

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 6, 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: Abigail Bernardo – Student Advisory Representative, Isabelle Pacheco – Student Advisory Representative

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair informed the audience that the meeting was being recorded for public access. The Chair also explained the use of Zoom for this particular meeting.

Motion made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve the minutes from April 8, 2020. Minutes were approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Student Advisory

Isabelle Pacheco spoke regarding the Spring Musical updates. She stated that while they are unable to have a live performance they are working towards a virtual musical using an acapella app. The cast records themselves singing and it will be dialogue free. The individual performances are combined to make a unified performance.

Abigail Bernardo spoke regarding senior activities. She stated that senior sweatshirts were passed out last week. She spoke about the lawn signs that were delivered by faculty personally. She talked about the AP exams being done online. She also spoke about the schedule for senior activities and stated that she appreciates the work the administration has done. She asked the School Committee their thoughts on holding a prom later in the summer if the governor allows large gatherings.

Dr. Baldwin addressed her question. He stated that he understands how hard everyone has worked. He commended the seniors for being adults. He also stated that they will do anything they can to support the Class of 2020 by protecting their class dues and money. He said that they are willing to try to work with them on the semantics. He stated that we will find out what we can do and if it's acceptable. He stated that we will also look into seeing if this is something the Town can do or help with.

Mr. Monroe stated that he is quite certain if there is something possible, we want to see the Class of 2020 get it. Dr. Baldwin continued to state that we will be honest and real with the senior class. He stated that we will not tell them that they can do something if we are not 100% sure that it can happen. Mr. Monroe stated that the money that the Class of 2020 has raised is theirs to spend. Dr. Baldwin stated that he wants

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to plan to protect the class and its funds. Ms. Bernardo stated that she will come back to the School Committee if/when they have a better idea.

Mr. Bueno stated that the way the student advisors advocate is honorable. He stated we will make sure we get it right and not make empty promises. He thanked them for their hard work and efforts.

Ms. Powers wished Ms. Bernardo well. Ms. Kuechler wished Ms. Bernardo the best of luck. She said to keep watching what the experts are telling us to do. She said we can't map this out and she thanks them for their understanding. Ms. McKenna wishes Ms. Bernardo luck. Mr. Veitch stated that it is amazing how they have all come together.

Public Comment

Mr. Monroe stated that everyone can speak, but they will be limited to 2 minutes. He asked that everyone maintain decorum and respect. He also asked that they refrain from discussing any personal information regarding staff. There was no one for Public Comment.

District Enhanced Remote Learning Project

Dr. Baldwin began and discussed the initial implementation. He stated that originally we thought we would be out for a week and now we are out for the rest of the year. He discussed the slower start that FPS had as they followed a sustainable structure. The Enhanced Remote Learning Plan begins May 4. He stated that Educators and Admin are meeting daily. We need to respect that everyone has a different story. We provided what needed to be provided for and now want to finish strong.

Ms. Kohler stated that last week the teachers ran some demo lessons. Each school level is handling it their own way so that it is appropriate for the age groups. She discussed "office hours". She stated that the goal was to have the students start the learning plans and use the office hours are to connect and ask questions. She went over how we are handling the prerequisite standards from DESE. She stated that they are reviewing data on the backend and coming up with assessments to ensure the standards are being met, and if they are not being met, how we can get there. We are also trying to plan for the future upon return to help those children meet the standards. Mr. Monroe asked about grading. He specifically referred to emails from EHMS/FHS and asked for a clarification of the Pass/Fail grading system being implemented. Ms. Kohler referred to the progress report grades and they were pass/fail. If you did any of the work during the enrichment time, you could change your grade. Ms. Powers asked for further clarification by asking if you weren't doing well in term 3 and didn't do the enrichment assignments, will you fail? Ms. Kohler responded by explain that nothing we are doing is meant to hurt a child. Teachers are giving students a personalized list as to where they need to be and giving kids opportunities that they normally might not take advantage of. She agreed to have the administrators send a clearer message on Friday to parents so that they have a firmer understanding. Ms. Powers asked about how this will affect GPA's. Ms Kohler stated that the students' grades will be weighted appropriately for the first half of the year. Our data analyst has been working on it X2 and it will take some time. The end of the year grade will look like a credit/no credit, but the first half of the year will be weighted appropriately.

