

NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING

Senior/Community Center, Newburyport, MA 01950

Monday, December 18, 2023

Present: Mayor Sean Reardon, Sarah Hall, Juliet Walker, Steve Cole, Brian Callahan, Breanna Higgins and Bruce Menin (virtual).

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Sean Reardon called the School Committee Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call found all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. At this point in the meeting, Sarah Hall took over.

Roll Call:

Mayor Reardon	present
Sarah Hall	present
Bruce Menin	present - virtually
Brian Callahan	present
Juliet Walker	present
Breanna Higgins	present

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lauren Eramo, 49 Kent Street: As a parent and teacher, she thanked Bruce Menin and Steve Cole for their years of service and doing what is best for the students and teachers.

Donna Holaday, 6 Parsons Street: It was a pleasure working with Bruce Menin and Steve Cole through the years. She thanked them for all their work and is grateful for their support of the kids and staff, their institutional history and longevity.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Lucia Perrucci, grade 7, was recognized for her commitment to coursework, leading by examples, always having a positive attitude towards her peers and looking out for others.

Rudy Reardon, Luna Mutzabjia, Audrey Roebuck, and Gabby Smith (grade 8) were recognized for their exceptional leadership skills throughout the year on Student Council, as well as consistently being great role models and maintaining a high standard of academic excellence.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS – BRUCE MENIN & STEVE COLE

A special recognition was held for outgoing school committee members, Bruce Menin (22 years) and Steve Cole (20 years). Mayor Reardon thanked both men for their years of service, noting both men were in the Top 10 for longest tenure on the Newburyport School Committee. The School Committee members thanked each of the men for their contributions, leadership, hard work and commitment through the years.

On behalf of Senator Bruce Tarr, official MA Senate Citations were presented by Kristen MacDonald to both Bruce Menin and Steve Cole in recognition of their dedicated & committed years of service.

On behalf of Representative Dawn Shand, official citations from the MA House of Representatives were presented by Mayor Sean Reardon to Bruce Menin and Steve Cole in recognition of their years of service.

CONSENT AGENDA

Warrants

Motion:

On a motion by Steve Cole and seconded by Brian Callahan it was

VOTED: to approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following Warrant:

Warrant 8107	\$514,990.15
A-Warrant	<u>\$ 13,338.37</u>
	\$528,328.52 Total

Motion Passed

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Reardon	yes
Sarah Hall	yes
Bruce Menin	yes - virtually
Brian Callahan	yes
Juliet Walker	yes
Breanna Higgins	yes

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT NHS student, Theo Roberts, provided the student report that included many holiday activities and community service projects completed throughout the district, as well as an update regarding the On The Spot Admissions event at the high school and student led conferences at the Nock. (attached)

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNT REQUEST

Superintendent Sean Gallagher explained the Red Cross Club is a new club at the high school, and they are requesting a student activity account.

Motion:

On a motion by Breanna Higgins and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: to approve a student activities account as requested, subject to the procedures outlined in policy JJF – Student Activity Accounts.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Reardon	yes
Sarah Hall	yes
Bruce Menin	yes - virtually
Brian Callahan	yes
Juliet Walker	yes
Breanna Higgins	yes

HIRING PROCESS UPDATE – DIRECTOR OF PUPIL SERVICES POSITION

- Pam Kealey, Director of Human Resources, provided an update regarding the next steps for upcoming meetings on December 19 and January 8 (tentative date). Future meetings will involve reviewing and choosing applicants, as well as developing interview questions.
- Screening Committee members will include Andi Egmont (NYS Director/Community Partner), Kristen Farrell (SEPAAC Member/Parent Nock-Molin/Nbpt Commission on Disabilities/ASL), Bruce Menin (School Committee/Community Member), Michael Nazarro (District BCBA), Jamie Calisi (NHS Adjustment Counselor), Sherry Denby (Reading Teacher Nock/Molin), Jillian Grille (District Physical Therapist), Renee Toth (SEPAAC member/NHS Parent/Educational Advocate), Breanna McCarthy (Bresnahan Parent/Corporate Experience Building Teams), Melanie Beaulier (SEPAAC Member/Parent Nock-Molin), Nick Markos (Principal Nock Middle School), Deb O'Connor (Interim Director of Pupil Service)
- Juliet Walker and Breanna Higgins questioned Bruce Menin representing the School Committee as he was leaving. Sarah Hall explained that a new person will be invited to participate in January.
- Juliet Walker would like a list of screening committee members and their roles.

