

**Millbury Public Schools
School Committee**

*Regular Session
Meeting Minutes*

OCT -8 AM 8:42
MILLBURY MASS

Date: April 8, 2020

Present: Mrs. Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson

Mr. Chris Wilbur, Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Sue Teixeira, Member

Mrs. Julia Lagerholm, Member

Mr. Nick Lazzaro, Member

Mr. Christopher Lowe, High School Principal

Mr. Andrew Tuccio, Shaw School Principal

Mr. Andrew Hall, Elmwood Street School Principal

Ms. Kate Ryan, Director of Special Education

Ms. Lizz Boutiette, Curriculum Coordinator

Mr. Rick Bedard, School Business Manager

Mr. Greg Myers, Superintendent

Location: This meeting was held virtually using Zoom. The Zoom invitation link was included on the meeting agenda, which was posted publicly.

Time: 7:00pm

Mrs. Nietupski opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Regular Session Minutes of March 25, 2020.

Mrs. Nietupski asked for corrections to the Regular Session Minutes of March 25, 2020. Hearing none, Mr. Wilbur motioned to approve the minutes from the March 25, 2020 meeting, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. Approved, 5-0.

b. Executive Session Minutes of March 11, 2020.

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions, or deletions, to the Executive Session Minutes of March 11, 2020. Hearing none, Mrs. Teixeira made a motion to approve the Executive Session Minutes of March 11, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Lagerholm. All approved (5-0).

2. Report of the Administration

a. COVID-19 Update on School Operations

Mr. Myers updated the School Committee on the school operations during COVID 19. He stated that the Cafeteria has distributed 4000 meals to families. Mr. Myers stated that they have loaded out 450 Chromebooks mostly to kids but also some staff. This Friday will be the last day the District will be loaned out as COVID 19 is reaching its peak and we want to reduce exposure.

Mr. Myers stated that the Millbury Teachers' Association and the Leadership Team have worked to create expectations of teachers working from home and also the responsibility of the Administrations as teachers work from home. Mr. Myers stated that Mr. Lyon was fantastic to work with and will present the Memorandum of Agreement to his teachers for review. Mr. Myers asked the School Committee to review the Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and the Teachers' Association that is included in their packet before the next meeting.

b. Distant Learning Plan

Ms. Boutiette updated the School Committee on the Distance Learning Plan. She stated that Mr. Myers sent a letter from his office highlighting the Distance Learning Plan to all families. She stated that the Principals from each school sent a more detailed letter and plan to the families in their schools. She stated that there is a plan for PreK-6 and a different plan for grades 7-12. She stated that the grade 7-12 plan is more detailed and encompasses grading students' work. The Leadership Team is considering a plan to introduce new materials to students in grades 7-12. The Plan for PreK-6 is for students to deepen their learning around skills they have already been taught. This Plan also has teachers collaborating on lessons together as a grade level so that it is the same content for each grade level student.

A discussion took place on plans the Leadership Team is creating if school returns this year and plans to enhance a summer school learning program for students that need additional support. The discussion also included changing required testing to a resource based project for seniors.

Mr. Myers stated that if we do not return to school this year there may be a plan for students to begin classes in the fall in the grade they were in last year to learn the needed skills. He stated that this would be a very short time. Mr. Myers stated the logistics would have to be worked out.

Mr. Myers stated that at this time there has not been a decision on MCAS testing by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

A discussion took place regarding returning to school earlier in the summer.

c. Preschool Program - Additional Classroom for FY21

Ms. Ryan stated that an additional half day preschool class is needed for the 2020-2021 school year. She stated that the preschool program has been at max capacity for quite some time and several families are waitlisted each year. The additional classroom will be cost-neutral (a new .5 FTE teacher will be paid entirely by the new preschool tuition) and occupy space that will be freed up by the elimination of a dedicated computer lab at Elmwood.

4. Budget

a. Vendor Payments during COVID-19 School Closure Period

Mr. Bedard briefed the School Committee on recent guidance from DESE regarding payment of school transportation, collaborative tuitions, and Special Education private

tuitions vendors during the COVID-19 school closure period. He stated that they are still giving our students services and therefore, we will continue to make payments.

Mr. Bedard stated that AA Transportation contract is different because they are not giving us any service. He stated that the recommendation from the DESE is to continue payment to bus companies because if districts do not continue paying for transportation companies will go out of business without continued payments, which would jeopardize the availability and continuity of services when schools reopen.

