

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
December 3, 2019
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Mr. John Moses (Vice Chair), Ms. Maria Santos (Secretary), Mr. Jeffrey Doherty and Ms. Donna Newcomb.

Also present: Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent), Dr. Linda Hirsch (Assistant Superintendent) and Ms. Johnson-Collins (Director of Business and Finance)

Call to Order

6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Opening Statement

The Chair welcomed all and stated that the meeting will be recorded and televised by Chelmsford Telemedia.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of November 19, 2019

Ms. Newcomb motioned to approve the minutes of the regular school meeting of November 19, 2019. Ms. Santos seconded. Motion carries 4 – 1, with Mr. Moses abstaining.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that the Harrington PTO and Byam PTO are hosting a combined fund raiser on Sunday which will have a winter store and gingerbread house competition. About 50 CHS National Honor Society students will be helping. Center and South Row will also be having gift shops. At Center Elementary School last week Amanda Pelkey, gold medal winner from the winter hockey team of 2018 was the guest. She shared her story with the students and brought her gold medal to show. McCarthy's Project 300 success was highlighted on NBC Boston 10 last week. All five through eight students took the preliminary round tests for the Geography Bee. They will learn after Thanksgiving which ten students from the middle schools will qualify for the "School Championship" which will take place this Friday. A new episode of the CPS Art Department is featuring the making of the CHS musical. Many students are going the Symphony, String Fest and the M Penn Conference. Concerts will be held at all levels over the next two and a half weeks.

The Chair was happy to attend the rally before the Thanksgiving football game which was a testament to school spirit. Sports awards were given out on November 25th according to Ms. Santos. The CHS production of the musical, *Chicago*, was phenomenal.

Public Comments

Allie Barnes, of 104 Garrison Road, hosts a program called Chelmsford Signs, which enables people to practice and learn sign language. American Sign Language is the third or fourth most common language in the USA. She and other members of this group would like see sign language as an option at the middle schools and CHS.

New Business

1. SEPAC Communication: Recess

Allie Barnes again joined the table along with Peter Malloy, a SEPAC member, to present findings of the SEPAC Recess Subcommittee. The study was conducted based on information that students sometimes miss recess as a punishment or to complete their classwork. The thorough research was presented and shared in a detailed slide show, which is included in tonight's agenda packet. Current School Committee policy states that schools will "provide at least one daily recess period in Kindergarten through grade five which is not used as a punishment/reward". Currently, the State legislature is reviewing a proposed bill regarding the inclusion of recess as part of learning time. Their presentation included recommendations of several alternative methods for student behavior support which did not involve taking away recess time as well as training for staff. The Committee appreciated the information being brought forward to them and will schedule on the agenda of a future Committee meeting a full discussion of the recess policy and communications concerning the policy.

2. Presentation: Spotlight on the Departments-World Languages & Student Exchange Programs.

Ms. Jessica Nollet, Department Coordinator for World Languages and Student Exchange Programs, shared updates, beginning with the Seal of Biliteracy program. Twenty-one CHS seniors will be taking exams in early February and may be awarded the "Seal of Biliteracy" or "Seal with Distinction". Cultural exchanges will take place in May of 2020 and proposed exchanges with Malaga, Spain. Additionally, Ms. Gauthier's students are involved in a "Pen Pal" communication with students in Madrid, Spain. Ms. Nollet conducted a survey which resulted in requests to add Mandarin Chinese and American Sign Language (ASL) to the curriculum. Finally, she is applying to have Chelmsford designated to participate in the State Department's Student and Visitor Exchange Program. Tonight's agenda packet includes details on these possibilities. Ms. Nollet's entire presentation may be viewed by watching tonight's Committee meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube.

3. Presentation: Mr. Roger Hatch – Chelmsford & MA State School Funding

Mr. Hatch provided information on how Chapter 70 works and the formula by which aid is provided to the different school districts. He also talked about how, the recently passed, Student Opportunity Act will effect changes beginning in fiscal 2021. His presentation with detailed slides may be watched on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube. Mr. Hatch also fielded questions from The Committee.

Short Recess (two minutes)...

4. Establish Working Committee – CHS Plateau Field Space Renovation

Dr. Lang would like a School Committee member to join this committee to help decide the future of the plateau space at CHS. He hopes the working committee will meet before the holidays and reach a proposal by the spring. Mr. King offered to serve on the working committee but is open to another School Committee member serving in his place.

Approval of 2020/21 School Calendar

Dr. Lang has included a draft of the 2020/21 school calendar in tonight's packet.

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the 2020/21 school calendar. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

5. Recommended FY20 Budget Transfers

Mr. Moses motioned to transfer \$663,109 from the COLA Reserve Account to the Salary Accounts as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

6. Public Forum: Multi-Year Strategic Plan – Discussion and Planning

Suggestions were made to begin with a recap of the last forum on the Strategic Plan. Then allowing the public to speak about what they would want to see in outcomes during the next three to five years. These topics will then be discussed at the various break-out groups. Publicity for this event has been multi-faceted to reach the entire community. Dr. Lang will create a draft agenda tomorrow and share it with The Committee before publicizing it. Cookies will be served!

7. Updates: Outstanding Matters

Dr. Lang assured The Committee that all necessary steps have been taken relative to the recent publicity over the school kitchens.

8. Approval of Conference and Field Trip Requests

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the field trip as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

Reports

1. Liaison Reports

Mr. Doherty shared that the CHIPS PTO had their November meeting and a successful Open House with fund raising. They are hosting a “sock” drive and planning a teacher luncheon for December.

Ms. Newcomb shared that the All Town Wind Ensemble will hold their concert on December 19th at 7:00 p.m. at the PAC.

Ms. Santos said that the EL Council meeting was well attended and included two EL teachers. Information was given out on free EL services for adults. By-laws have been created and it is hoped that officers will be elected soon.

Mr. King attended a fifth-grade band concert which he found impressive!

Public Comments

None

Adjournment (8:44 p.m.)

Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

Tonight’s meeting may be viewed in its entirety on Chelmsford Telemedia You Tube.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Giglio