

Carlisle School Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

7:15 p.m.

Carlisle School Cafeteria (moved from the Community Room)
and Zoom Remote Access

Present– School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, Amanda Comperchio, Jack Huntress, Eva Mostoufi, Sara Wilson

Present– School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent

Present – School Administration via Zoom: Matt Mehler, Middle School Principal; Dennet Sidell, Elementary School Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Rob Fortado, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds; Anne Mahan, Business Manager; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, 5 members of the public were allowed access to this meeting in the cafeteria at the Carlisle School. Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, members of the public who could not access this meeting in the cafeteria were able to access it via live stream at:

<https://carlisle-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/88319561243?pwd=MjZFK2EwTTIEWjJWVFOyNXIGODIPQT09>

Meeting ID: 883 1956 1243

Passcode: t8NFG?

Public comments were posted via the chat box. Questions/Comments were read and answered by the School Committee via live stream.

I. Call to Order

Ms. Lear called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m. and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

II. Review/Approve Minutes

- A. Meeting of December 2, 2020. Ms. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes of December 2, 2020; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Wilson, aye.

III. Information/Discussion Items

- A. State and Local COVID Dashboard. Mr. O’Shea began by thanking everyone including the students, Kevin Maier and Valerie Thomforde, that participated in the sing along and musical performance this evening. Mr. O’Shea reviewed the School’s decision making framework. Based upon developing understanding of positive case dynamics and guidance of health officials, the School has moved away from hard number benchmarks to a thoughtful and individualized approach in determining the mode of instruction for students. Three positive cases of COVID were identified between Monday and Wednesday this week. All close contacts have been notified. One third grade class and

three teachers are in quarantine and will be remote until the winter break. The School is unaware of any in-school transmission. The identified cases were in close contact with symptomatic people outside of school. As of December 6, there were six positive COVID cases in Carlisle.

- B. School/Superintendent Update. Mr. O'Shea reported that on December 9, the School welcomed back 16 middle school students to in-person instruction, and three middle school students moved to remote instruction. Free COVID testing is being provided through the Fire Department through December 19. Mr. O'Shea thanked Chief Fisher, Chief Sorrows and the LEPC for coordinating this testing. Additional testing options have been identified as well and families are asked to contact Lauren Sawyer for details. Mr. O'Shea stressed the importance of remaining vigilant in following the guidance to stay safe. The School will send out the travel form again so families can get assistance in managing testing and the transition back to school to keep everyone safe. Ms. Lear said the reason we are in school is because people are following guidance. Middle school report cards were issued this week. Parent Teacher conferences took place today. A storm is coming and the plan is that we will have a traditional snow day tomorrow for students and a professional day for faculty and staff. Mr. O'Shea encouraged the staff to do some planning but also work on physical well-being and mental health. There will be no remote instruction tomorrow, which is a change from the previous plan but it is felt this is the best course of action right now. The last day of school remains June 18, 2021. Budget planning continues; Anne Mahan is working with the Administrative Team and faculty to develop FY22 budgets. The Finance Committee (FinCom) budget questionnaire has to be completed by January 18. FinCom special budget meetings are on January 25 and January 27. Flu shots are required for all students by December 31 whether they are in person or FCR; not adhering to this will impact a child's ability to access instruction. There is a Policy Subcommittee meeting January 5, 2021. Communication outreach will meet after the new year. Mr. Huntress confirmed that the next CSC meeting will be on January 6 at 7:00. Ms. Lear discussed the CSC meeting schedule. Mr. O'Shea suggested meeting every other week in January, and another schedule can be considered in February. The next CSC meetings will be on: January 6, January 20, February 3 and February 24. Mr. O'Shea referenced the metrics discussion about the school community number and stated that everyone will continue to monitor numbers, but asked that the current CPS case number should not be a trigger to go fully remote without a broader discussion on how it is impacting the School operation. Mr. Huntress said that transmission is not happening in schools with the many precautions in place and it makes sense to have a broader discussion should numbers rise. Ms. Lear asked when the CSC and the health and School professionals would meet in person to discuss a situation. Mr. O'Shea said that School Nurse Lauren Sawyer continues to talk regularly with Public Health Nurse Tricia McGean. CPS relies on Ms. McGean's professional understanding; if she sees something concerning, she lets us know. Mr. O'Shea will also communicate concerns to Ms. McGean and Ms. Sawyer's professional opinion is also considered. The lines of communication are open. The CSC decided that the state positivity rate would not trigger a school closure and following the same approach with the number of cases in school makes sense. Ms. Comperchio agreed that it's important to get professional input in helping to come to a decision on the School instruction mode. Ms. Mostoufi added that Ms. McGean is watching the whole scope of

