

Carlisle School Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

Carlisle School Community Room, Carlisle Schools, 83 School Street, Carlisle, MA 01741
7:00 PM

Present – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, David Model, Eva Mostoufi (arrived at 7:03 p.m.), Sara Wilson, Shannon May Lavery (arrived at 7:03 p.m.).

Present – School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent; Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal; Susan Pray, Business Manager; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Meeting Documents:

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| Draft Minutes of 2-12-20 | Draft Minutes of Special Education Subcommittee Meeting 2-25-20 | Dog Park Grant Proposal |
| Recreation Commission 7-Year Action Plan | Energy Task Force Presentation | Budget Update |
| Proposed 2020-2021 School Calendars (3 Drafts) | | |

I. Call to Order

Chair Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Ms. Lear announced that the meeting is being recorded.

II. Public Comment Period

Ms. Lear welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked if any members of the public had comments. There were no comments.

III. Review/Approve Minutes

Mr. Model made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 12, 2020; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members present voted in favor of approving the minutes. Mr. Model made a motion to approve the Special Education Subcommittee Meeting minutes of February 25, 2020; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members present voted in favor of approving the minutes.

IV. Student Athletes.

Samuel Richman and George Joseph talked about being members of the 8th grade varsity basketball team. They reported that the team has won more games than in past years. They are happy that the team practices and plays games after school, as opposed to meeting like other clubs during recess, because they enjoy recess. They praised Coach Pires who is not only nice but helps players to get better. Everyone who tried out made the team this year. The team was comprised of all 8th graders and one sixth grader. Towns Carlisle played include Lincoln, Concord, and Acton-Boxborough. The boys said that basketball is a lot of fun and kids became friends with people they didn’t hang around with during school. They play or practice Monday

through Thursday during the season. They also have opportunities to do school work at homework club from 2:20-3:00 every day. Practice goes until 4:30. Both boys will try and play basketball in High School. They each play different sports in other seasons outside of school.

V. Information/Discussion Items

A. New Business Manager Discussion and Vote. In the search for a new Business Manager, with Susan Pray retiring, an interview committee, co-chaired by Jim O'Shea and David Model and comprised of School and Town employees, was established. Anne Mahan emerged as the top candidate. Ms. Mahan works in Shrewsbury, and was going to attend this meeting until this afternoon when complications due to the coronavirus necessitated her staying home. Once the Committee votes, Anne will have a contract. She and Susan Pray will work a few days together in March and April to help with the transition. Ms. Mahan's job starts July 1, 2020. Mr. Model made a motion to approve Ann Mahan as the new Carlisle Business Manager; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. Mr. Model said Ms. Mahan should have a working session with the School Committee, as it would familiarize Ms. Mahan with the process. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

B. Open Space Recreation Discussion

1. Dog Park Grant. Courtney Bittelari and Amy Smack presented. Ms. Bittelari lives on Fiske Street with her family and has been on the RecCom for 2 years. Rec com proposes to apply for a design grant for a dog park to be built at Banta Davis. This would be an off-leash fenced in area. It would be a great place to socialize, as there are over 600 dogs registered in town. The area at Banta Davis has been surveyed, and the location would be behind the softball field. Abutters are a non-issue and there is still plenty of room if the school expands. It was noted that the proposed Community Center location would be near the baseball field, not near the dog park. The grant is from the Stanton Foundation. Stanton is the former head of CBS, and he supported canine welfare. There have been 36 grant recipients including Billerica and Chelmsford. The grant covers 100% of the park design. The process includes employing a landscape architect who has built a park before; and if so, the grant will fund 90% of the construction cost. Ms. Bittelari is asking the CSC to write an assurance letter, then RecCom will present to the BOS and Fincom. Ms. Lear questioned the need for a place for dogs to play and thought it would be a burden to the Town to maintain a park. She asked who keeps it clean and who polices it. Ms. Bittelari answered that RecCom could apply for a maintenance plan, similar to the one that Billerica follows, where waste stations and water are provided. Ms. Bittelari will write Committee concerns into the plan. She added that the RecCom would provide trash receptacles and the DPW would empty the waste barrels. RecCom oversees it. Ms. Smack added that this area has already been scoped for building; just a fence and landscaping is needed. There is still additional land for a school expansion, and the dog park could be relocated if the site is needed in the future. Ms. Smack added that there have been a lot of dog waste problems on the playing fields; this is a venue designed for dogs and there might be less waste on fields as a result. Ms. Sorn asked about abutters and Mr. Model said there would have to be written permission from abutters before something was constructed.

