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BURLINGTON

■■■■■■■■■■ PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, August 22, 2023
TIME: 7:00 pm
LOCATION: 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA 01803
Administrative Offices, School Committee Room

ATTENDEES

MEMBER(S) PRESENT: Chair, Ms. Martha Simon, Vice Chair Ms. Melissa Massardo, Mr. Jeremy Brooks, Ms. Chris Monaco, Superintendent Dr. Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lisa Chen, Finance Director Ms. Nichole Coscia, and Director of Operations Mr. Bob Cunha

MEMBER(S) REMOTE: Ms. Katherine Bond

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: None

GUEST(S) PRESENT: BPS District Data Manager Ms. Robin Miliano

GUEST(S) REMOTE: Ways and Means Mr. Steve Morin

PUBLIC PRESENT: Burlington Resident and TM Member, Mr. Adam Senesi

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REMOTE: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Simon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and read the following statement: The public can also access this meeting via WebEx Technology. The Burlington School Committee will hear public comments in person and virtually. Meetings are also broadcast live on Burlington Cable Access TV (BCAT) as usual. Chair Simon reminded participants that comments and statements are limited to 3 minutes each. Meeting Access Code: Meeting number (access code): 2335 100 7880 | Password: Tuesday.

EQUITY STATEMENT

Educational equity means **that every child belongs and receives whatever support he/she/they need to develop his/her/their full academic, emotional, and social potential to learn and thrive every day.** This begins with kindness and valuing the humanity of every child or individual.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Monaco made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of 7/18/23; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - abstain, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 4:0:1 by Roll Call Vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

INFORMATION / REPORTS

Subcommittee Reports

None.

Ways & Means

None.

Other Announcements

Dr. Conti stated that the Equity Audit Report is still being worked on. He stressed that this report is meant to be public will be available as soon as it is completed.

LEARNING, EQUITY, THRIVING

Journey to C.A.R.E.S.

Dr. Chen made a presentation entitled, "Journey to C.A.R.E.S." Dr. Chen stated that during the summer there is always a lot of preparation needed in order to be ready for the new school year this Fall and reviewed the extensive work of the departments.

Mr. Cunha praised the maintenance departments for all their hard work during the summer and explained all the projects that have been completed this summer, which are as follows: Trees at Pine Glen needed to be removed due to tree roots causing the sidewalk and roadway to rise and crease; two BECC bathrooms have been renovated; the score board at the middle school are in process and will be completed soon; the middle school air conditioning is being worked on and will be completed by the end of this week; the fan in the main office at BHS has been replaced; two large construction projects are now being worked on at the BHS lower library and at Pine Glen.

Dr. Conti informed the committee about a new messaging product, called ParentSquare. This new messaging program was instituted so the BPS website and messages will be more accessible to everyone and messages can be translated in different languages.

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Student Transfer & Enrollment Report

Ms. Miliano provided the committee with a breakdown of the student enrollment as of 8/21/23. Ms. Miliano stated that since 7/1/23, there have been 96 completed registrations for pre-K through grade 12, there are approximately 9 or 10 registrations that are still in process and several registration appointments are scheduled over the next two days. Ms. Miliano stated there are about 30 families at the Burlington hotel, and more families are expected.

Dr. Conti explained that due to the McKinney-Vento, the federal law, if a student relocates with their family to Burlington but is attending school in another community and wants to stay at the school in the other community, then Burlington is responsible to transport the student to and from school. The cost of the transportation then gets split between Burlington and the other community.

Discussed ensued.

Out-of-State Marching Band Field Trip

Dr. Conti stated that Ms. Faydeen Sateriale is seeking approval for the Marching Band's annual field trip to Hampton Beach, N.H. This will take place after the completion of the Band Camp. The trip is scheduled for Friday, August 25, 2023.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to approve the Marching Band to attend an out-of-state field trip to Hampton Beach, N.H., on August 25, 2023; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Stipend Proposal - MSMS Student Book Club

Dr. Conti stated there is a stipend proposal for a new student book club at MSMS. Dr. Conti recommends approving this extra curriculum activity, which will take place after school on Mondays.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to approve the stipend proposal for the MSMS student book club; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

BHS Student Handbook

Dr. Conti reminded the School Committee they need to approve the student handbooks every year, preferably by the start of school and recommended approving the BHS Student Handbook that is being presented this evening.

Ms. Monaco motioned to approve the BHS Student Handbook for 2023-2024, as presented; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Master Plan/School Building Condition Review

Dr. Conti stated that he sent two reports to the committee, one was the 2017 Master Plan Report and the other was an MSBA report from 2017, which is an evaluation of the condition for every school in the Commonwealth.

Discussion ensued regarding the school building projects.

Mr. Adam Senesi, a Burlington resident and Town Meeting Member, commented that since there was a request to Town Meeting for \$1.5M for a BHS feasibility study, thus recommended the high school should be the next project in the queue.

Union 1-year contract extensions (custodial, cafeteria, IA's)

Dr. Conti explained that the contracts for these unions were previously voted upon and now need to be voted on publicly. The contracts for custodial, cafeteria and IA's ended in 2023 and a one-year extension with a 3% COL increase for each of these unions were requested.