AA Transportation has contracts with thirteen school districts in Central Massachusetts. School Business Managers Dan Deedy of Wachusett and Patrick Collins of Shrewsbury will be meeting with Ron Ernenwein, owner of AA Transportation, on behalf of the cohort to discuss options that may help keep the company viable. Both School Business Managers will serve in a strictly advisory role for the cohort and their negotiations with AA Transportation will not be binding. Instead, individual School Committees have the exclusive authority to negotiate adjustments to their transportation contracts. Mr. Bedard stated that we will receive advice towards payments but it is the School Committee decision. Anything we agreed to would be an amendment to our contract. It was stated that this would be a reduced payment to AA Transportation to keep the company viable until we need their services. A discussion took place regarding if AA Transportation is paying their staff and taking advantage of every opportunity available to small businesses such as the CARES Act. Mr. Bedard stated that we have the same situation with Assabet Collaborative and Norfolk Agricultural.

b. Revolving Account Update

Mr. Bedard updated the School Committee with a review of the revolving accounts. This Summary is for the beginning of April. He stated that some of the salaries of teachers or aides derive from the revolving accounts. Therefore, with no additional revenue coming into the revolving accounts the balances are in jeopardy of not covering the expenditures. The Pre-School account has a balance of \$214,123 and will not go into a negative balance. The Athletic Account pays part of the salary of the Athletic Director salary of \$12,693 and will not become a negative balance at the end of the school year. The Aftercare account's balance is \$55,757 and with salaries to pay through the end of the school year amounting to \$78,000 it has a potential to become a deficit. Mr. Bedard stated that the School Lunch Program also will become a deficit at the end of the school year. Mr. Bedard stated that the lunches being served to families will be reimbursed to the district for \$3.41 per lunch. He stated that they are looking to cover these deficits with money coming from the savings in transportation costs, utility costs and substitute teaching costs. The School Committee has Mr. Bedard to raise the hourly rate of the cafeteria workers handing out lunches to the community.

Mr. Bedard stated that it has been a challenge during this time to have the student activities account and payroll schedule warrants to be signed. Mr. Wilbur made a motion

to approve Julia Lagerholm as the sole signer of the warrant articles during the COVID 19, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All approved (5-0).

5. Old Business

a. Millbury Jr./Sr. High School Athletic Field Renovation Project

Mr. Bedard stated that he opened bids for the horizontal work and that the lowest bid for \$3,836.787 came from Green Acres Landscape and the district will award them a contract.

Mr. Bedard stated that the bids for the plumbing and electrical came in very high. The plumbing bid came in at \$106,100 and the budget was for \$39,596. The electrical bid was \$186,660 with a budget of \$96,212. He stated that the general contractors bid will be over the \$506,000 budget. Mr. Bedard stated that if this is the case the Field Building Committee and School Committee should reject all bids and start the bidding again. He stated that when this happens the project is usually reduced in some areas but they are hearing that the bids were affected by COVID 19 and that bids are coming in 20% to 30% higher. The rejections would only be for the Building portion of the project. Mr. Bedard stated that the horizontal portion of the project should continue and in the near future change the scope of the Amenities Building and rebid. The Planning Board is meeting on Monday.

b. Shaw School Project Update

Mr. Myers stated that the Building Committee met on April 1st through zoom. He stated that the Committee is working on reducing the budget. He stated that the building has met gold standards in design and therefore there is wiggle room to change materials without a negative impact on the project. Mr. Myers stated that the project is on time and that National Grid scheduled to install temporary power over the summer. Mr. Myer stated that the Design Development will be ready for submission to the MSBA at the end of April.

6. New Business

7. Executive Session

8. Future Topics

- a. Student Activity Accounts: Review of Subaccounts (April 29, 2020)
- b. Committee Reorganization (April 29, 2020)
- c. School Committee 2020-2021 Tentative Meeting Calendar (May 27, 2020)
- d. Annual Review and Appointment of School Attorney (May 27, 2020)

9. Next Meeting: April 29, 2020

Regular SC Meeting, 7PM

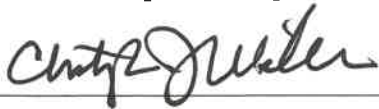
****This meeting will be held virtually using Zoom****

10. Adjourn

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira.

Approved:

Jennifer B. Nietupski, Chairperson



Christopher J. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson



Julia Lagerholm



Nicholas Lazzaro