

**Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday April 16, 2020 7:00pm**

Zoom Conference Call- <https://zoom.us/j/345166574?pwd=V3oycVhtUDlueG1yWXMrzFBSVFCQT09>

Meeting ID: 345 166 574

Password: 541232

OR Dial In (415) 762-9988 and follow the prompts

**Members Present:** Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Jennifer Schaeffner, David Harris and Sarah Fox

**Also:** William, H. McAlduff Jr.-Interim Superintendent  
Michelle Cresta-Director of Finance

**I. Initial Business and Public Involvement**

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.

**2. Commendations**

Ms. Taylor shared that she wanted to recognize the Music Department for receiving the Best Communities in Education Award for 2020 for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row. She read a prepared statement and congratulated the Department.

**3. Student Representative – Dan Howells**

Mr. Howells shared that remote learning officially began on April 7<sup>th</sup> and that Quarter 3 had ended and that Quarter 4 had begun. He informed the committee that Students would have until the 17<sup>th</sup> to turn in any missing Quarter 3 assignments that were late. Mr. Howells explained that assignments were structured on a weekly basis sharing that assignments would be posted at the beginning of the week and due at the end of the week. It was mentioned that grades would go towards final grades if students were to return by May 4<sup>th</sup> or the grading structure would become a pass/fail model. Mr. Howells shared that communication amongst teachers and students had been great with quick responses from teachers. He also mentioned that there seemed to be a good work balance. When asked by Ms. Gold how he was handling the social contact piece of being home, Mr. Howells reported that social media and phones helped but that there was some feelings of sadness with not being able to see others.

**4. Public Comment**

Mr. Jeff St. George 29 West Shore Dr. shared that as he was hearing great things about the remote learning plan at Tower and inquired if Ms. Gold would share input regarding their success. He shared his concerns about his 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders missing out on virtual learning or recorded instruction.

Ms. Gold reminded the community that the committee normally does not comment on public comment and that Mr. St. George's concerns should be address during the closure update.

Ms. Mary Dow of 7 Warwick Terrace shared that she had two students at Village. She read a prepared statement sharing that she felt Marblehead needed to start structured online teaching and instruction. She noted that prerecorded lessons could not replace live teaching through video.

Ms. Catherine Martin of 29 West Shore Dr. shared her concerns regarding extended closure and the need for looking more closely at the technology framework and infrastructure so the students and staff could be better prepared if the Corona Virus were to resurface in the Fall. She also mentioned the potential need for additional nursing and custodial staff for temperature taking and more frequent cleanings.

Mr. Blair Nelson 100 Elm St. thanked the committee, administrators and teachers for "all of their efforts during unheard of times." He expressed his concerns regarding remote learning technology and how it was not working for his family. He noted that he felt it was not sustainable and that instructions needed to be more clear.

Ms. Alastar Conor shared concerns about children missing the social piece of learning. She noted that

younger children who cannot be on social media should be required in some way to interact with other students to force social interaction.

Ms. Karin McCarthy of 15 Cloutmans Lane shared a Zoom chat message sharing that she could not stay for the meeting and shared “ Want to commend the VETS rollout—Feel like the program has gone quite well...My 8th grader feels like she has real work and has adapted well. Yes, on-line classes where kids could see and interact with teachers would be beneficial and make it all feel more like “real” school...I teach at college level and understand the pivot to on-line is hard even where some or much of the classroom material is ready for conversion to on-line—So I understand how it can feel daunting to teachers—but the substance of what is being done via on-line means currently feels relevant and engages my child...and that is a good thing. Hopefully teachers can add zoom or google chat time to their days—thank you to all for the efforts being put forth.”

## **II. Consent Agenda and Action Items**

### **1. February 6, 2020**

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the minutes from February 6, 2020. Ms. Schaeffner explained that she would be abstaining due to not having a chance to have read the minutes. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Gold-Yes

Ms. Taylor-Yes

Ms. Fox-Yes

Mr. Harris-Yes

The motion carries in favor, 4-0 with one abstention.