what is going on and has so much knowledge about COVID numbers in Carlisle and nearby towns. Mr. O’Shea said it is more likely that a decision on instruction mode will be made based on our ability to operate the school, for example, in the case where large numbers of staff are absent. Children have to be supervised. Ms. Wilson said that having the hard number creates anxiety in families. Ms. Lear said that the number served its purpose. Ms. Wilson said we now we have wonderful health professionals providing guidance, families are abiding by the rules, we are in a different place in terms of our understanding of our population and the dynamics.

- C. School and Town Facilities/Long Term Capital Planning. Mr. O’Shea reported that Mr. Fortado has been meeting with Town officials to see how they can work in a centralized way to achieve some savings. They developed a 5 year plan. There is currently nobody in the role to look at all of the projects in the town, so Mr. Fortado and Steve Bastek developed a capital plan; they identified the resources Carlisle has and what items need to be replaced or repaired, along with estimated costs, the life cycle and risk of failure. This comprehensive list includes the library, fire department, DPW, Town Hall and CPS. The estimated cost is for the Town to pay approximately \$850,00/year to invest in facilities in this plan. One priority project for CPS is the HVAC system. The conditioned air in Spalding removes the humidity, but the building still gets hot. There is inconsistency across the school; units are in some rooms but it is not educationally optimal. There is thought to upgrade the entire system at the cost of 2.3 million. This may be done in component parts. Wilkins is a priority. Mr. Huntress said that we have not had this level of consistent planning and there is a high cost in the first few years because we haven’t been performing consistent maintenance. Ms. Wilson added that Long Term Capital has tried to keep on top of things, and though the School elevator was pushed out year after year, it was not a surprise when it failed. We are a small town but there are a lot of issues. The approach was to fix it when it broke, and when it did there were other problems. Mr. Huntress said this process can help people plan. Mr. O’Shea will let the CSC know when he is presenting this information to the Board of Selectmen.

IV. Members’/Committee Reports as Needed

CCRS: Ms. Wilson reported that there was a constructive budget meeting; the process is transparent. Concord continues to provide the best education to children in the safest way possible.

Community Outreach: Mr. Huntress reported that he is continuing to work on the objectives and will share them when they are complete.

Ms. Wilson noted that Tricia McGean was recognized by the Boston Globe.

V. Communications/Correspondence

Mailings were shared with Ms. Lear and the members.

VI. Warrants

- A. Accounts Payable Warrant #4021; \$103,746.75
- B. Payroll Warrant #3821; \$385,621.48

VII. Action Items

Mr. Huntress made a motion to abolish the hard metric number of COVID cases in the School community that would transition CPS to the remote mode of instruction; Ms. Comperchio seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. It was noted that the School will continue to communicate regularly with Tricia McGean about COVID cases.

VIII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IX. Adjourn Meeting

Ms. Comperchio made a motion to **Adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) with no intent to return to open session for the following purpose:**

Purpose 2, To conduct Elementary and Middle School Principal contract negotiations; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Anderson
Assistant to the Superintendent

List of Documents Viewed or Reviewed:

Draft Minutes of December 2, 2020

Warrants

Accounts Payable Warrant #4021; \$103,746.75

Payroll Warrant #3821; \$385,621.48

Carlisle School Committee Goals