

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
Public Participation Via Remote Access
February 24, 2021

Committee Present: Sheila Varela, Chair; Dr. Elaine Craghead, Vice Chair; Margaret Eberhardt, Dr. Kevin Donahue, Ada Rosmarin, Betty White

Staff Present: James Jette, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Karen Spaulding, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources; Amy Dexter, Assistant Superintendent for Business

(Conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.)

1. **Call to order** - 7:02pm
2. **Approve February 24, 2021 Agenda**
Updated and approved

Chair Varela made a motion to amend the agenda to adjourn to Executive Session only in part, and move Executive Session item to #3 on the agenda: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with union personnel.

Part II of Executive Session will remain at #12 on the agenda. (Two Executive Sessions)

Second: Dr. Craghead
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

3. **Execution Session Part I** - The School Committee formally left open session at 7:10pm

The School Committee formally returns to Open Session resumes at 7:58pm.

4. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 Minutes)**

Michelle Donovan - 137 Gerald Road

- Mother of 2 at the High School
- Physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Support the return to school in full
- Need to focus on the high school students as well
- Increase in person learning
- $\frac{2}{3}$ in person would be a start to the transition, $\frac{1}{3}$ remote

- Mask and hygiene are mandatory
- need to maximize the learning
- Put the HS schools students back in school 5 days a week until lunch time
- maximizing the social time is as well

Jen Goonan - 37 Woodchester Drive

- 3 children in the MPS
- Pulled 2nd grader out of the Milton Public Schools in order to have full time learning and considering pulling out another child for the same reason
- What do we need to see happen to get the students back in school full time?
- Need to follow the science
- Need to listen to medical professionals
- It is safe to return based on recent data
- When will we have a detailed plan in place?
- Why is Milton not keeping up with other communities?

Dyanne Crowley - MEA President

- Expressed dismay with administration
- MEA repeatedly asked about the hybrid models
- Understands the changes of the leaning models
- MEA maintains that educators and students worked diligently to overcome the challenges
- MEA is truly proud of the educators and students
- Lack of communication with DESE
- MEA is committed to work with the district
- Looking forward to offering more in person time for our students

Bonnie Bates - Pleasant Street

- 2 Cunningham students
- Announcements from other communities that are returning to school full time
- Milton needs to focus on the best interest of the students
- Milton has not brought back any grade levels full time
- Milton has continue to ignore and let down the children
- Need to look into returning with 3ft by April
- Other communities are not relying on vaccines

5. Superintendent's Report - Superintendent Jette

a. Glover Elementary School Site Council Presentation

- Link: https://www.miltonps.org/application/files/1816/1470/4002/2021_Glover_Elementary_School_Site_Council_Presentation.pdf

The School Committee and Administration thanked the Glover Site Council for their presentation.

b. Revised 2021-2022 School Year Calendar

Chair Varela made the motion to approve the revision to the 2021-22 School Year calendar adding Monday, June 20, 2022 as an observed holiday for Juneteenth Day.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

c. District Updates - Superintendent Jette

- Set up School Community listen sessions for all schools
- Difficult year, constantly evolving
- MPS started out with a comprehensive plan
- Looking forward to discussions with the community and the union
- There have been changes/updates in the science
- We are talking about bringing students back
- Everyone is working hard in these challenging times
- SLT time increasing
- Updates will be given over the next couple of days with the new guidelines from DESE
- Eager to get back to negotiation sessions
- Plans are being discussed to increase in person learning
- Will continue our weekly meetings with the union
- Thanked parents for their patience with this process
- Looking forward to more in time learning for our students
- Community session meetings will be posted

6. Chair's Report - Chair Varela

a. Student Advisory Council Report

- Jayme Lo - Representative from the Class of 2023
 - benefits of the cameras remaining on during remote time
 - encourages students to participate more
 - feels more like a classroom setting

The School Committee thanked Jayme Lo for speaking on behalf of the student advisory.

b. School Committee Subcommittees/Advisory Committees - Chair Varela

- Need to send out a revised subcommittee list and descriptions
- Members need to review and revisit any changes that need to be made at the next meeting in March
- The transition in April should be clean and ready for the transition of the new members
- Need to take a look at the overall list of committees/subcommittees

7. Finance Subcommittee Report - Dr. Craghead

a. FY22 Budget

- Dr. Craghead explained and reviewed the budget and options
- Parents need to express their concerns and voices
- Town including the schools have a 3million dollar shortfall
- Went before the Warrant Committee back in the fall, made our asks with our Tier I requests
 - Cost to return to school from the pandemic
 - Elementary reading specialist
 - Middle School Guidance counselor
 - Middle School Special Ed Teacher
 - Nursing staff
- Also have a Tier II requests
 - 504 Coordinator
 - Exploratory Teacher at the elementary level
 - Pre-K Behavior Health Specialist
 - Full Time - Paraprofessional
 - Tier II asks has been cut

b. Approval of Vendor Warrants – Dr. Craghead

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #32 in the amount of \$285,307.80 payable on February 11, 2021.

