement.

HEAC PPA Proposal; Vote

David Fay presented a proposal from Solect Energy PPA to install solar panels on the roof of the new school. In the proposal the array is owned by Solect Energy. There is no cost to the town other than the \$550 cost to join Power Options. The contract terms are set by Power Options. The savings over 20 years is estimated at \$353,000. Benefits include; the cost for electricity will be known; savings for generator use when there is a power outage; and reduction in our carbon footprint. The benefit to doing the project now versus later is that solar will help avoid an increase in operating expenses and the current PPA credit rates are high and may be going down in the future. Overall the only drawback to this project is the risk of roof leaks which can be worked out through establishing a warranty to cover any leaks. The School Building Committee needs to sign off on this proposal and there may be some timing and warranty issues that still need to be resolved. The School Committee reviewed their options.

1. Table discussion until the School Building Committee approves the project.
2. Show our support for the project going forward and endorse HEAC to work with the School Building Committee on said proposal.
3. Wait until our next meeting to approve.

The Committee agreed to support the proposal and move it forward to the next step.

John Ruark made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to move that we support HEAC to move forward with the Solect Energy proposal subject to and in coordination with support from the School Building Committee.

VOTE 5/0

Coronavirus Readiness and Learning Plan Update

Dr. Dwight shared information regarding the learning plan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Student Vivien, Felecia and Will spoke on the student perspective that teachers are doing a great job and there have been a lot of zoom meetings. There have been a few technical issues but zoom meetings are working well.

Superintendent Update

See Attached

Field Trip/Grant Approval

None

Continuing Pay of Hourly Employees

Dr. Dwight presented a request to the School Committee asking for a continuation of pay for the hourly staff during the school closing due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded that during the period starting March 16, 2020 to April 6, 2020 inclusive or to such later date as the Governor of Massachusetts may determine for the continued closure of all public schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the Superintendent may determine for the continued closure of the Harvard Public Schools, whichever date is later, due to COVID-19 in the 2019-2020 school year, hereinafter referred to as the "Closure Period," the Harvard School Committee, subject to appropriation, shall pay the regular wages for work days during the Closure Period to each employee of the Harvard Public Schools, excluding day substitutes, provided that each such employee to be paid performs work that may be requested or required by the employee's supervisor during the work days to be paid in the Closure Period. Nothing in this motion limits any rights that any employee may have to take vacation, sick, or personal leave during the Closure Period.

VOTE

Allen (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye), Ruark (Aye)

Continuing Pay of Bus Contract

Dr. Dwight explained that the Commissioner of Education has asked for more time to give direction state wide regarding contracts. Dr. Dwight recommended at this time, no action should be taken until such time as we see what direction other districts are taking and after hearing the advice from the Commissioner of Education. The Committee also agreed that no decision be made until more information is obtained from legal counsel.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to table the vote of continued payment of the Dee Bus Contract.

Allen (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye), Ruark (Aye)

School Building Committee

SusanMary Redinger reported that the good news is, at this time, construction projects are allowed to continue during the mandatory shutdown due to COVID-19. Shawmut and NV5 will get together to see if there will be any impact. The warrants will need to be paid and it is possible to continue payment through a wire transfer if town hall is closed. We are hoping that National Grid will do the final hookup this week. The project is approximately 16 days behind schedule. We have paid out approximately \$16 million or 31% of the project budget to date.

Agenda Items

School Choice

Title IX Plan Work

Start time update

Continuous Improvement

Transportation Cost for Athletics

Dashboard Subcommittee report

Approval of Meeting Minutes

With no objection the Chair, John Ruark approved the minutes of the March 9th meeting as presented and amended.

Liaison/Sub-committee Reports

Sharlene Cronin – reported that the fields are getting a rest period and maintenance should start in the coming weeks.

Sharlene Cronin – reported that the Dashboard meeting was cancelled. Next meeting is not yet scheduled.

Shannon Molloy – reported that the HES Council meeting was cancelled.

Shannon Molloy – reported that the Policy Subcommittee met briefly with nothing to report at this time.

SusanMary Redinger – reported that The Bromfield School Council met, most parents wanted the schools to close due to the Coronavirus. The Bromfield Parent Survey went out to parents and will stay open on the website for a while.

Suzanne Allen – Nothing to report.

John Ruark – reported that HEAC met and reviewed the presentation that David Fay showed us tonight.

John Ruark reported that a version of the teacher's contract is being presented and voted on virtually by teacher. The plan is than to have School Committee ratify the contract at their next meeting.

Maureen Babcock reported that DEAC met with nothing to report here. Linda Dwight offered to host a follow-up meeting on April 15th.

Maureen Babcock – reported that a number of members of the Boy Scout troop are in attendance to listen to discussions at the meeting tonight as they are working on their Citizenship and the Community merit badge.

Maureen Babcock – reported that she will share a link to members who wish to read information on the proposed Vicksburg Square project.

School Committee Commentary

SusanMary Redinger – acknowledge the leadership team for the amount of work and the great communication and leadership during this time. It is huge and appreciated.

John Ruark declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Mary Zadroga

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