Mr. Brooks motioned to approve the 1-year contract extension for the cafeteria workers with a 3% COL increase; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Mr. Brooks motioned to approve the 1-year contract extension for the Instructional Assistants with a 3% COL increase; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

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Mr. Brooks motioned to approve the 1-year contract extension for the custodial workers with a 3% COL increase; seconded by Ms. Massando.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Clerical Union FY'23 – 0.05% MOA

Dr. Conti explained that the clerical union was voted on for a 2.5% increase for FY'24 and another 0.05% retroactive increase for FY'23 in order to bring their COL increase equal to the other union increases.

Ms. Monaco motioned to approve a 1-year contract for the clerical workers with a 2.5% COL increase for FY'24 and a 0.05% retroactive COL increase for FY'23; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

FACILITIES/FINANCE

M.G.L. Chapter 70 to Report

Ms. Coscia reported on M.G.L Chapter 70 Aid. Currently, the funding for FY' 24 is up 2.25% over last fiscal year, which is approximately \$205,000 and this is due to the per pupil increase of \$30.00 (total of \$60 per pupil) that the state adjusted in the formula. The total of the state Chapter 70 aid to the school budget is \$9.3 million and the school operating and accommodated budgets are approximately \$76M, thus the Chapter 70 aid is approximately 12%, meaning that approximately 88% is from other sources.

Assistant Athletic Trainer/Strength & Conditioning Coach - Approval to add to BEA contract, Appendix F (Coaches)

Dr. Conti provided a background on the full time Assistant Athletic Trainer/Strength & Conditioning Coach position, noting this position is in a separate section of the BEA Contract, along with the full time Athletic Trainer. Dr. Conti requested that the committee accept the full time Assistant Athletic Trainer to the BEA union.

Ms. Massardo made a motion to accept the full time Assistant Athletic Trainer/Strength & Conditioning Coach to the BEA Contract Appendix F; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Food Service Management Company Update

Ms. Coscia updated the committee on Food Service Management. She explained that there was a 66-day contract with Whitsons and the contract included a guarantee return of \$46,967.00. The actual return was \$86,524.72, thus Whitsons honored their guarantee. The ending school lunch revolving account was \$760,000.00 for the year. Ms. Coscia stated this contract had to be re-bid due to new parameters set by the State and there was only one bid received, and it was Whitsons. Ms. Coscia stated actual financials can be seen on the report provided. The vendor for food service management this year will be Whitsons, and they will again, guarantee their rate of return for the new contract.

Ms. Monaco requested detailed information relative to the amount of money in the school lunch revolving account when Whitsons started their 66-day contract versus the amount that is currently in the account.

Capital Warrant Articles Closeout

Ms. Coscia reported on the capital warrant articles closeout and asked for the committee's approval. She explained there are four (4) listed capital articles closeouts and used the example of not moving forward with the Pine Glen HVAC upgrade because the original amount was for \$500,000 and when the bids came in it was over, at \$890,000. There are other similar capital warrant articles and asked Mr. Cunha to explain.

Mr. Cunha asked the committee for input on the following projects:

1. **BHS Parking Spaces:** One of the projects is the additional parking spaces at the high school, which is now double the cost it was originally and asked the committee if this project is still a priority?

Ms. Simon stated the committee already decided not to move forward with this project due to the upcoming feasibility study and asked for a motion.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to close out the capital warrant article for the front BHS parking spaces project and return \$60,000 to the Town, which was allotted in May 2, 2018 at Town Meeting; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

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2. **Pine Glen HVAC:** Mr. Cunha does not recommend returning the money for the Pine Glen HVAC. He suggested completing the project at scale, then seek commitment from Town Meeting for additional funding in the future to request the additional work.

Dr. Conti explained that is very similar to how the HVAC project at Francis Wyman was completed. He stated the Francis Wyman HVAC project was done in Phase I and Phase II.

Ms. Coscia will ask Town Counsel if this needs to be re-voted on based on a change in scope and will advise the committee.

Ms. Simon stated that this vote should be delayed until after Ms. Coscia obtains information from Town Counsel.

3. **Design Work:** In May 2020, design work was part of the capital warrant articles. Mr. Cunha explained the money for the design work does not pertain to the work that is currently needed, thus recommends returning the money to the Town.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to close out the capital warrant article for the design work project that was allotted at Town Meeting in May 2020 and return \$100,000 to the Town; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

4. **Visitor Control Access System:** Mr. Cunha explained that we anticipated more units than necessary and the software allows us expansion using other devices that we currently own. He recommends returning the amount back to the Town.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to close out the capital warrant article for the visitor control access system project and return \$9,655.00 to the Town; seconded by Ms. Bond.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Update on Use of Federal Pandemic Funds Update

Ms. Coscia updated the committee on the Federal Pandemic Funds. There were three separate grants with three separate end dates for a total of \$1.4 million and to date we've spent \$906,000, the majority of which have been on salaries. We have about \$500,000 left, which is earmarked for salaries, specifically for mental health supports.

