

**FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**October 23, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Bueno, Mr. Veitch, Mrs. Kuechler, Mrs. Powers, Mrs. McKenna

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Monroe (with prior notice)

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Kohler, Ms. Bouchard, Mrs. Potter

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Abigail Bernardo - Student Advisory Representative, Isabelle Pacheco  
- Student Advisory Representative, Lisa Plant - Parent

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Kuechler (acting as Chair in absence of Brian Monroe) at 6:29p.m.

The chair informed the audience that the meeting was being videotaped.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Bueno, Powers, Kuechler, McKenna, Veitch (Mr. Monroe was absent with prior notice)

Motion made by Stasia Powers, seconded by Kyle Bueno to approve regular minutes of October 9, 2019. Minutes were approved, 4-0-1. Ms. McKenna abstained.

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Student Advisory

Abigail Bernardo reminded everyone of the upcoming unified Basketball games, with the next one being 10/24/2019 at 3:30pm. Ms. Bernardo gave an update regarding the sports teams and their progress. She also talked about the various fund raisers for Athletics and senior class fundraising. Isabelle Pacheco gave the Committee updates regarding clubs and fundraising. She also made note of a Vendor Fair being held on 11/2.

Class Size Goals

Dr. Baldwin spoke regarding the handout. He indicated that the numbers used were the same ones from October 1. The numbers are usually run on a monthly basis and the report shows them broken down by class size. Dr. Baldwin referenced the March review of the numbers for grade 3. The changes from March until now is not an equitable difference. The median at East is 23 and the median at Wood is 25. Also discussed were the effect of the numbers on the budget process (i.e. the number in grade 2 get moved to grade 3 when planning the next year's budget). The core academic areas are also affected and have been broken down by content. The guidance/scheduling team and administration have worked to get the number to an average where they are comfortable and positive across the board. The analysis proves

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it is being handled well. While some numbers still show 27 and 28 in classes (which is still within the goals), there are some places other than Fairhaven that are well into the 30's.

#### Student Enrollment

Members and staff received handout regarding the student enrollment. Dr. Baldwin reviewed and pointed out that the enrollment is either flat or increasing. He also pointed out that 2018 on the handout should read 2019.

Stasia Powers spoke regarding the figures on the handout. Ms. Powers mentions Middle School ELA (grades 6-7-8). She states there are 145 in 6 sections in grade 6, but there are 8 sections in grades 7 and 8. She asks why this is.

Dr. Baldwin responds that there are 70+minute blocks in grade 6 and that is not how it is done in the other grades. The blocks are 54 minutes in grades 7 and 8. This was put in place a number of years ago.

#### FY21 Capital Improvement Plan Submission

Dr. Baldwin began by informing the audience that on 10/15/2019 we entered our submission. The maintenance building is the number one priority. This building has been a longstanding request. The storage is needed for maintenance and athletic equipment to improve its longevity. The turf is the second priority. Both are on the docket.

#### FY20 Budget Update

Dr. Baldwin spoke regarding the different budget items including out of district tuition. He spoke of the meetings with the Selectmen and Finance Committee where the narrative that was submitted was well received. Both meetings went to vote and we received unanimous support and we will continue moving forward at the Special Town Meeting on 11/12. The budget will reflect the needs.

Ms. Powers stated that she is glad we are moving forward. It shows effort of building trust and asking for what we need. Schools and students are the number one priority.

Mr. Bueno states that is motion is in keeping with the transparency and honesty. It is an example to other departments and schools.

Ms. Kuechler appreciates the Finance Committee's support. It is a good thing we can be clear and prevent a structural deficit.

Dr. Baldwin stated that the Town Administrator pointed out that no other department is being asked to fund their department out of a special fund.

Ms. Kuechler stated that with Special Needs funding and providing the least restrictive environment, funds can fluctuate. This ensures the reserve.

#### Solar Power Purchase Agreement

Dr. Baldwin spoke regarding a meeting that was had between several people from the town, including the town's counsel and the solar representatives. The town's attorney is involved with the negotiations to protect the best interest of the town as there may be new incentives that could be advantageous. Ms. Kuechler stated that Wood was built with this thought. This is a smart thing to do and a great opportunity.

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K-2 Reading Initiative

Ms. Kohler spoke of a recent PD that was successful. The theme was "Unplugged". It asked participants to reflect on why they do what they do and why Fairhaven Public Schools. The Commissioner visited and spoke regarding changes. Ms. Kohler would like to credit the teachers and staff for tackling the growth and building the teachers' comprehension strategies. There will be a formal update in December. Mr. Bueno stated that this speaks volumes regarding the solution oriented approach.

Ms. Powers recognized Ms. Kohler's excitement regarding the initiative.

Ms. Kuechler spoke regarding the need to address needs early on as this leaves the ability to catch up and opens them up for success.

Next Meeting

11/13/2019

Dr. Baldwin stated that the School Improvement Plans will be ready and the Special Town Meeting will have taken place. He also reminded everyone of the Unified Basketball Games taking place this week. Ms. Bouchard to forward dates, locations, and times to School Committee. Dr. Baldwin also mentioned recent meetings he has attended. Some takeaways were at NEASC and that Fairhaven is the first school district in the region to apply for District Accreditation. There are also many things happening on the Voc-Tech front with regards to access and equity.

Ms. McKenna mentioned the SMEC Walk-a-Thon and informed everyone that many teachers participated. They had a great turnout.

Mr. Bueno was thankful for the opportunity to speak at the "Unplugged" PD.

Ms. Kohler, when speaking in regards to Mr. Bueno's speech at "Unplugged" PD, mentioned that Mr. Bueno highlighted an elementary educator who made him feel seen. He made the staff feel like what they do is worth it.

Ms. Powers questioned incident from earlier this morning. Dr. Baldwin had no new updates and stated that it is a police matter. Ms. Kuechler and Ms. Powers, on behalf of the School Committee, hopes for the best.

No Executive Session.

Motion made by Colin Veitch, seconded by Kyle Bueno to adjourn. Unanimous, 5-0, adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.



Robert Baldwin, Ed.D  
Secretary to the School Committee  
Fairhaven Public Schools