

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting
Thursday April 7, 2022
Marblehead High School-Library

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83104797645?pwd=K3phbHA0NHpqL1VuZmJKb0xXTWRWUT09>
Zoom Recording ID 831 0479 7645

Members Present: Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Emily Barron and David Harris

Remote Participants: Sarah Fox

Also: John J. Buckey, Superintendent
Michelle Cresta, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations
Stephen Kwiatek, Director of Technology

I. Initial Business

- a. Call to Order
Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.
- b. Commendations
 - Ms. Fox commended the faculty and staff for preparing the students for the All Strings concert.
 - Students Lucy New, Aidan Nue and Sophia Vatnick were recognized for their work at the Village School educating the younger students on anti-Semitism
- c. Student Representative-Yasen Colon
 - A vigil was held for the recent passing of high school student James Galante on March 19th
 - Fundraising to support a scholarship fund in his name was currently taking place
 - The Racial Justice Team gifted portraits to the school of Harriett Tubman and John Lewis
 - The All String Concert recently took place
 - MCAS for 10th grade were held on the 29th and 30th
 - The play Macbeth made it to the regionals in Drama Fest
 - Bye Bye Birdie will be show this weekend
 - Student Will Lamb was recognized for his surfing documentary being selected as a finalist for the Salem Film Festival
 - Two new clubs called *No Labels* and *Support and Be Supported* have begun at the high school
 - Project 351 is running a clothing drive through April 8th
 - A fundraising auction for the National Art Society will run through April 8th
 - Course selections for 9th through 11th graders will be happening until the 13th
 - Juniors will have an upcoming seminar with college admissions experts
 - The juniors are selling raffles tickets for prom
- d. Public Comment
 - Catherine Martin of 29 W Shore drive spoke about the need for a budget override and voiced her frustration with the process sharing she hoped for more transparency
 - Jonathan Letterman spoke about having trouble being let into an earlier 4pm meeting that he planned on recording. He also requested that a line item budget be available other than in person at the administration offices
 - Nicole Cohen requested more transparency sharing that meetings are not all easy to attend due to times they are scheduled
 - Karen Tal Makhluf echoed Mr. Letterman's budget statements and voiced her concerns with outdated text books
 - Becca Whiden of Atlantic Avenue spoke against the scheduling times of meetings being held at times that working parents cannot attend

II. FY23 Budget Vote

Ms. Gold requested that the facilities capital requests from the subcommittee section be moved up as it could affect budget lines.

Ms. Fox explained that the subcommittee met the week prior to confirm the capital requests. She explained that the requests were driven by the facilities assessment and included safety and technology concerns along with roof and high school hvac concerns. The included items were listed as critical by the consultants who completed the assessment. A capital article in the warrant will be for roofs and the hvac unit at the high school. A second article will be to address technology needs of the Town and the schools. It was mentioned the two ways to fund the requests would fall under either the placeholder for the capital request override or the operating fund override. Ms. Fox mentioned that the subcommittee unanimously voted to fund the requests as part of the operating budget to incorporate allocating the recurring funding into the facilities master plan.

Ms. Cresta informed the committee that due to the Town running out of free cash quickly, all of the items approved on the capital article are considered to fall under debt exclusion overrides with a documentable useful life of ten years which the capital request would not qualify for. She further explained that adding the requests to the operating budget would be a one time/one year override. A conversation about a tax levy versus debt exclusions took place.

Ms. Fox made a motion to follow the recommendation of the facilities subcommittee to include costs into the operating budget. The motion was moved by Ms. Barron seconded by Mr. Harris. It was explained that the motion would add just over \$426k to bottom line budget ask.

Mr. Harris noted that the overall ask of the Town for FY23 is \$24,364,298 sharing that the schools consist of about eight million dollars of the budget ask. He encouraged the community to come to the Town meeting to hear about requests and investments that need to be made. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to incorporate the additional funding into the operating budget passes, 5-0.

Ms. Gold, Ms. Fox, Mr. Harris, Ms. Taylor and Ms. Barron –all yes

Ms. Taylor made a motion to approve the FY23 operating budget the Superintendent put forward with the addition of the facilities number added to total \$47,033,366. Ms. Fox voiced wanting to amend the motion and Ms. Gold recommended that Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Cresta further explain what is included in the total ask prior to amending.

Ms. Cresta noted that the budget number last week was at \$46,606,959. She explained that the quote for security cameras came in under budget by about \$95k less than expected. The additional \$95k would be put back into funding high school curriculum positions. She further explained that the total budget of \$47,033,366 included an additional amount of \$426,407 including all articles previously mentioned. It was confirmed that the Town would be funding the base budget roll forward budget including contractual obligations and an out of district tuition costs of about \$800K

Ms. Fox spoke in favor of augmenting the proposed budget to include the original cost of the curriculum coaches by Principal Bauer. Superintendent Buckley clarified that administration was looking into using existing staff as part time teaching and part time curriculum coaches to which Principal Bauer confirmed could work well. Ms. Fox voiced that she would still like to amend the motion to reflect the asks as first presented. The motion was not seconded.

Ms. Taylor, Mr. Harris and Ms. Barron all spoke in favor of supporting the administrators for what they have advocated for in the budget. Ms. Gold thanked everyone for their hard work during a long process which has led to a solid budget for the next year.

Ms. Fox read a prepared statement to summarize her concerns regarding the proposed budget mentioning; The scope of a diversity, equity and inclusion DEI position, lack of a social studies and social emotional curriculum and transportation concerns.

