
**EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN SESSION – January 12, 2021**

I. Call to Order Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met virtually in Open Session on Tuesday, January 12, 2021. Mr. Monteiro called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Members present were Joel Monteiro, Chair, Jessica Beauchaine, Vice Chair, Max Brandle, Clerk, Jenni Azanero and Charles Tsonos. Also present were Superintendent Kathryn Crowley, Assistant Superintendent Celeste Bowler, Ben Russell, Anthony Feola, Leslie Anderson, Julian MacDonnell, Cheryl Mammone, Craig Enos and Diana Clarkin.

The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed.

II. Student Liaison – Grant Wosencroft highlighted events from the high school.

Mr. Monteiro stated that they are hoping to have both live and virtual meetings. The goal is to have the February meeting a hybrid meeting but need to work on audio issues and follow RIDOH guidelines.

III. Consent Agenda

Communications/Correspondence: Superintendent Crowley called attention to a few documents: The APRA request received was sent to the District's attorney who responded asking for a 20-day extension. One item on the APRA is a request for a maintenance plan for the new high school. Mr. Monteiro stated that the School Committee approved a contract to develop a building management plan for the new high school. The NEARI letter that was sent on October 28, 2020 and in their packet stated they would like to resume negotiations.

Winter sports information was included in the packet. EPHS winter sports is scheduled to begin tryouts/practice on January 11th. The winter offerings are boys and girls basketball, boys and girls indoor track, hockey (co-op with Mt. Hope High School), gymnastics and swim. Sports will be spectator free and under the COVID-19 guidelines of the RIDOH and RIIL. The middle schools will be offering boys and girls basketball beginning on January 19 and will also be spectator free. The athletic department is working on broadcasting these events.

Appointments: Justin Van Brink, Technology Support Technician for the District, effective 1/4/2021; and Christine Carreiro, Portuguese Teacher at EPHS, effective 1/4/2021.

Homeschool Requests: There were 4 requests to homeschool.

Approval of Minutes:

- December 8, 2020 School Committee Meeting

- December 7, 2020 Building Committee Meeting

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to approve the minutes as submitted.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda.

IV. Public Comments I – Agenda Items – No public comments were received on agenda items.

V. Superintendent's Report

1. NESDEC 2020-21 Enrollment Projection Report – Every year this organization (New England School Development Council) does a demographic study and an enrollment projection.

2. SHOUT – Dr. Bowler and Dakota Watjen

Dr. Bowler shared information and asked for support of this club at the high school. The team of facilitators asked to create a club called SHOUT. The goal is for students to have a safe place to discuss social and racial injustice. Dakota Watjen spoke about establishing this club. He explained that SHOUT is by students for students to empower each other on issues and education policy and share their positive and negative experiences. There are many students who feel passionate about issues and want to make changes and be heard. The students will also be collaborating with administrators. The Club will be overseen by the advisor, principal and assistant superintendent. The cost of the advisor will be covered from grant funding and a budget has been created. There was discussion about having the position of advisor in the budget. An added position in the district will need to be approved by the School Committee.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Tsonos and carried by unanimous consent to move up item 9 - Building Committee Report on the agenda.

Mr. Bradner gave an update on the high school building project. He focused on the project milestones – As of January 1st the project is 52.2% complete based on work in place.

Window glazing is ongoing, mechanical equipment start-ups in the next 90 days, rooftop unit startup in February, the auditorium and kitchen are starting to take shape. Significant amount of work happening in the interior of the building. During December and January there have been 20 subcontractors and 220 workers on site per day and 1,760 man hours per day. There was discussion on the HVAC system for the new high school which is highly technological and modern. The facilities team will need to be trained on preventative maintenance. Testing of the units will take place next month. The maintenance plan is being developed and will be reviewed and approved by the School Committee. Tech Director, Ben Russell did a drone and walkthrough video of the building which is on the EP Building Committee FB page.

3. Legal Institute – Celeste Bowler, Cheryl Mammone and Craig Enos attended an event at The Legal Institute on November 30 which was for all administrators. There was a presentation on the Title IX Policy which is on the agenda this evening for a first read. Ms. Mammone reported they have been collaborating with the district attorney on the Title IX Policy to be in compliance with the Title IX laws. Procedures and forms are being developed and revised as part of the new regulations.

4. Update on 2nd Semester Re-entry Plan – Dr. Forand
Superintendent Crowley reported that for the first semester 2,704 students were on distance learning and for the second semester 2,260 students are on distance learning. There are about 450 students returning since last semester with about 220 of them being in the elementary grades. There may be some changes with the increase of students returning to the classroom. There are no changes with middle and high school.

5. Winter Sports Update for Middle and High School – Ms. Beauchaine
Winter sports were discussed earlier in the meeting. The Committee received information on winter sports for the middle and high schools.