PROPOSED WHITTIER BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

- Mayor Sean Reardon provided an update regarding the recently held MSBA meeting. They voted 5-0 to move the Whittier project to the build process. Now Whittier has 120 days to hold a vote within the 11 sending communities. He also noted MSBA mentioned the Whittier project proposal was the third vocational project in a row where member communities stated they were not informed of the building project.
- Many towns sent letters to slow down and/or pause the project / vote, and many people voiced concerns via public comments. The Whittier School Committee voted 11-3 in favor of holding a special vote in the 11 sending communities on January 23 from 11AM-7PM.
- Bruce Menin asked what would happen if the vote fails. Mayor Reardon said the project would not move forward and hears that Whittier will then go for renovations.
- Juliet Walker finds the lack of communications discouraging.
- Several members suggested Whittier SC Reps should begin to attend Newburyport SC meetings periodically.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

- Brian Callahan stated their recent meeting centered around the Whittier Building Project, as well as recognition for Steve Cole as this was his final meeting.

Policy Subcommittee

- Juliet Walker stated all policies up to Chapter "L" have been reviewed. The MASC representative (Dorothy Presser) provided her recommendations prior to retiring at the end of December. Chapters A thru D were recently updated and are available on the website in a PDF format. They are exploring using MASC to host our policies in a searchable database.

Fundraising Advisory Committee

- Brian Callahan stated the committee recently met with John Ricci, Treasurer of the PTO to learn about their fundraising activities and disbursements. Conversation topics included field trip busing and teacher “wish lists”.
- Brian Callahan suggested any standard office supply should be a “budget” item and not obtained via parents/PTO (i.e. via a wish list).
- The next meeting will be held on January 22 to interview the Athletic Department.

CISL Subcommittee:

- Breanna Higgins reported that CISL held their first meeting in October. The meeting consisted of new member introductions, a recap of the School Committee summer retreat, and an overview of the Early Literacy Screening Process.
- Juliet Walker stated that each school presented their School Improvement Plan (SIP) at the November meeting (presentation details in the packet).

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Hall and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Business meeting of the Newburyport School Committee at 7:50 PM.

Motion Passed

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Reardon	yes
Sarah Hall	yes
Bruce Menin	yes - virtually
Brian Callahan	yes
Juliet Walker	yes
Breanna Higgins	yes

Submitted by: Theo Roberts

Location – Senior Center

NEWS FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL

Over the past 2 weekends, students' part of the National Arts Honor Society has supported many local events across Newburyport. These events include holiday fairs and festivals. Feedback from the event organizers acknowledged the professionalism of our students and the joy they brought to many children and families.

The Leo's Club is wrapping up their annual Toy Drive. Through the month, they have been collecting gifts for those in need. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

The Interact Club which is our largest student organization has also been busy. They have supported many events in the community over the past month. Most recently, over 30 students helped out at the Salvation Army where they organized and wrap gifts that will help enhance the holiday for over 500 families in the greater Newburyport area that are in need this year. (Jill's Pictures)

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Thank you to Logan MacKnight for taking the lead around the December food drive here at the high school and the Bresnahan school. Also thank you to everyone who contributed. Over 275 pounds of food has been collected to help replenish the shelves of Our Neighbors Table.

We have many student groups who are helping to educate and improve how we manage waste at the high school. I want to thank the National Honor Society for the work they do with managing recycling. I also want to commend Sophia Franco who is currently working on a plan through her internship with ACES to help us develop stronger systems to ensure what is in the recycling bins is recyclable.

Here is a flyer created by Finn Deveney to highlight the importance of COMPOSTING. Last school year, the Environmental Club with support from the city, purchased bins to support sorting of trash during the lunches. We still have work to do in this area, but our students have made improvements with placing food waste into the compost bins.