The Student Services director Dr. Paula Donnelly came before the committee to address some community concerns regarding tiered support, grant funding not accounted for in the budget, aligning practices across the district and scheduling to support the student services department needs. It was further explained that scheduling conflicts make it difficult to maintain efficient instruction and collaboration, which can make buildings feel short staffed.

Superintendent Buckey explained that Assistant Superintendent Murphy did extensive scheduling work with stakeholders with special education in mind and the schedules were unfortunately changed. It was mentioned that more work needs to be done to better align schedules for efficiency.

Ms. Cresta addressed the comments made during public comment to address misinformation about the line item budget. She clarified that the referenced documents are listed on the website called the "budget summary". It was noted that a plan to create a digital budget process going forward was being discussed.

Ms. Taylor's motion to accept the proposed budget of \$47,033,366 was taken by roll call vote and the motion passes, 5-0.

Ms. Gold, Ms. Fox, Mr. Harris, Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Barron-all yes

III. Consent Action and Agenda Items

a. Minutes- 2/3/2022 and 2/17/2022

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the minutes from 2/3/22 and 2/17/22. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Harris. All roll call vote was taken and the motion passes 5-0.

Ms. Gold, Ms. Fox, Mr. Harris, Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Barron-all yes

b. Approval of Overnight and Out of State DECA Trip (Formerly known as *Distributive Clubs of America*)

Principal Dan Bauer explained that six students qualified for the DECA International Competition taking place in Georgia during April vacation. Four of the six will participate and advisor Ms. Skalaban has organized the travel plans and accommodations. Ms. Gold asked for a motion to approve the overnight trip for DECA Internationals. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passes, 5-0.

Ms. Gold, Ms. Fox, Mr. Harris, Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Barron-all yes

IV. Superintendent Report

a. Technology Update-Educational Technology Director-Stephen Kwiatek

Mr. Kwiatek shared a slideshow of the technology updates that have been made in the district since he arrived including many security, infrastructure, device and phone upgrades. He also mentioned that the department is working on developing a long-term technology plan and multi-year budget while also looking to create a committee to address ongoing technology needs/concerns.

b. District Updates

Superintendent Buckey provided a series of brief updates

- Hope Doran has been named the Glover Principal and will be in district soon for a coffee
- The Brown Principal Search has named three finalists and is working on a community forum for finalists to attend a building tour, staff and parent forums, and submit a writing assessment
- The food services director search is being launched by Ms. Cresta
- Principal Bauer has many interested candidates for the assistant principal position at the high school
- The district is working with METCO Inc. to develop a job description for the director position and Superintendent Buckey commended the dedicated staff who have stepped up in absence of a director

V. Finance and Organizational Support

a. Bus Pilot Program Update

Ms. Gold informed the committee that the bus audit has not come in. Ms. Cresta provided a memo regarding the *Pay to Ride Program*. She explained that the district was unable to offer more Pay to Ride seats due to driver shortages and wage concerns. It was mentioned that the schools had joined a group for \$225 a year which would offer a free transportation audit.

b. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Gold asked for a motion to approve the schedule of bills totaling \$1,034,225.91. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passes 5-0

Ms. Gold, Ms. Fox, Mr. Harris, Ms. Taylor and Ms. Barron –all yes

VI. School Committee and/or Discussion Items

a. School Committee METCO Discussion, *Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity*

i. Parent Representative

Ms. Barron shared that other districts have successfully added a METCO parent representative on their school committees as a non-voting member. She spoke in favor of pursuing who may be interested in serving as parent representative and mentioned following up with districts who have implemented the new position.

ii. Meeting dates at METCO Inc.

Ms. Gold explained the committee would like to visit the METCO headquarters for a tour and host an upcoming school committee meeting at their Roxbury headquarters.

Ms. Fox mentioned reaching out to the clerk to confirm how to properly post for the meeting in Roxbury. Superintendent Buckey noted that he would follow up with Lynnfield at the next round table event as they recently posted for a similar meeting with METCO.

Although no formal vote was taken, the committee agreed that the 5th of May would be preferred with April 28th as a backup option.

b. Subcommittee and Liaisons Updates

i. General Subcommittee Updates

- A policy meeting was held last week and the committee is continuing to look over “I” policies.
- The high school SAC is working on handbooks and the attendance policy post COVID. Policy links were being reviewed and hotlinks will be included for accessibility.

ii. Facilities Capital Requests Update

This agenda item was taken out of order and discussed during the budget vote.

iii. Facilities School Department Properties Discussion

Ms. Fox informed the committee that the list of school owned properties was reviewed at the last subcommittee meeting. She explained that the Beacon St.

property was found to be unsuitable for school use and recommended that Article 33 be utilized to transfer the property back to the Town. Ms. Fox clarified that she mentioned the wrong article and was referencing the placeholder article used to transfer property.

It was confirmed that no placeholder was put in as there was no vehicle to address that property at town meeting this year. It was requested by Ms. Barron that a placeholder be added for the following year. A conversation about Article 33 and the Green St. property took place. Ms. Gold also mentioned the letter received from the Fair Housing Authority regarding the use of the Beacon and Green St. properties and she recommended having the Fair Housing come to present to the committee.

VII. Closing Business

a. New Business

Ms. Fox requested conducting a staff survey that the union facilitates.

Ms. Gold mentioned that the Town recently did a salary survey and recommends the same for the school to help solidify budget planning.

b. Correspondence

The Fair Housing Authority Letter previously mentioned was included as correspondence.

c. Adjournment

Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 9:25pm.

Materials Included:

FY23 Budget Presentation

Memorandum-Transportation Update

Schedule of Bills

Fair Housing Authority Correspondence

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Dimier, Secretary

Marblehead School Committee

Approved May 19, 2022