TOWN OF BURLINGTON
Meeting Posting

Notice of Public Meeting – (As required by G.L. c. 30A, c §18-25)

BOARD:       School Committee
DATE:   September 10,  2019
TIME:   7:00 p.m.
PLACE:    School Committee Room, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA

AGENDA*

1.  Approval of Warrant

2.  Public Participation

3.  Information/Reports
   a).  New Student Representative
   b).  Subcommittee Reports
   c).  Ways/Means

4  Instruction/Technology (7:00 – 7:30 estimated time)
   a).  Introduction of New Marshall Simonds Assistant Principal
   a).  Student Enrollment Update
   c).  We Are Burlington Demographics

5.  Communication (7:30 – 7:45 estimated time)
   a).  School Opening Report
   b).  Summer Projects Wrap Up

6.  Financial Update (7:45 – 8:45)
   a).  FY19 Budget Year Closeout
   b).  FY20 Budget Reduction Amount – Approval
   d).  Student Activity AUP Update
   e).  FY20 Monthly Financials

7.  Old Business (8:45 – 9:00 estimated time)
   a).  Elementary School Building Needs - Discussion

8.  New Business (9:00 estimated time)
   a).  MSMS Extra-Curricular Stipends – Approval
   b).  LABBB Capital Plan Increase - Approval

9.  Public Participation

10.  Executive Session
    a).  Contract Negotiations

11 .  Adjournment

*Agenda subject to change
Chair Martha Simon called this meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:10 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mr. Thomas F. Murphy, Jr. and Mrs. Kristin Russo. Superintendent Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Patrick Larkin, Business Manager Nichole Coscia and Director of Operations Bob Cunha also present. Mrs. Christine Monaco and Mr. Stephen Nelson absent.

**APPROVAL OF WARRANT**

Mr. Murphy made the following statement: As you know, since the immediate family members of two School Committee members are teachers, the Committee cannot reach a quorum due to conflicts under the Conflict of Interest Law. We have been advised by counsel to invoke the Rule of Necessity to allow us to vote on any matter involving the financial interests of such family members, and by this statement, are invoking the rule. Detailed disclosures regarding the matter were made at the Committee’s April 11, 2006 meeting and recorded in the minutes, and are also on file with the Town Clerk and may be viewed in the Town Clerk’s office. Moved by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve the warrant; motion carried 3-0-0.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Doug Place explained that he has the town common reserved for an October 12 event, is expecting 100 people but would like to have a backup plan in case of rain and was enquiring about possible gym space being available. Mr. Cunha stated he’d spoken to Mr. Place earlier today, would follow up tomorrow to check if space is available. Dr. Conti noted that the building rental fee has been waived but the School Committee could consider waiving the custodial fee. All three Committee members were in favor of waiving custodial fees.

BEA President Diana Marcus stated that with upcoming financial meetings with the Town regarding budget funding for next year, it should be addressed that there are insufficient funds for services to students including the middle school library being closed to students on Mondays and Fridays and there is a critical shortage of school nurses with building nurses having to leave their home building to administer medication to students in another building. Last spring parents appeared before the School Committee requesting lower elementary class sizes. She further stated that budget discussions should begin with what are the needs of students, what is the cost to provide that, and requested that the School Committee and Administrators support finding new ways about how we talk about providing our students education. Chair Simon explained that budget guideline meetings with School and Town officials will be held later in the fall.

**INFORMATION/REPORTS**

New Student Representative

New student representative Bridget Conceison stated that student council had met and they have two new advisors Mr. Milton and Ms. Fischer. The School Committee welcomed Ms. Conceison.

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Murphy reported on the ongoing discussion with the Recreation Commission regarding the possible change of fertilizers at the Memorial and Francis Wyman fields; he informed the Commission that the School Committee would not have a decision on this until spring. He explained Mrs. Monaco had requested research to see if there is a less chemically oriented fertilizer for consideration. Mrs. Russo stated she would be meeting with Brendan Egan tomorrow and would then meet with a Tom Irwin representative regarding fertilizers.

**INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY**

Introduction of New Marshall Simonds Assistant Principal

Marshall Simonds Principal Cari Perchase introduced new Assistant Principal Jenn Chen-Fein and expressed thanks to the School Committee for reinstating this position. Ms. Chen-Fein explained she is beginning to build relationships with students, teachers, and families.

