

Lenox Public Schools
School Committee
Via Remote Access
June 14, 2021 @ 6:30pm

To Access Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88205301851?pwd=eXJjckZFaEpuRINjREVqc2htdGgxdz09>

Passcode: 098320 Webinar ID: 882 0530 1851

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Vaughan, Meghan Kirby, Veronica Fenton, Oren Cass, Robert Munch, David Rimmmler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christine Mauro

ALSO PRESENT: William J. Cameron, Melissa Falkowski, Brenda Kelley, Michael Knybel

I. CALL TO ORDER. RV, Chair; 6:30 pm

II. HEARING OF VISITORS

- Public comment. Kristen Moriarty, thanked all staff in the schools and especially the School Committee members, who do this on a volunteer basis. Molly Rivest seconded KM's comments. Also, hope to hear what the 2021-22 school year will look like; it is time to start those conversations. Mary Cherry, LEA President, read a prepared statement to mark the occasion of Dr. William Cameron's last School Committee meeting in Lenox, on behalf of LEA Exec Board. Very grateful for his extended tenure in Lenox. He was the leader Lenox Public Schools needed. RV: Seconded MC's comments and expressed his gratitude for Dr. Cameron's leadership as well. Also seconded by RM. BK provided update regarding events at Morris – Books before Bed and Field Day occurred recently, and Thursday will be 5th grade stepping up ceremony.

III. CORRESPONDENCE. None

IV. BOARD REPORT

- School Committee Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2021

MOTION by VF and Seconded by DR to accept the minutes of the May 17, 2021 School Committee meeting.

VF: aye

MK: aye

OC: aye

DR: aye

RM: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-o, one absent.

- Graduation summary. RV provided a recap of the graduation ceremony and Senior events throughout the previous week.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Hiring/vacancy updates. WC recapped the hiring that has taken place, and thanked Brian Cogswell for his service. Interviews will take place next week for the Technology Coordinator and Data Manager positions. Interviewed last week for Coordinator of Curriculum and Instructional Technology. This was a platypus position merging two distinct categories of expertise. It was an unrealistic expectation to have someone who was fully competent in both areas. We are not going to fill that position this year.
- Update on plans for reopening schools. Operating on the assumption at this stage, that schools will be open as normal beginning in September. Some questions remain regarding masks. Remote learning option will not be available next year. OC inquired regarding the Travel Advisory for out of state travel -- is it still in place? WC: Travel plan was derived from what is still the latest travel advisory from the Commonwealth. OC then inquired regarding the status of the plan going forward, specifically for fall. OC also inquired whether teachers who have remained remote for the duration of this year would be remote for next school year. WC indicated permission for teaching remotely was granted only for this

school year, with the indication that it would not likely be an option for teachers for the 2021-22 school year. OC: MOU with teachers re: COVID expires at the end of the school year, is there anything that will carry forward to the next school year? WC: It would be on the part of the LEA to bring that up.

- MOU on 2020-21 stipends. Document lists all the stipends for various extra-curricular, coaching etc. for activities that occurred during the year. This is approved by the School Committee so that the compensation is pensionable.

MOTION by MK and seconded by VF to approve the contract addendum for stipends for the 2020-21 school year.

VF: aye

MK: aye

OC: aye

RM: aye

DR: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-0, one absent.

- 2021-22 School Calendar—Vote required. WC: School Committee previously approved the start, ending and vacation dates. Additions have been made so that is a full school year calendar with more details. WC outlined the additions to the calendar from previously approval. VF: Would like to address two parts of the calendar regarding equity and inclusion. We reference October 11 as Columbus Day. Request that it be referenced merely as a Federal Holiday, without a specific name, and that we continue conversation about how we look at that day. April 15 -- this year happens to be tagged on to April vacation. Out of tradition we have given Good Friday as a day off. We should consider not giving a day off for one religion and not for others.

MOTION by VF and seconded by RM to remove Columbus Day and indicate October 11 as a Federal Holiday. Members discussed the merits of this proposed change.

OC: nay

RM: aye

DR: aye

VF: aye

MK: nay

RV: aye

Approved 4-2, one absent.

MOTION by VF to amend the calendar to have April 15 be a school day and not a holiday.

Discussion ensued. VF proposed to revise motion to change April 15 to a half day. No agreement to making the change to a half day was made, and no second to the motion was made.

MOTION by VF and seconded by OC to accept the 2021-22 school year calendar as amended.

OC: aye

RM: aye

VF: aye

DR: aye

MK: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-0, one absent.

- Summer Programming. WC provided overview of status of summer programming, MK provided details of plan for LMMHS.
- JF School Admissions Policy revision – First read. WC outlined changes in this policy to comply with DESE requirements.
- JFABF Foster Care Policy – Second read and vote. Members would like acronyms spelled out for each first use in the policy. WC agreed to make that amendment. DR requested clarification of the use of the phrase ‘the district’.

MOTION by MK and seconded by RM to approve the adoption of the JFABF Foster Care Policy.

OC: aye

RM: aye

VF: aye

DR: aye

MK: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-o, one absent.

- JFABD Homeless Students Policy – Second read and vote.

MOTION by VF and seconded by MK to approve

OC: aye

RM: aye

DR: aye

MK: aye

VF: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-o, one absent.

- WC thanked the SC for the opportunity to work and learn in the district. Thanked MC for the comments from the LEA. Thanked leadership and staff at both schools, parents, members of the community. I've worked here in a remarkable place. District is in exceptionally good hands going forward with Dr. Marc Gosselin coming in.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- Transfer Request (Health Insurance Benefits to Contracted Services) – Vote Required. RV: Asbestos remediation project needs to be funded, is requesting a transfer from Health Benefits which is not needed due to the premium holiday in May. MF explained details. Discussion ensued regarding the status of the remediation currently, and what was done in the past regarding this issue. WC: no asbestos in new part of the building. I-Beams in original part of the school were sprayed with fire retardant. This substance contained asbestos. Inner facing beams must have this substance remove, on one side. Spray was applied to seal the substance on the other side. Strong gusts of winds are blowing vermiculite onto window sills in older part of the building. No air quality evaluation has ever shown evidence of friable asbestos. SC members discussed the current situation and determined the topic should be discussed further at future meetings.

MOTION BY VF and seconded by RM to approve the transfer of \$315,000 as indicated in the memo, of \$255,000 from Health Insurance Benefits for Active Employees, and \$60,000 from Health Insurance Benefit for Retirees, for a total of \$315,000.

OC: aye

RM: aye

DR: aye

VF: aye

MK: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-o, one absent.

RV: Would like to request dates Committee members are/are not available for an additional meeting this summer. Will send email.

OC: Would like to introduce the motion included in the packet regarding what our policy will be for opening of schools in the fall. RV: Can definitely introduce the motion. Not sure what the motion will do that isn't already in place.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEES

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Teaching and Learning
- School Culture and Community Relations
- Governance and Leadership

MOTION by RM and seconded by VF to adjourn the meeting.

OC: aye

RM: aye

MK: aye

DR: aye

VF: aye

RV: aye

Approved 6-o, one absent.

Meeting adjourned 8:22 pm.

IX. DOCUMENTS IN PACKET

- School Committee Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2021
- Memo re: Fall 2021
- Stipend MOU
- 2021-22 School Calendar
- JF School Admissions Policy revision
- JFABF Foster Care Policy
- JFABD Homeless Students Policy
- Transfer Request
- IDEA Part B Determination
- Revised School Committee Meeting Schedule
- School Committee Member Directory
- School Committee Subcommittee Chart

Submitted by *Amy Noble Novitzky*.