6. School Activities for Middle and High School – Ms. Beauchaine
The Committee received a list of school activities in their packet. An updated list will be prepared for the February meeting.

VI. Director of Human Services Report

Leave of Absences – Ms. Mammone read the leave of absence as follows: Paraprofessional at Martin Middle School, effective 1/4/2021.

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the leave of absence as submitted.

Terminations – Ms. Mammone read the termination as follows: Paraprofessional at Waddington Elementary School, effective 1/13/2021. The district is in compliance.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the termination as submitted.

There were no resignations, retirements, non-renewals or recalls.

VII. Director of Finance Report – Mr. Enos presented the financial report and reviewed the last three fiscal years; the new FY21, FY20 and the Audit Report for FY19 which was completed by Blum Shapiro. He went through the Audit Report. The Single Audit Report is a requirement.

VIII. Policy Committee Report – Ms. Beauchaine.

Ms. Mammone reported the Committee worked on the Title IX Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Policy with the district's legal counsel. The policy is on the agenda for a 1st read. A policy meeting is scheduled on Friday, January 22 and will be reviewing the Building Use Policy.

IX. Building Committee Report – Mr. Monteiro

This item was moved up on the agenda. Mr. Bradner gave an OPM update.

X. Discussion Items

1. Testing Sites – EP is one of the school districts participating in testing our faculty and students. Paperwork has been submitted to RIDE and waiting on a response. Six people will be sent for the training and then they will train other people. The BinaxNOW testing gives rapid results and is for teachers and students (age twelve and older) in district who are asymptomatic. Positive results will be followed up by the nurse. In elementary grades, a trainer has to test the students. Dates and times will be set up at each school. Permission slips will be sent out and participation is completely voluntary. Extended hours will be offered at night and will be offered to athletes as well.
2. Vaccinations – Phase One of vaccinations. Superintendent Crowley is asking for School Committee support on a letter she drafted for the Governor and Dr. Alexander-Scott at the RIDOH. She feels strongly about teachers and educational staff be included for vaccinations in phase one of the RI Plan. The East Providence School Committee fully supports the letter.
3. High School Schedule – The Superintendent worked with Principal Gibbons who developed 4x4 block scheduling for next year. There will be a meeting for a final review on Thursday. The high school will present the schedule to the Committee in February.
4. Negotiations – The Superintendent received a letter from one union asking for negotiations to resume. Mr. Monteiro recommended the Committee meet with Mr. Scungio in executive session to go over district goals. There was some discussion on negotiation and school committee meetings being held in person and virtually. Mr. Monteiro is just waiting on audio issues to be resolved. Superintendent Crowley suggested meeting virtually with negotiation sub-committees.
5. School Committee Dates for Meeting with the School Attorney – A meeting has been scheduled with Attorney Ben Scungio on Tuesday, January 19 at 6 pm to review contracts.
6. Technology Position – Ben Russell worked on the job description for this position for the new high school to support the building on the technical side.

XI. Action Items

1. Bill List:

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine seconded by Mr. Tsonos and carried by unanimous consent to approve the following warrants as submitted.

Voucher No. 1004 for \$127,111.56
Voucher No. 1006 for \$6,437.00
Voucher No. 1007 for \$2,086,786.56
Voucher No. 1048 for \$113,896.03
Voucher No. 1049 for \$17,937.05
Voucher No. 1050 for \$201,353.93

2. Technology Support Technician Contract

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Tsonos and carried by unanimous consent to approve the contract for the Technology Support Technician as submitted.

Mr. Monteiro reported that the following invoices which total \$5,906,807.22 have been vetted and approved by the Building Committee and recommended for approval by the School Committee.

3. Ai3 Invoices for Services

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Ai3 December 2020 Invoice for Basic Services in the amount of \$122,474.84 and Reimbursable Expenses in the amount of \$373.87 as submitted.

4. Peregrine Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Peregrine Group, LLC December 2020 Invoice for services in the amount of \$59,000.00 as submitted.

5. Gilbane Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Gilbane Construction Co. December 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$5,712,634.26 as submitted.

6. Stephen Turner, Inc. Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Stephen Turner, Inc. December 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$8,014.25 as submitted.

7. Thielsch Engineering Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Ms. Azanero and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Thielsch Engineering December 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$4,310.00 as submitted.

XII. Public Comments II – Non-Agenda Items – No public comments were received for non-agenda items.

XIII. Announcements – Ms. Beauchaine announced two fundraisers for Waddington Elementary School on Thursday, January 14 from 3-8 pm at Subway and on January 28 at Panera.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Tsonos, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Corsi
Administrative Assistant

Max Brandle
School Committee Clerk