

**Carlisle School Committee**

Minutes

Friday, May 29, 2020

8:30-9:45 a.m.

Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Present Via Zoom – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, David Model, Eva Mostoufi, Sara Wilson, Shannon Lavery.

Present Via Zoom – School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent; Matt Mehler, Middle School Principal; Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Susan Pray, Business Manager; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Meeting Documents:

Minutes of May 22, 2020		
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**Note: Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, the public was not allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. Members of the Public were able to access this meeting via live stream at**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85377174635?pwd=eWY0QklZNllrKzIvK0tPZktubmEyUT09>

Meeting ID: 853 7717 4635

Password: 495434

**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**

Chair Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Ms. Lear announced that the meeting is being recorded.

**II. Review/Approve Minutes**

Ms. Lavery moved to approve the minutes of May 22, 2020; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson aye.

**III. Information/Discussion Items**

- A. Teacher and Student Presentations. Dr. Sidell introduced Megan Cox, the first of two teachers presenting today, noting that the teachers are working hard and being creative every week. Ms. Cox teaches 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and said that when school was in session, her students would share a high point of their week every Friday. Now, her class has a virtual talent show every week. This platform highlights what makes kids unique, and is an opportunity for students to be interactive and fun. Things kids have displayed include a

science explosion, and dance and piano performances. The students have been very excited to showcase their talents this way. Dr. Sidell then introduced 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher Shawna Hunt. She said that the teachers and service providers miss their kids a lot, and wanted to reach out to them in a different way, so they created a video, which was shared. The heartfelt emotions of the teachers was evident, as they all said and did something unique to show the kids how proud they are of them, and how much they miss them and love them. Ms. Lear thanked Ms. Cox and Ms. Hunt for sharing, and said that Carlisle teachers amaze us with what you are doing for our children.

- B. Update on School Closure. Mr. O'Shea shared a presentation. Remote learning continues and kids are staying connected. The principals will send out another parent survey this week about remote learning. Student materials have been picked up. Work continues with the LEPC. 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation is now scheduled for June 17 at 10 a.m. with a rain date of June 19. Dr. Mehler thanked the members of the graduation planning team who have met for the last 5-6 weeks and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers for the thoughtful discussion and brainstorming. It is clear that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students want to see each other, and everyone wants a graduation that is memorable and safe. The current plan is to hold graduation in cars on a private property. If the two dates don't work out due to rain, the ceremony will be held via Zoom. It was noted that graduation plans will be approved by Linda Fantasia, the Carlisle Health Agent. Dr. Mehler appreciates the efforts to make this occasion special for the graduates, their families and the community. Summer school planning continues. Plan A is to offer in person services to students, allowing for physical distancing with added precautions and enhanced hygiene. This summer plan will also be approved by Linda Fantasia. Mr. O'Shea thanked Chief Sorrows for assisting with the acquisition of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for summer school. Plan B would be a remote summer school program providing direct services to students. Summer cleaning continues. Room moves will occur as well. The School will meet with COA and RecCom about using the school building over the summer, and the best way to share the space while ensuring safety for all. Budget discussions continue as well. Town Meeting is planned for Saturday, June 20 on the School plaza. There is a rain date, and if Town Meeting is not able to be held due to rain, the School will adopt the 1/12 budget. The School Committee will continue the discussion with FinCom of utilizing the prepay option. FinCom is developing new budget guidelines, which may mean a 2.9 % reduction in the School budget. The Back to School Task Force (BTSTF) met on Monday. The challenges are complex, and the plan will have to be flexible and adaptable. Public Health becomes the priority. The BTSTF will divide into four working groups focused on Curriculum, District Operations, Resources/Finances and Communications. They are exploring three scenarios: in-person learning, remote learning, and blended learning. It was noted that both reopening scenarios require additional precautions with enhanced hygiene. The School will procure the needed PPE. The group will utilize guidelines from the DESE and the Department of Public Health, and will collaborate with other districts in the area. The plan will be finalized by early August for a September implementation. Mr. O'Shea appreciates the support, patience and understanding expressed by the entire community during these trying times. Ms. Mostoufi asked if FinCom anticipates a drop or a rise in the School's operating cost next year due to COVID-19. Mr. O'Shea understands that there will be additional expenses at the School, but FinCom is asking us for a reduced budget. When the School incurs