2. Seven Year Action Plan. Mr. O'Shea presented. David Freedman had contacted Mr. O'Shea, seeking CSC input about Open Space. So Mr. O'Shea and Ms. Lear drafted a document identifying open space at the school, with goals including the installation of a grassy area on the plaza, replacing the castle playground, and renovating Spalding Field. Banta Davis land is also available, and the plan would categorize what is there and the hopes for the future. Mr. O'Shea

asked if there was anything to add, please let him know. Ms. Smack from the RecCom further explained this large document, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, asks relevant bodies in town to make goals every 7 years. It becomes a guiding document for all town boards. It is approved and delivered to the state of MA. MA wants communities to plan for our open space and mandates these plans. RecCom works with Master Planning too. Some committees will address items that are also addressed in the Master Plan. Mr. DeKock added that the plan is aspirational and opportunistic, and boards help themselves by putting something forward. Mr. Model feels that renovating Spalding Field should be prioritized. Debbie Bentley, Heald Road, added that the School also has the vegetable garden and tennis courts. Amy said Reccom can share its goals with the CSC.

C. Energy Task Force Presentation. Bob Zogg and Debbie Bentley of ETF presented. Activities to improve energy efficiency over last 10 years through green community grants and incentives have brought in over \$800,000. Carbon emissions are an environmental concern. Carbon emissions are associated with residential vehicles and burning waste. There is a related climate issue; people have 30 years to get back to zero emissions. The Carlisle carbon footprint is 40% larger than the average in Massachusetts. The ETF has a plan “Path to Zero Emissions.” The plan includes a conceptual pathway on how to address emissions. It was noted that there is a section in the Master Plan on energy saving. The four pillars of sustainability are: weatherize, electrify, shift to 100% renewable electricity, promote more sustainable behaviors. For the school: how are we going to have an emissions free school? What do we teach our children about the climate crisis? How do we communicate to the community through our students and coordinate with CCHS? This process benefits from hiring a professional Sustainability Director that may do other tasks in a small town like Carlisle. Mr. Zogg added that Concord’s Sustainability Director brings in 2-3 times her salary every year (the money brought in by the Director cannot be used to pay her salary). Ms. Mostoufi asked if Carlisle can regionalize with Concord’s Sustainability Director. Ms. Bentley answered no, because Concord has different needs. The job is too overwhelming for volunteers. The Master Plan will be complete in August. The ETF hopes to have goals in the Plan about emissions and if so, a warrant article will be proposed next year. Ms. Mostoufi asked where the focus of the plan would be; it was answered that residential is a big problem so the focus would likely be there. Ms. Mostoufi noted that delivery trucks drive seven days a week; to that point, Mr. Zogg added that the goods and services we purchase account for 2/3 of the emissions. Mr. DeKock added that to help address this issue, Amazon is electrifying their vehicles. Educating people about this issue is important. Mr. O’Shea said that there is opportunity through the School’s visioning work to address some of these concerns. Mr. O’Shea added that the School can start taking steps now by working with the Visioning Committee and exploring Odden Pool grants to develop related curriculum. There are already valuable practices in place at the school including composting. The School will make this part of the goals. Ms. Lavery thanked the presenters for their important research and for laying the groundwork on a plan moving forward. It was noted that 77% of Carlisle has switched over to green electricity. Eversource is the delivery company and Public Power is supplying the power.