Dr. Craghead made a motion to Motion to approve Vendor Warrant #34 in the amount of \$551,449.04 payable February 25, 2021.

Second: Chair Varela
Roll Call Vote:6-0-0

8. Facilities Advisory Committee Report - Dr. Donahue

- Ensuring appropriate functions of our facilities
- Managing a short term space issues until we have our new elementary school
- Capital request have been made
- All the Principals identified spaces to be used
- Discussed the need of funding to reconstruct the spaces
- \$160,000 to convert spaces
- Need to uses 2 and 3 of those proposed spaces in the fall
- Next 2 academic years we will have the space to convert classroom spaces
- Also looking at proposed rental spaces
- Where could MPS house temporarily - space solutions

- Portable classroom options
- Overrides/additional funding discussions

9. Policy Subcommittee Report - Dr. Donahue

- a. Anti Racism Policy, MPS Hiring Policies worked with Somaly Prak-Martins
 - Started to look at the policies Anti Racism Policy and MPS Hiring Policies
 - Conclusion was the School Committee needs to have more conversations about the philosophies
 - What is the vision, need to create Anti Racism Policy and MPS Hiring Policies
 - Need to involve stakeholders in the town and the School Committee
 - It will be a lengthy robust process
 - Elevate the conversations and structure the conversation and start doing the primary draft of the policies
 - Somaly Prak-Martins stated she appreciated the safe space to have the conversations, the conversation will be uncomfortable but we need to be equitable for all. Equity need to be provided to every person and that will need to continue to evolve
- b. Milton School Committee Resolution: COVID-19 Vaccination - Chair Varela

Chair Varela read the draft of the Milton School Committee Resolution: Prioritization for Public School Employees for Covid-19 Vaccination.

WHEREAS, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the students of The Milton Public Schools are experiencing a unprecedented school year, and have missed out on traditional learning, social, and extracurricular experiences within their school experience; and

WHEREAS, students and staff are commended for their resilience, commitment, and efforts throughout the remote learning and hybrid learning model of education and challenging times in our nation; and

WHEREAS, plans are being made for increased learning time in school buildings for as many days as possible for the rest of the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that COVID-19 vaccinations are one major step, yet not the complete solution to end the COVID-19 pandemic, as public health measures such as wearing masks, physical distancing, hand washing, and COVID-19 testing methods are still necessary for the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, we write this in anticipation of reports that greater vaccine supplies are expected to become available so state decision makers can consider prioritizing other groups in the planned current phases; and

WHEREAS, Center for Disease Control medical directives advise that it takes between 5-6 weeks between the initial first dose of the vaccine for efficacy to arrive 1-2 weeks after the second dose; and

WHEREAS, the sooner the 5-6 week vaccination timeline can begin for the members of public school staff the better the chances for more in person learning to occur;

WHEREAS, the Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of Education, and the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education have prioritized in person learning, and vaccinating public school staff willing is an important step towards that goal; therefore, let it be

RESOLVED, that the Milton School Committee requests that Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, and the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccination Advisory Group take steps to prioritize all of public school employees be moved to **PHASE II GROUP I** to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in order for this essential risk reduction to occur and for students to return to more in person learning; let it be

RESOLVED, that the Milton School Committee send a copy of this resolution to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and invite all school districts to sign on in support of all public school employees across the Commonwealth.

Chair Varela made a motion approve the Milton School Committee Resolution:

PRIORITIZATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES FOR COVID-19 VACCINATION.

Second: Dr. Donahue

Roll Call Vote:6-0-0

10. Approval of Minutes

Chair Varela made a motion to approve the minutes of the Milton School Committee meeting of January 6, 2021.

Chair Varela made a motion to approve the minutes of the Milton School Committee meeting of January 20, 2021.

Chair Varela made a motion to approve the minutes of the Milton School Committee meeting of February 10, 2021.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote:6-0-0

11. Next Meeting Agenda Items - Chair Varela

Updated and approved

12. Executive Session

Chair Varela moved to adjourned to go into Executive Session not to return to the open session for the purpose of discussion of:

- a. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations nonunion personnel in accordance with Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2)
- b. Approval of Minutes

Second: Ms. White

Roll Call Vote:6-0-0

The School Committee Meeting was adjourned at 10:27pm.