Addition of a Second Crossing Guard at Fox Hill

Mr. Cunha explained the need for a second crossing guard at Fox Hill due to the traffic. Currently there is only one crossing guard and two streets with multiple crossings. The Burlington Police Captain confirmed there is a crossing guard available who can start the first day of school. This expense is approximately \$2,100 per month.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to approve adding a second crossing guard for Fox Hill; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Transportation Update

Mr. Cunha reported that the goal is to put the school routes on the website by August 23rd and this is on target for that date. All the changes that were requested last year were made and approved to carry through for this year, as well. Mr. Cunha stated that a change this year is that the request form to change routes will not be available until after 9/13/23. Mr. Cunha suggested students be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.

Dr. Conti reminded the committee that the BHS start time was moved to 8:40 AM last year and noted that it doesn't make sense to change it back to 8:30 AM, at this time. He stated it takes longer to get across town and the State is repaving Cambridge Street starting at the Billerica line and this will be cause further delays. In addition, Dr. Conti informed the committee that Ms. Coscia will be putting out a transportation RFP following the recommended State guidelines.

Ms. Coscia explained one of the requirements is that the State wants longer advertising times and anticipates the RFP going out by late October.

Fox Hill School Building Committee Update

Mr. Cunha stated that there is a community meeting on 9/18/23 at BHS, more info will follow and there is additional information on the Fox Hill website.

Dr. Conti confirmed that the Fox Hill School Building Committee agreed not to have a combined Fox Hill and Pine Glen school at the Pine Glen site.

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BHS Update – BHS Building Committee – 2nd Reading

Ms. Bond recommended the first BHS Building Committee be set up during the first two weeks of September.

Mr. Cunha stated this is the 2nd reading for the BHS Building Committee. He explained that by using the MSBA template for a committee, there are predetermined members needed and read the recommendations: There needs to be a member who is MCPPO certified who is Ms. Nichole Coscia; a local Chief Executive Officer who is Mr. John Danizio; an Administrator or Town Manager who is Mr. Paul Sagarino; a minimum of one School Committee member and there are five, Ms. Martha Simon, Ms. Melissa Massardo, Ms. Katherine Bond, Ms. Chris Monaco and Mr. Jeremy Brooks; the Assistant Superintendent of Schools who is Dr. Lisa Chen; a local official responsible for building maintenance who is Mr. Bob Cunha; a representative authorized by law to construct school buildings who is Mr. John Danizio; the School Principal who is Mr. Mark Sullivan; a member knowledgeable in educational mission and function of the facility who is Mr. Joe Attubato; a local budget official or member of local finance committee who is Mr. John Iler; a member with architect, engineering or structural experience who is Mr. Neil Guanci; and a category for “other” that includes: Ms. Wendy Czerwinski, Ms. Laura Maida, and Mr. Tom Regan, (BHS teachers); Burlington High School Parent, Gail Pinkham; and two students Esther Ma and Colin Irwin; and a Ways and Means member who is also a parent and resident, Mr. Chris Campbell. We have already designated a Chair and Vice Chair but there still needs a discussion about voting members.

Dr. Conti stated the Chair is Ms. Katherine Bond and Vice Chair is Ms. Martha Simon and recommends that the five school committee members be the voting members, at least to start the committee.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to accept the proposed BHS Building Committee, with the addition of Dr. Conti; seconded by Ms. Bond.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Brooks made a motion to keep the five school committee members as the voting members until such time the committee deems it is required more voting members; seconded by Massardo.

There was a discussion about adding Dr. Conti to the committee. Ms. Simon requested that if we add any members beyond the five School Committee members, that it should result in an odd number on the committee.

An amendment was made to this motion as follows:

Ms. Bond made a motion to amend the previous motion to add two voting members, Dr. Eric Conti and Dr. Lisa Chen; seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – nay, Ms. Massardo – nay, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 3:0:2 by Roll Call Vote.

Ms. Monaco made a motion that all five school committee members and Dr. Conti and Dr. Chen will be the starting voting members of the BHS Building Committee; seconded by Ms. Bond.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – nay, Ms. Massardo – nay, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 3:0:2 by Roll Call Vote.

Ms. Simon confirmed the school committee voted on 7 voting members for the BHS Building Committee.

Pine Glen Update

None.

Summer Projects Update

Mr. Cunha provided an update on the summer projects, as follows: The projectors are being installed at MSMS with software and blue tooth connections; the flooring at Francis Wyman being installed now; the grease trap at FW is now completed; the BECC bathroom renovations should be completed by this Friday; the Pine Glen paving project will be completed tomorrow; work is being conducted along with the DPW and the Recreation Department for the ground maintenance to continue at the schools and will continue throughout the fall; the middle school air conditioning will be completed this week; the Francis Wyman playground delivery is scheduled for Monday 8/28, the installation crew is ready to begin next week and the Recreation Department expects this to be a three-week process.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Ms. Monaco to adjourn at 10:16 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Massardo.
Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.
Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

SUBMITTED

Respectfully,
Marianne Fabbri
Recording Secretary

Date Submitted: 9/12/23
Date Approved: 9/12/23