D. Update on Charging Station. Jonathan DeKock, Oak Knoll Road, presented. Ryan Fahey and Luis Alegria from Ameresco were also in attendance. Eversource and Ameresco came to an agreement that if the charging stations are placed next to the equipment pad, Ameresco will purchase three stations. The stations are in a different location than previously planned but it was determined that they must be close to the transformer. Now the ETF has to

write a letter of apology because the green communities grant will not be used for this project. The plan is that the charging stations will be installed this summer along with the solar canopies. There will be a line put in for the installation of another two charging stations in the future. Ameresco needs to adjust their plans for the solar canopies if we go forward with this plan. Construction begins on April 20, so there is still time to change the design plans. Mr. Model moved to waive usual practice of discussing an issue at one meeting and voting on it at the next; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. Mr. Model moved to accept the change in location of the EV charging stations with other associated changes as described; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Mr. Model moved to proceed with the project; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor.

E. Budget Update. Ms. Pray gave an update on the budget. The Town will pay a portion of the Special Education transportation cost for a student attending Minuteman Tech. Circuit Breaker funds will be applied to the Tuition line. Purchase orders will be liquidated. Mr. Model suggested the School have a conversation with Fincom about prepayments. This discussion will take place after town meeting, probably in June.

F. 2020-2021 School Calendar Discussion and Vote. Mr. O'Shea summarized the calendar discussion to date. The Calendar Committee, comprised of teachers and administrators, presented Draft 1 of the calendar to the Carlisle Teachers' Association (CTA) and the calendar was endorsed by the CTA. Then the Calendar Committee met with a couple of people from the CSC, where a second (Draft 2) calendar that included more days off on Mondays was proposed. The CTA did not support Draft 2. The major concerns were due to the number of days that school would not be in session on a Monday. The CTA felt that students who received certain services or attended specials on that day would miss a lot of time. Teachers also thought people might extend weekends and not show up for conferences. The Committee met again, came up with Draft 3, that was the Draft 1 calendar with one early release day moving from a Tuesday to a Friday. The thought moving forward is to work on the 2021-2022 calendar sooner. Mr. Model shared that the meeting with School Committee representatives and the Calendar Committee was productive with an honest attempt to understand both sides. Moving forward, attention will be given to students that receive services on early release days. The School Committee feels it is better for families if professional days occur on a Monday or a Friday. There was thought of surveying parents and teachers to ask about what days of the week work best for conference days. Another thought was to come up with a model or two and then survey parents. Ms. Wilson shared that there was bitterness about the last "start of school" survey, where parents supported an after Labor Day start and the Calendar Committee proposed a before Labor Day start; so there is a need for communication of all of the complexities of designing a school calendar. Some ideas were generated including having conferences from 4-6 p.m. and then allowing teachers who stayed for that time period to receive a comp day; or conferences could be spread out over the course of a week at the beginning or end of the day instead of a 2 day option; or early release days could be moved to Thursdays with Fridays as the professional days. Moving forward, a couple of models will be developed then the Calendar Committee will hold a forum where everyone could share opinions. It was felt it was a positive step talking about how to improve the calendar for both parents and teachers. Ms. Wilson moved to accept the Draft 3 calendar for 2020-2021, Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor.

G. Update on Coronavirus. Mr. O'Shea shared that the School is in communication with Linda Fantasia, the Carlisle Public Health Agent, and a town group, including the police chief

