

## FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 12, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Bueno, Mr. Andersen, Ms. McKenna, Mr. Monroe, Mr. Veitch, Ms. Pickup

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Kohler, Mrs. Potter, Mr. Balestracci, Ms. Bouchard

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Members of the community and staff; Mr. Kulak, and select members of the high school staff

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Kohler at 6:30pm.

Mrs. Kohler began the Reorganization Meeting. She asked for a nomination for Chairperson of the School Committee. Mr. Monroe nominated Colin Veitch, seconded by Ms. McKenna. Mr. Veitch accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for Chairperson. Motion to approve the nomination made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. McKenna, approved, unanimously, 6-0.

Mrs. Kohler turned the meeting over to Mr. Veitch. The reorganization continued with a nomination for Vice Chairperson. Mr. Veitch nominated Mr. Brian Monroe for Vice Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Andersen. There were no other nominations for Vice Chairperson. Mr. Monroe accepted the nomination. The Committee voted unanimously, 6-0 to approve Mr. Monroe as Vice Chair.

Ms. McKenna was nominated by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Veitch to serve on the SMEC board. Ms. McKenna accepts the nomination and the Committee voted to approve the nomination unanimously, 6-0. There were no other nominations.

The Policy Subcommittee nomination was made. Mr. Monroe nominated Ms. Pickup, seconded by Mr. Veitch. Ms. Pickup accepted the nomination. The Committee voted to approve the nomination unanimously, 6-0. Mr. Veitch nominated Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Andersen. Mr. Monroe accepted the nomination. The Committee voted to approve the nomination unanimously, 6-0. Mr. Monroe nominated Mr. Andersen, seconded by Mr. Veitch. Mr. Andersen accepted the nomination. The Committee voted to approve the nomination unanimously, 6-0.

Motion to adjourn the Reorganizational Meeting made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. McKenna, approved 6-0, unanimously.

The regular session meeting was called to order at 6:34pm.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Veitch read the recording policies for the meeting.

Roll Call of Committee Members: Mr. Andersen, Ms. Pickup, Mr. Bueno, Mr. Monroe, Ms. McKenna, Mr. Veitch

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from March 22, 2023 was made by Mr. Bueno, seconded by Mr. Monroe, approved 5-0-1, Ms. Pickup abstained.

Report of the Student Advisory Committee

There student representatives were not in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Mrs. Kohler asked to take the 2nd bullet out of order. The Chair and committee agreed.

Receive presentation on College Board AP Access Award

Mrs. Kohler presented. She stated Fairhaven High School is one of only 26 high schools being honored and recognized through the Commonwealth for their AP Access. The award is not just about the AP program, but the expansion of access in the program. Mr. Kulak and the staff also spoke regarding the award and the program. The Committee gave positive feedback on the program and the staff's efforts.

FY24 Preliminary Budget update

Mrs. Kohler presented. She stated that she would be going through a slideshow presentation. She gave a brief history of where they were at in the process. She stated that where we stand today has switched significantly since last Thursday, and switched again last night in a half an hour's time. There has been a lot of debate and a lot of conversation. She stated that the Committee has been maintaining the concept of improving our amount above net school spending. They have been a conscientious Committee regarding this and making our schools the best in the south coast. She