additional expenses, FinCom want us to go back to the Town to access reserves. The School would prefer to be able to access prepays to cover costs. Mr. Model added that there is overriding uncertainty; the state aid is unknown as are tax delinquencies. Unemployment in Carlisle is approximately 17% and this uncertainty leads to the Town being careful with expenses. Concord will operate on 1/12 budget until its town meeting in the fall. Carlisle considered that as well, but wanted to have town meeting for other reasons. It was noted that if there is a town meeting, there has to be a budget discussion; FinCom has to come up with a guideline. Currently FinCom is proposing a flat budget (the previously stated 2.9% reduction.) Mr. Model proposed a joint meeting with FinCom meeting before town meeting to resolve some of the finances. Ms. Lear will coordinate the joint meeting for next week, and then there should be more clarity with the budget. Ms. Mostoufi asked if anyone from FinCom is on the BTSTF. Mr. O'Shea answered that we have two BOS members, Kate Reid and Alan Lewis, on the committee but nobody from FinCom. Mr. Model commended everyone for being engaged and collegial through the budget discussions. People realize there is a shared issue, but this is a community with a strong fabric and he's proud to be a Carlislean. Ms. Mostoufi voiced her agreement about the cooperation between departments in town. Mr. O'Shea cited the great work of the LEPC and Chief Fisher to lead these efforts. Ms. Lear noted that in the early stages of the closure, the school offered equipment to the Town and now when the School has needs, people are offering supplies to us. We are very lucky. Ms. Mostoufi asked about the practices that would be in place in the summer program. Mr. O'Shea answered that there will be enhanced hygiene, PPE, all with the Health Agent's approval. Mr. O'Shea noted that it is a benefit with the small number of students attending (approximately 30) so they can spread out very easily. The summer program will also be used to gather data to inform the School reopening in the fall. He thanked Lori Bruce, Lauren Sawyer and Lori Desjardin for all of their hard work and planning. Ms. Lear acknowledged that there is a lot to manage.

- C. Open Space Document and Vote. Ms. Lavery made a motion to accept the Open Space document as written; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call:: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

#### **IV. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed.**

CCRS: Mr. Model stated that the Region will do a 1/12 budget. Principal Hunter created four task forces with specific agendas for opening school; each school has a task force. People are working hard. Ms. Mostoufi shared that Concord will do a virtual summer program. She added that she will listen to Concord task force meetings and report about what Concord is doing for reopening. She will see if there are places the two towns can cooperate. There will be a car parade for CCHS graduation.

#### **V. Warrants**

There were no warrants.

#### **VI. Action Items**

There were no action items.

#### **VII. Public Comments**

Cynthia Sorn, Rutland Street, asked what guidance will the School get on the legal issues if parents want to keep their kids home in the fall; what will be done if parents or teachers feel uncomfortable coming to school? Mr. O'Shea is not sure when we the School will get guidance, and that is part of why he wants to work collaboratively with other districts. It was asked if a parent is keeping a child home, is the child homeschooled? Mr. O'Shea answered that if there are a significant number of parents who keep kids home, the School has to make a plan. There may be a blended approach, where faculty members who feel uncomfortable coming into the building will be brought together with children who choose to stay at home. There are a variety of scenarios and possibilities to explore. While Carlisle may not have a large number of students in this situation, in conjunction with other surrounding towns, there may be a large number. Is there opportunity to work with other towns toward a solution? There are a lot of questions. Ms. Lear is hoping the State will provide guidelines for these scenarios in June. Ms. Mostoufi said that Concord is looking at early retirement for teachers; as are many districts, because teachers are calculating risk and looking at options. There are no easy answers. She asked if the School has an idea on what the teachers are thinking about this? Mr. O'Shea could not speculate, but will conduct teacher surveys as part of the research on reopening and planning. Ms. Lear thanked Ms. Cox and Ms. Hunt for the phenomenal presentations today. Mr. Model added that the caucus took place and there are three qualified candidates for two openings on the School Committee. He noted at least two of these people were on the call today and extended his thanks to them. He asked Carlisle citizens to vote, which can be done remotely. Please access the Town website for details. Mr. O'Shea extended the invitation to candidates to please talk with him; he is happy to speak on the phone or arrange a Zoom meeting. Carrie Patel, Tophet Road, added that the PTO will host a forum for the School Committee candidates on June 17 from 9-11 a.m. They cannot take questions during the forum, but asked that questions be sent to her in advance of the date. The Zoom details will be on the website and administrators will send it out in their parent communications.

### **VIII. Adjourn Meeting**

Mr. Model made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Anderson  
Assistant to the Superintendent