and the fire chief. Anxiety is growing. We do not have a confirmed or presumptive case of Covid-19 in Carlisle so we are continuing on with life as planned. At the school, hand washing is encouraged. Purell foaming dispensers have been installed around the school. There are new cleaning procedures using disinfecting wash and spray. Tables are cleaned by staff after each lunch. When the Governor declared a state of emergency, it triggered funding but also heightened anxiety. Some schools have already closed. Plans could change quickly. The Commissioner of Education shared that our 185th calendar day is our last day of school. In Carlisle that is June 22. The next two days out of school will be straight school cancellation days. If we are at a place where we close school after that, Husky Home Days will be used. It was noted that the daily structure of assignments and continuity will be sacrificed as time in closure goes on. Ms. Lavery asked who makes the call on if school closes. Right now Districts are making the call based on COVID-19 cases. Mr. O'Shea added that what will influence the decision is communication with the Health Agent and communication with the State. Mr. Model said that School Committee makes the call to close school. Mr. O'Shea said that if Carlisle is considering a long term closure, he will convene the Committee. Ms. Lavery asked what the criteria is for closing school; what is socially responsible? It was felt that putting a stop to congregating in large numbers is proactive. Mr. O'Shea wants to do what is right for the Carlisle community. Mr. O'Shea has several meetings tomorrow about this issue, including ones with the department of public health and Town department heads. Upcoming events at the school include the 7th grade play and the DC trip. Parents might be surveyed about plans over April break to see if that week in April could be used to make up time lost. Emergency meetings can be called in a crisis situation.

H. School Choice Discussion. The School Choice vote will be on the April agenda. Ms. Mostoufi said that we have a high level of education and caring staff in Carlisle, and people from other districts would be willing to pay for these quality services. Are there other ways to explore bringing out-of-town students to Carlisle and having them pay tuition? Could families pay what it would cost to educate a child here? This is a community that values education, supports innovation in the classroom and the arts, which are luxuries to some people. This could help with enrollment and the budget. How do you communicate this idea? Ms. Wilson will look into this as it is believed this is an acceptable practice. Mr. Model supports this idea as well. We could still have an admissions procedure. Mr. O'Shea will run this idea by Counsel. For School Choice, Mr. Model stated that if the School declines School Choice, the reason would be that the incremental payment to schools for participating does not benefit Carlisle.

VI. Communications/Correspondence

Christine gets MASC emails every day. Members should all be sure they have signed up to receive these emails.

VII. Superintendent's Report

Highlights of Superintendent Jim O'Shea's report included:

There are several health and wellness initiatives in March. The 7th grade will be given a Signs of Suicide survey. On April 3, the 8th grade will be given SBIRT, a diagnostic tool, where students meet with the nurse and are asked questions about drug use. This is used to identify students that need support. There is also a 6th and 8th grade Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Administration hosted the COA breakfast last week.

Challenge day with 7th grade took place yesterday.

The School Committee policies have been updated on the Website.

Steve Baset, Tim Goddard and Mr. O'Shea met about unifying supplies and services across town.

Rob Fortado and Steve Baset will work on creating an inventory of projects in town, including the HVAC units so there is an understanding when the School goes before Long Term Caps about funding a project.

VIII. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed

Long Term Caps. Ms. Wilson reported. LTC voted to delay the tractor purchase for the school but agreed to the school fire alarm system. Technology was moved from LTC to the school operating budget. Ms. Wilson is coordinating with Samantha Rottenberg and Alyson Becker about the school mailer that will be sent out right before Town Meeting.

Master planning. Ms. Mostoufi presented. There was a community meeting on March 4th that was well attended. There are 9 master plan topics listing aspects of Carlisle such as housing and recreational space. Posters about the topics will be on display in the Library and at Town Hall. Master planning is looking for community comments on how to solve challenges in the Town.

CCRS D. Mr. Model presented. There is still debate over the parking lot. All school trips in Concord have been cancelled.

Visioning. Ms. Lavery presented. There was a Research and Innovation subcommittee meeting today. The committee reviewed slides and had discussions. There is lots of overlap with the master plan. The vision statement and profile of a graduate drafts are being created.

IX. Warrants

- A. Payroll Warrant #6120; \$394,629.40
- B. Accounts Payable Warrant #6320; \$39,293.72
- C. Payroll Warrant #6820; \$361,935.02
- D. Accounts Payable Warrant #6920; \$48,359.87

X. Action Items

There were no action items.

XI. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

XII. Adjourn Meeting

Mr. Model made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. The public meeting was adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Anderson
Assistant to the Superintendent