reminded the Committee that she had submitted a draft budget that included the possibility of increased SPED tuition. She reminded the Committee that we have not had our Budget Hearing yet and that we are still in the draft process. Mrs. Kohler mentioned in her presentation to explain the transparency of our process, the work that is accomplished, and the use of the funds using an example of the Literacy program. She addressed the net school spending and the formula that is used when determining the numbers. Mrs. Kohler reminded the Committee of the purpose of Chapter 70 funds, which are to ensure that every district has sufficient resources to meet its foundation budget spending level through an equitable combination of local property taxes and state aid. The factors that determine our foundation budget are enrollment, wage adjustment factor, and inflation. The factors that determine our contribution are property value, income, municipal revenues and growth factor. These factors work together to determine Chapter 70 funding. She then dives deeper into the rates and the affects of inflation. She explains how it is accounted for. She reviewed examples for schools that we could compare ourselves to. She showed graphs depicting the net school spending and growth for the comparison. She also reviewed Fairhaven's graph and pointed out that we took a \$200,000 previously, and if we continue on this path we will not hit this year, we will be at or below. When you are at or below the 95<sup>th</sup> percent, you get a warning and fined or can lose your state aid. We (the Town) are expected to get an additional \$600,000 in Chapter 70 state aid because of our schools. She also reviewed the graph for the state totals. According to the numbers on the state website, we should be receiving \$1,467,922; we asked for \$950,000 in our draft budget. Our original request was \$23.9 million. She then pointed out the FY24 required projected net school spending number which is \$23,768,490. Our original request was \$23.9 million. She feels as though because we are so close to the state's number, that we are budgeting responsibly. She pointed out that some districts are millions over their projected numbers. She stated that we have gone through the process with Fin-Comm respectfully. She stated that on Thursday there was a recommendation without any explanation to cut \$250,000 from the schools. She also stated that she and Mr. Monroe attended the Fin-Comm meetings on Monday and Tuesday. She is going on record that this is the first time in over a decade that the number that is being put forth is less than the number for projected net school spending and the Town is going to be in danger of losing their state aid. The Committee discussed the budget situation and their resolve to defend what we are asking for. Mrs. Kohler also stated that the Fin-Comm voted to go back to a \$200,000 cut. Mrs. Potter also contributed to the discussion regarding meeting the net school spending budget. She stated that many school districts across the Commonwealth are asking for between 6%-8% increases. She stated that the budget we have put forward is very responsible and we are utilizing every single grant, every single revolving account to not burden the tax payer. She expressed her concerns over not meeting the net school spending amount.

Receive revised request for Turf Field Rental for Vipers Soccer

Mrs. Kohler presented. She stated that the Vipers would like to add some home games if there is availability on Saturdays. There is no charge for admissions, and no concessions sales. She stated that the practices are going well and would like to recommend this. Motion to approve the revised rental agreement of the turf field with Vipers Soccer made by Mr. Bueno, seconded by Mr. Monroe, approved, unanimously, 6-0.

Upcoming Events:

Next meeting: April 26, 2023

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

Vote to accept a donation of \$1000.00 from the Fairhaven High School Alumni Association to the Fairhaven Alumni Technology Gift Account. Motion made to accept a donation of \$1000.00 from the Fairhaven High School Alumni Association to the Fairhaven Alumni Technology Gift Account made by Ms. Pickup, seconded by Ms. Bueno, approved unanimously, 6-0.

Vote to approve updated FPS Anti-Bullying and Prevention Policy. Mr. Balestracci presented and went over the changes to the policy. Motion made to approve updated FPS Anti-Bullying and Prevention Policy made by Mr. Bueno, seconded by Mr. Monroe, approved unanimously, 6-0.

Receive on 1st reading the DRAFT updated Policy: IHGB Homeschooling (Information received prior to meeting). Mr. Balestracci presented the changes to the policy for a first reading.

Receive on 1st reading the DRAFT updated Policy KHB: Advertising in the Schools (Information received prior to meeting). Mr. Balestracci presented the changes to the policy for a first reading.

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Public Hearing and Vote: School Choice. Motion to suspend the rules of regular session and go into Public Hearing made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Bueno, approved, 6-0, unanimously. There was no Public Comment in this hearing. Mr. Veitch reconvened the regular session. Motion to have Fairhaven Public Schools enter into the School Choice program made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Andersen, opposed, 0-6, unanimously. The motion does not carry.

Vote to adopt the 2023-2024 School Calendar

Mrs. Kohler presented the calendar for 2023-2024 school year. She stated that the families would like less interruption, and the staff was mixed. The calendar presented has the kids starting one day later than normal and there will be one full PD day in the beginning of the year. In January, we will keep the Tuesday after Martin Luther King Day as a PD day. Motion to adopt the 2023-2024 School Calendar made by Ms. McKenna, seconded by Mr. Monroe, approved 6-0, unanimously.

There will be no Executive Session.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. McKenna, approved, unanimously, 6-0.

Adjourned at 8:29pm.



Tara M. Kohler  
Secretary to the School Committee  
Fairhaven Public Schools