**NEW BUSINESS**

MSMS Extracurricular Stipends Approval

By consensus, this item was taken out of order. Principal Perchase explained she’d like to expand after school extra-curricular opportunities for students and was requesting a National History Day Advisor and two Student Council advisors. These positions have been in existence for the past year, teachers were paid on an hourly basis and they had good student participation. Due to the number of students involved, she is requesting two Student Council advisors. Dr. Conti explained that stipends for year 1 is $500, $750 for year 2, and for the third year an amount is assigned to the individual stipend positions. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to approve three $500 extracurricular stipends; motion carried 3-0-0.
Dr. Conti reviewed student enrollment\(^1\) in grades K-12 as of September 1. He then proceeded to review elementary schools projected student enrollments 2019-20\(^2\), which outlined elementary class sizes by grade and school, as well as number of sections in each grade. He pointed out the large class sizes at Pine Glen in grade 2 and at Francis Wyman and Fox Hill in grade 3.

The Superintendent summarized the We Are Burlington demographics that was in the Committee’s meeting packet which included: enrollment numbers by grade, student ethnicity, student race, numbers of students in special education and on 504 plans, student languages, ELL students, students’ birth country, and percentage of economically disadvantaged students. This document will be posted on the school’s website. He pointed out that for 20% of students, English is not their first language, the school district is seeing more complicated student health, medication, and mental health needs as well as growing diversity.

Mr. Larkin reported that he is collecting survey data from BPScon held in August, the first day of school for students went smoothly, no big issues cropped up but the typical transportation concerns of the first couple weeks of school.

Mr. Cunha stated that they are working on the transition to a new bus company, bus routes are being reviewed and adjusted, a couple buses are running late but they are looking at solutions, and are giving buses a couple weeks to work out the kinks. Trombly Transportation has been very responsive to the school department and he thanked them and the bus drivers. Mrs. Russo commented that her children had noticed videotaping on the buses and they have told their friends which may be helpful with student behaviors. She further commented she’d heard of a couple issues with middle and high school buses. Mr. Cunha explained they are reviewing that bus stops are minimal but effective and safe, if buses are running late, and if students are arriving at bus stops on time. Dr. Conti summarized that bus transportation is being worked on, we are trying to accommodate requests but by adding bus stops, it makes each bus route slower. Mr. Cunha reviewed the status of summer projects:

- the poles for project adventure have arrived and will be installed next week
- walkie talkies will be rolled out next week and safety buttons were previously installed
- fire alarm system at Francis Wyman – the vendor has been issued a notice to award
- HVAC bid award – currently in vendor verification process
- MSMS boiler – the vendor has been sent a notice to award

Dr. Conti informed the Committee that the state had run pilot remote learning days last year to make up snow days, the state board and education commissioner has decided to discontinue the practice, and to continue with current hourly and number of days requirements. Mr. Larkin sent an email to faculty informing them of this and thanking them for efforts with the pilot. The School Committee thanked teachers, staff, and administrators for their work on this effort. Mr. Murphy expressed frustration with the state discontinuing the option for remote learning days.

The Superintendent thanked the 14 volunteers from the First Congregational Church who held 29 summer reading sessions for children at Lord Baron apartments.

Ms. Coscia directed the Committee’s attention to the monthly financials and balanced out FY19 budget reports included in their meeting packet.

Due to the lower cost of the transportation contract, Ms. Coscia requested that the Committee reduce the FY20 Operating Budget by $216,381, which will populate the TBD amount submitted in the September town meeting warrant article. Moved by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mrs. Russo to reduce the FY20 operating budget by $216,381; motion carried 3-0-0. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti replied that any costs associated with the rebid of the transportation contract will be covered by the legal budget account.

---

\(^1\) September Student Enrollment

\(^2\) Elementary Projected Student Enrollment 2019-20
After reviewing the Powers & Sullivan School Revolving & Gift Funds report (included in the Committee’s meeting packet), Ms. Coscia created and reviewed the Revolving AUP Action Items for School Committee Discussion which included:

- closing and repurposing dormant accounts
- completed recommendations in the Before & Afterschool program
- completed recommendations in Building Rentals
- completed recommendations in Sprouts Childcare program
- recommendation in process of creating a food policy
- recommendation in process of creating a collections policy
- recommendations to be addressed: master event logs & multi-year budget-to-actuals

Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to close the dormant Math Wizard Fox Hill account and repurpose the funds to the Math Olympiads; motion carried 3-0-0. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to close the dormant Cooperative Games Group account and repurpose the funds to Special Olympics; motion carried 3-0-0. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to close the dormant Italian Afterschool Program account and repurpose the funds to the MSMS Homework Clinic; motion carried 3-0-0. Moved by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mrs. Russo to close the dormant China Pathways account and repurpose the funds to International Students; motion carried 3-0-0.

