

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 17, 2020

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

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

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:32p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance. **The Chair played a recorded version of the pledge. **

Roll Call: Kuechler, Powers, Veitch, McKenna, Bueno, Monroe

Motion made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Ms. Powers to approve the minutes from June 3, 2020. Minutes were approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Student Advisory

Students did not attend the meeting. Therefore, there wasn't an advisory report.

Public Comment

Mr. Monroe stated that everyone can speak, but they will be limited to 2 minutes. He also asked that they send a chat or raise their hand if they would like to speak. Since there was no response, there was no Public Comment.

FY20 Update FY21 Budget Process

Dr. Baldwin discussed misinformation being given out. He reviewed the article in the Globe as an example. He also spoke of the continued uncertainty. He also began to review the memo that he sent to Mr. Rees, the Town Administrator. He reminded everyone that uncertainty is the only thing that is certain. He stated that our school department must prepare in June with information that we likely won't receive until the fall. He stated that due to the Collecting Bargaining Agreement and state statute, we must execute personnel decisions no later than June 15 and decisions that can be executed regarding operations must be executed by June 30. He then discussed revenues. He reviewed the facts regarding the state revenues. He stated that a downturn of state revenues of \$6.6 billion dollars may equate to a 20% reduction in Chapter 70 funding. The would be a reduction for Fairhaven of about \$1.45 million. This is one scenario & this changes regularly. He went on to discuss his next point which was that a 1/12th budget equals a level funded budget. This means we are walking into FY21 with a FY20 budget, yet we are proposing a FY21 budget. For the Fairhaven School District, the difference between a level fund and a level service is \$643,000. This is a second scenario. The third scenario is the one presented by the Town Administrator of a 5%, 10%, or 20% of your operating side. While this doesn't mean you take it from your operating side, that is what he used. This scenario equates from \$200,000 to \$960,000. The town side's numbers will more than likely not be in until the fall. He went over the Rainy Day & Stabilization funds, but reiterated that no one has answers regarding their use at this time. He also discussed the possibility of Federal funds coming through, but he stated that these were hopes and possibilities, but that we must prepare for the worst case possibility in June & hope to fill back as it goes. He stated that FY21 will look different due to the ongoing effects of COVID19. On June 10, consistent with our collective bargaining agreement, we non-renewed over a dozen teachers and a half-dozen paraprofessionals. On June 15, according to state law, we started to implement measures for the operational budget to get to those numbers. We did not go as deep as the 20%. We used a combination of resignation, retirements, nonrenewals of nonPTS staff, and the pre-purchasing of collaboratives through our operation budget so that we can get through FY20 & hopefully, begin to build it back for FY21.

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 17, 2020

PAGE 2

Ms. Powers asked about when the state would be releasing their guidance about what they want the fall to look like. Dr. Baldwin stated that it will more than likely be next week that we hear from the Governor.

Mr. Bueno stated that the uncertainty is throughout all communities. He recognizes that Dr. Baldwin and the District are doing what is fiscally responsible and what is right for our students.

Dr. Baldwin also stated that we would be surveying our families to find out if they will be sending their kids back once we receive guidance.

Ms. Kuechler stated that this is new to everyone. She stated that one of the strengths of this team is that they find opportunity in challenge and rise to the occasion. She stated that she feels confident that we will make it through.

Mr. Veitch also expressed his confidence in the staff and administration.

Mr. Monroe stated that from an FY 21 perspective we have done what we can to try to prepare for the deficit. He stated that sounds as though we have done all we can until this point. Once the guidance from the state comes through, he is confident that Dr. Baldwin and the staff will present the Committee with the plans. He also stated that he would prefer to actually know the facts before making projections.

Next School Committee meeting: TBD

Dr. Baldwin suggested holding onto July 8, 2020 for Open Budget Hearing only, unless Town Meeting gets moved. If Town Meeting gets moved, only July 22, 2020 will stand.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Questions from Individual Committee Members

Mr. Bueno commented regarding mental health and reaching out to make sure that everyone around you was ok. He said it's important to remember that we are all going through something different and mental health plays an important role in our well-being.

Ms. Powers asked about Chromebooks for high schoolers. Ms. Potter stated it is all being communicated through the principals.

Ms. McKenna echoed Mr. Bueno's statements.

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 17, 2020

PAGE 3

Mr. Monroe thanked everyone for their hard work in getting us through the year and the situation.

No Executive Session

Motion made to adjourn by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Ms. McKenna, 5-0 approved, unanimously.

Adjourned at 7:51pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Baldwin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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