## **III. Superintendent Report**

Superintendent McAlduff appreciated the feedback and mentioned that the Remote Learning Plan would be adjusted as time went on and more guidance may be provided by the state. He also shared that staff had been asked to provide at least one live session per week with students. He reminded the community that everyone was working hard to better the process.

### **1. School Closure Update**

#### **a. Field Trips**

Superintendent McAlduff reported that all field trips would be canceled through the remainder of the year even if there would be a return to school. He further explained that this would help keep the focus on learning. It was mentioned that annual and traditional activities would be scheduled if guidance from the Governor allowed.

#### **b. Senior Activities**

It was mentioned that the discussion on Senior Activities would be put on hold until May 7<sup>th</sup> when more information would be available. Superintendent McAlduff explained that he was in contact with High School Principal Mr. Bauer regarding making the best decisions moving forward regarding cancellations, postponed trips and a plan for virtual graduation if necessary.

#### **c. Re-Entry Plan Discussion**

Superintendent McAlduff explained that the re-entry plan discussion was added at the request of the committee. He clarified that he would like the committee to share their input regarding what they would like the goals of the re-entry plan to be so he could note concerns.

Topics of discussion consisted of curriculum assessments and educational gaps, classroom setup and programming upon return, budget implications directly related to additional nursing custodial staff and cleaning supplies and the plan for immune compromised students who may not be able to return to school.

### **2. Assistant Superintendent Hiring Update**

Superintendent McAlduff reminded the committee that he had reported on the hiring process for the Assistant superintendent at the meeting held on March 5<sup>th</sup>. He shared that a Search Advisory Committee had been established and that he was awaiting a response from a Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade parent representative. He shared the names of the participants:

William McAlduff- Interim Superintendent  
Meagan Taylor-School Committee Representative  
Jennifer Schaeffner-School Committee Representative  
Michelle Cresta-Director of Finance  
Matthew Fox-Veterans Middle School Principal  
Brian Ota-Glover Elementary School Principal  
Robin Feins-High School English Teacher  
Jonathan Heller-Village School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
Eric Fargo-Glover Elementary School Physical Education Teacher  
Melissa Kaplowitch-Parent Representative Grades 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>  
TBD-Parent Representative Grades K-6<sup>th</sup>  
\*Dr. John Buckey-Incoming Superintendent would also be invited to take part

It was explained that the search process would be about a month behind due to the closure and that there would be an upcoming virtual orientation to discuss parameters. It was also shared that a recommendation for appointment was originally planned to be shared on May 7<sup>th</sup> and that the recommendation may be delayed until early June after virtual interviews had taken place and finalists had been identified.

#### **IV. Finance Organizational Support**

##### **1. Schedule of Bills**

Ms. Gold asked for a motion to approve the schedule of bills totaling \$1, 326, 898.29. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Fox. Ms. Fox inquired if the utility reserve funds from the Town had kicked in yet to which Ms. Cresta informed her that it already had for water and that they just hit the threshold for the electrical on the current schedule. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Gold-Yes  
Ms. Taylor-Yes  
Ms. Fox-Yes  
Ms. Schaeffner-Yes  
Mr. Harris-Yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

##### **2. FY21 Proposed Budget**

###### **a. Timeline Update**

Superintendent McAlduff shared that the Board of Selectmen recently voted to move the Town Meeting from May 4<sup>th</sup> to Monday June 29<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that committee would need to look at dates to hold their Budget Public Hearing and meet with the Town Finance Committee as next steps in the process to vote the FY21 proposed budget. It was mentioned that if a timeline following the closure was anticipated, the meeting with the Town Finance Committee could be held around May 25<sup>th</sup> instead of the originally planned date of March 30<sup>th</sup>. It was also shared that scheduling could be further discussed during the Budget Subcommittee meeting scheduled for the following day. Potential dates June dates for voting on the budget and scheduling the hearing were discussed.