The School Committee thanked Ms. Coscia, Business Office staff, and the Superintendent for their work over the past year. In response to Chair Simon, Ms. Coscia replied that the recommendation on credit cards has not been addressed at this point. Town meeting member Eileen Sickler asked a number of questions and in response Dr. Conti replied that the bus contract and Powers & Sullivan report will be put on the school website, however, the content needs to be accessible to all, corporate gifts can be used on a number of things for instance, the BHS flags on the ring road light poles were used with funds sponsored by the Third Avenue businesses, cameras & gps equipment are on all Tromby buses but for the protection of Tromby’s property and they are allowing the school department access to their cameras. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti explained that the Camp Bourneald fund has been decommissioned but it’s still a 5th grade event renamed to Project Adventure and the electronic purchase order system is slowly progressing now that the Business Office is fully staffed, will be part of the District Improvement Plan including a timeline. Ways & Means member Sue Harrigan requested a clarification on the Powers & Sullivan progress. Dr. Conti replied that the agreed to procedures are complete and their commitment fulfilled; when Powers & Sullivan reviewed revolving accounts he would have identified any significant issues, they will include a deeper dive during the annual year end report for the town but it will not be a separate report. In response to Ms. Harrigan, Ms. Coscia replied that all the items listed in the 9/11/18 Powers & Sullivan letter had been completed. The Superintendent explained he wanted to fulfill the School Committee’s expectation, wanted to understand the request but he could ask Powers & Sullivan for a management letter. Ways & Means member Diane Creedon recommended obtaining a letter from Powers & Sullivan prior to September town meeting stating that the Agreed to Procedures work had been completed and further noted that a deeper dive is not needed prior to September town meeting. Mrs. Russo requested that Powers & Sullivan provide a letter identifying exactly what the findings are and what work was completed.

Ms. Coscia stated that Roselli & Clark came out two years ago and completed a report. They are scheduled to come again on Thursday, will be finished on September 20, and will then complete a report on student activity account progress.

The FY20 monthly financials were shared with the Committee in their packet. Ms. Coscia explained figures were as of August 31 for the FY20 Operating Budget & Accommodated; the new monthly report format will be 3 pages instead of 7.

Dr. Conti commented that a repository for elementary school building needs had been created on the school’s website for parents, staff, and the community to submit recommendations which will be collected. He will review the content of the repository at the September 24 meeting. Chair Simon suggested that for the September 24 meeting, the School Committee think about suggestions on how to obtain input from parents/community; maybe with public

---

3 Revolving AUP Action Items for School Comm., Discussion
forums, etc.

NEW BUSINESS

LABBB Capital Plan Increase – Approval

The LABBB board is requesting an increase in their capital fund for the LABBB Collaborative as approved by the LABBB Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The capital plan increase will fund future building projects, renovations, classroom updates, temporary classroom (modular) space and other unexpected building costs where LABBB utilizes space in the host district. Moved by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve an increase in the existing LABBB capital plan by $500,000 for a total of $3.1 million; motion carried 3-0-0. In response to Mr. Murphy's inquiry of how the LABBB capital plan is funded, Dr. Conti explained that there are new rules, only a limited amount money can be carried over each year and the state has requested LABBB to identify when funds go to OPEB or the capital plan.

EEE Virus Update

Mr. Cunha informed the Committee that the town had sprayed last night to minimize the risk of infected insects in Burlington. An additional request has come in to spray the tree line areas around the athletic fields and Mr. Cunha is working with the Recreation Department to accomplish that this week. The Superintendent explained that the BHS Principal and athletic staff will communicate to parents when games and/or practices are shifted or being rescheduled if needed in order for athletic events to be completed by 6:30 p.m. In response to Mrs. Russo inquiry if youth sports organizations are banned from fields in the evening, Dr. Conti replied that the Recreation Department directly communicates with those organizations and advises them to follow the recommendation to finish field use by 6:30 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Murphy to adjourn the meeting at 9 p.m.; motion carried 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gilbert
Recording Secretary

Date submitted: 9/24/19
Date approved: 9/24/19