Access to Pick Up

Dr. Baldwin spoke about how we are working on doing things right in a timely manner. He stated that we are adhering to what is considered safe and acceptable to plan while working with the Health Department.

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Ms. Kohler spoke about having all the belongings bagged and ready to go after May 18th. We are looking at having the entire district bagged up and ready to go by next week and a pickup/driveup will be planned for the week of the 20th.

Budget Management FY20 Update

Dr. Baldwin stated that we are midyear through FY20. He stated that we have stopped spending on subs, and asks the Committee to allow the ability to transfer the money for subs to other things such as transportation and out of district tuition. He mentioned that there may be CARES money that may be afforded to us, but we do not have information on that yet. The School Committee agreed with Dr. Baldwin on the allowance of the transfer of funds.

Budget Update FY21

Dr. Baldwin stated that our needs based budget is correct. The revenues from the Commonwealth are not even close. He stated that August or possibly September that we will get an idea of what revenues might look like. Most likely, towns, communities, and schools will walk into July 2020 with a 1/12th of the FY20 budget. Town Meeting is scheduled in June and will proceed without Commonwealth numbers. The Commonwealth's numbers are down and we will not see more of a clear picture until July/August. Mr. Veitch asked how this will affect our contractual obligations. Dr. Baldwin hopes that people will be sensitive to education and schools. There are a number of measures that we need to take to see how we can protect ourselves. Nonrenewals need to be done by June 15. We will need to look to balance the budget by then. Ms. Powers asked how the Town Meeting will move forward without numbers. She questioned how they can go to vote without the information. Dr. Baldwin answered that this is the reason for the 1/12th budget has been proposed. We may not get what we asked for. Mr. Bueno asked if there are any changes to the District goals that we should prepare for due to this situation. Dr. Baldwin stated that we use those goals now more than in good times. He also stated that because we are fiscally responsible, he feels more confident, but still uncertain. Mr. Veitch asked about phase guidelines and hopes that there will be flexibility. Dr. Baldwin stated that we are going to take decisions from the state and work with them. He stated we will not make knee jerk decisions and will continue to do what's right for the district and kids. Mr. Monroe asked about Chapter 70 and Net School spending formulas and if they have changed. Dr. Baldwin advised that they are still in effect.

Capital Project Update

Dr. Baldwin stated we are waiting on a start date with project. He also stated that we received bids for the window projects and we are moving forward with both projects.

SMEC Lease/Team Agreements

Dr. Baldwin is asking School Committee to allow the Superintendent to enter into negotiations with SMEC. Our lease between SMEC and the Tripp School is up in the fall and we would like to continue with them.

Motion to allow Dr. Baldwin to represent the School Committee and enter into negotiations with SMEC for a lease made by Ms. McKenna, seconded by Mr. Veitch, approved, 5-0, unanimously.

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District Improvement Plan Goals Update

Dr. Baldwin began by stating that we will not be stopping what are goals were. Regarding before/after school care, we are looking for bids from contractors as we are looking to expand and enhance these programs.

Next Meeting is going to be May 20, 2020. Mr. Monroe asked if we should schedule more meeting over the summer given the situation. Dr. Baldwin stated we should wait until the first meeting in June to decide this. We still need to have the Open Budget meeting and discuss School Choice. We currently have two meetings scheduled in June... June 3 and June 17. Mr. Monroe was concerned because the days are booking up fast and there is competition for resources. Dr. Baldwin suggests waiting until next meeting to discuss further.

There was no Unfinished Business or New Business.

Mr. Veitch just wanted to give his appreciation to the staff and students by the way that they are handling this. He also commented on the slower paced approach that we took as the results are worth giving kudos to the staff. Mr. Monroe asked that a message get to the staff on behalf of the School Committee on how grateful they are for the work they have been doing.

No Executive Session.

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

Adjourned at 7:52pm.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Baldwin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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