#### **V. School Committee Communications and/or Discussion Items**

##### **1. Discussion on Remote Learning Plan Feedback Protocol**

Ms. Gold mentioned that she had spoken with Ms. Presser of MASC, the Massachusetts Association of School Committees regarding remote learning and suggested that districts follow the remote learning guidance being recommended by the state. Ms. Gold read a prepared statement.

A conversation took place regarding the process that should be used to receive parent and community feedback regarding remote learning. Although no formal vote was taken, it was decided that feedback should be submitted via the link on the remote learning website that would go directly to the task force members. Mr. Harris confirmed with Superintendent McAlduff that he could relay any new feedback as it became available.

Ms. Taylor and Ms. Schaeffner noted that it would be best to schedule a Policy Subcommittee meeting in the near future to address concerns surrounding remote learning and any other updates that may need to occur.

Ms. Gold shared that it was also important to remember that lowering ones high expectations may need to be considered during such unprecedented times in an effort to support the social and emotional well-being of parents, students and staff. She noted that the remote learning process would continue to be evaluated and adjusted and that the district would also continue to compare other schools plans for helpful information and additional guidance.

Mr. Harris noted that it was important to remember that teachers who also had children at home supporting their own children(s)' academics were facing the challenges associated with balancing work/life responsibilities from home also.

Superintendent McAlduff thanked the committee for their input sharing that their insight provided a view into looking at how the plan was working.

## **2. School Building Project Update**

Mr. Harris shared that he had forwarded an email to the committee that had been received earlier in the day from Gilbane regarding an updated safety plan that would now include COVID19 protocols. He explained that hot water and an electrical soap dispenser had been brought to the site for frequent hand washing.

It was also mentioned that the demolition and removal of the Upper Bell School foundation was nearing completion and that a test blast would be tentatively scheduled for Friday the 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Harris mentioned that Police Chief Picariello would send out a robo call notifying the community of the blasting.

Mr. Harris shared that RTA's or recommendations to award service agreements for items such as waterproofing and underground plumbing and shared that electrical was underway and that the Architect, OPM and CM were all working well together.

Concerns regarding supply chain delays was discussed and it was mentioned that no delays were currently expected and that the conversation could be continued at the next scheduled meeting being held the following Thursday.

## **VI. Closing Business**

### **1. New Business**

A request for public comment was made. Ms. Gold made a motion to allow for public comment and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Gold-Yes  
Mr. Harris-Yes  
Ms. Taylor-Yes  
Ms. Fox-Yes  
Ms. Schaeffner-Yes

Ms. Natalie Belli of 8 Gerry St and Village School Teacher shared that she wanted to give a shout out to students who were helping each other out to navigate new technology. She recognized the

digital citizenship kids were showing and commended them on interacting and sharing in other ways that supported the social and emotional well-being of their classmates.

Ms. Rachel Leavitt of 7 Countryside Lane and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher at Coffin School commended her son's Occupational Therapist for sending a video to help him learn to tie his shoe. She noted that even though children were not in the classroom that it was proof that students could still learn. She also mentioned that she was using Zoom to schedule two classroom meetings a week. She further reported that setting up a Zoom for the entire class was challenging for teaching but good for social engagement. Ms. Leavitt mentioned that students were struggling with sitting for longer periods of time to wait to share and that smaller groups structure or different avenues may be best.

Ms. Dana Trudeau of 12 Gregg St. in Beverly and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher at Village School shared her concerns surrounding Zoom meetings. She explained that being a parent teaching both her own children and working from home to teach was challenging. She also commended the Village staff for coming together for remote learning and thanked the parents reminding them that they could reach out anytime.

Ms. Taylor thanked the teachers for staying on the late call knowing they needed to be up early to teach.

Ms. Fox thanked Ms. Leavitt for sharing her personal story and what was and was not working with Zoom teaching.

## **2. Adjournment**

Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 8:56pm.

*Respectfully Submitted  
Sarah Fox, Secretary  
Marblehead School Committee*

*Approved June 18, 2020*