Please consider this a reminder that for every 75 hours of logged service, students earn 2.5 credits on their transcript.

Six students from NHS auditioned for the Northeastern District music festival, and three students were selected for these prestigious ensembles. Cedar Schumacher will play trumpet in the district jazz ensemble for the third year in a row, Evan Lagueux will sing in the chorus for the second year in a row, and Josh Burrell will play clarinet in the concert band for the first time! All three will also audition for the All State ensembles, next month. Congratulations to these excellent young musicians, and to their parents.

Recently students Shannon Brock, Sofie Lafranchise, and Aibhne Martino were invited to perform original poems as part of the Newburyport Choral Society winter concerts. This was quite the honor to recognize the creativity and emotion these students exhibit through their poetry.

During the showcase night, our athletics program hosted the annual National Letter of Intent Signing Night for exemplary students in the classroom and on the athletic fields. Congratulations to the following students and their families.

Owen Kreuz, Jack Sullivan, Kate Keller, Lily LeDuc, Olivia McDonald, Lilly Pons & Morgan Valeri

The College & Career Center was able to run our "On The Spot Admissions" event throughout this Fall. An on the spot admissions event allows our students to receive an admissions decision during a scheduled event with the college or university that they have applied to. We had eight colleges/universities come to Newburyport High School over the past three months to run these events. This also allows the student the opportunity to meet their admissions representative in person and learn more about the school.

Below is the on the spot admissions data over the past three years. We had 8 colleges/universities attend and 34 student acceptances through these events this school year!

• 2021

- 3 Colleges
- 28 Students
- 1 defer
- 1 wait for nursing review
- 26 full acceptances

2022

- 4 Colleges
- 15 Students
- 1 defer
- 14 full acceptances

2023

- 8 Colleges
- 38 Students
- 2 students deferred
- 2 students with conditional accepts (they just need to finish the application)
- 34 full acceptances

NEWS FROM THE NOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Second of student-led conversations occurred on December 6th. Students and families have reflected on an overall positive experience understanding student performance, grades, behind the scenes data and were very impressed with their child's ability to lead a conversation. The advisory focus throughout the next two months will be towards student leadership, college and career exposure and team building. The focus will shift in early spring to the student showcase.

Congratulations to the cast and crew of "A Lighter Shade of Noir". It was a great two nights of shows.

The Spring Musical for the Nock was announced last week- Matilda. Students are auditioning this week. Preparation for the May 2nd, 3rd, 4th shows will begin right after the holiday break!

NEWS FROM THE BRESNAHAN

K-3 Teachers participated in their 2nd i-Ready PD last Friday. In this session, teachers looked at how to use the i-Ready Classroom Mathematics Try-Discuss-Connect Framework to support productive student discourse. Each part of this framework allows students the opportunity to engage in mathematical practices such as making sense of and solving tasks, discussing various strategies, and making connections between representations.

2nd graders had a successful trip to the Museum of Science on Friday! Some of their favorite exhibits were the Lighting Show, the Arctic Adventure: Exploring with Technology, and of course, Dinosaurs!

Bresnahan students have been singing a lot lately. We had our downtown Sing-a-long this past Friday evening, and last week our 3rd graders visited the Senior Center to sing-along with the senior ukulele group. We can't wait to sing again when NHS band and chorus students visit us on Friday for our annual sing-along assembly.

NEWS FROM THE MOLIN

The Molin School had an amazing concert on Wednesday night with performances by both grade levels, the after-school chorus, the band, and the orchestra. It was highly attended. Mrs. Annicchiarico, the Molin Music Teacher, did an excellent job teaching the students all the skills for this concert.

The Molin School has created a "Holidays Around the World" exhibit by decorating the classroom doors to depict a specific holiday. We have 16 classrooms participating! Each classroom chose a different holiday to discover. Students will view all the doors and learn about each holiday. Christmas, Hanukkah, Las Posadas, Omisoka, Yalda, and Bodhi are examples of the celebrations represented.