

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 4, 2020  
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. Dr. Lang will present his proposed budget for FY2021 tonight. The next School Committee meeting will be held on February 25, 2020, when the public will have an opportunity to comment on the budget proposal.

**Consent Agenda**

1. **Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of January 28, 2020**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular School Committee minutes of January 28, 2020. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**CHS Student Representative Announcements**

Sudeep shared that the Mock Trial Team had a great debate at the regional championships and won for the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive time. A Valentine's Dance will be held on February 8<sup>th</sup>. There will be a field trip to UMASS Lowell this Thursday to present projects. Today an international lunch was performed at the CHS Learning Commons and went well.

Katrina added that the children's play, *The Big Top*, was successful last weekend. A parent information night will be held on February 6<sup>th</sup> for eighth grade parents. During the week of February 10, 2020, ALICE drills will be held at all schools.

**Good News**

Dr. Hirsch said that Harrington School had a very successful heritage fair. Every year we are involved in a program with UMASS Lowell which brings international teachers to our school district. We will be hosting three international "fellows" who arrived yesterday and will stay for six weeks. The entire visiting group of 22 will be joining us at our meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Doherty attended the children's play and congratulated all involved for a great job.

## **Public Comments**

None.

## **New Business**

### **1. Presentation: Spotlight on the Schools – Parker Middle School**

Principal Jeff Parks came to the table along with staff members and students to share highlights from Parker. Three staff leadership committees have evolved from Parker's PBIS; Building Connections; Executive functioning; and Mindfulness. These are staff run and supported by professional development. Building Connections provides opportunities for student leadership through the "student ambassador" program and helps build staff/student connections. Work focuses on community service projects. The ambassadors are elected from each home room from fifth through eighth grades.

The PRIDE Committee focuses on three areas. The Courtyard Committee decorates the courtyard and helps with upkeep. The School Store Committee launched its traveling cart last week. Finally, the Leadership Committee visits third grade classrooms throughout the district and provides leadership training. They also do follow-up visits the following year to the fourth graders. The entire PRIDE Committee went to leadership training this year at Bridgewater State University. PRIDE Week will take place February 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> with activities to support "perseverance, respect, integrity, dedication and empathy".

This weekend Parker Drama is presenting *Seussical (the Musical) Jr.* PGT (Parker's Got Talent) will take place March 6<sup>th</sup> at the PAC and the Annual Science & Innovation Fair will be held on March 12, 2020. Tonight's full presentation may be viewed by watching tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube.

### **2. Chelmsford INTERFACE Activity Report: June 2019 – November 2019**

Dr. Lang included a memorandum in tonight's packet and data attachments from Ms. Sue Rosa, Manager of Health Care Services for Chelmsford, detailing the activity for six months with INTERFACE. The data shows that most usage was to assist those dealing with depression and anxiety. The Board of Health provides education and programs for the schools and the community.

### **3. School Committee & Superintendent Mid-Year Goal Review**

Chairman King provided a detailed mid-year review of the Committee's goals for 2019-2020 with an update on results and action steps taken so far this school year. This review was sent to the Committee earlier in the week for their review prior to tonight's meeting. Ms. Santos want to continue to stress diversity. Mr. Doherty wants to continue to work on improved communication. Mr. King stated that a review of Committee policies would be beneficial and will schedule it for an upcoming meeting.

### **4. Superintendent's Recommended FY2021 Budget**

Dr. Lang shared a binder with attendees of his recommended FY2021 budget. He walked everyone through the financial and academic elements of the budget. He spoke about highlights of the budget, but no action is required from The Committee tonight. The next meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup>, will be run as a budget hearing for the public to share their views. Tonight, he began by sharing data about Chelmsford and comparable school districts in Massachusetts encompassing: demographics; school spending; staff salaries; per pupil expenditures; and performance in ELA, Math and Science. Dr. Lang concluded that, although our per pupil expenditure is below the state average, our academic achievements are high and well above the state average.

Mr. Cohen, Town Manager, is recommending an increase in the school budget from \$61 million to \$63 million for FY2021. Dr. Lang presented details about many of the 14 highlights included in the budget and touched on some of the appendices to the budget. He, along with Dr. Hirsch, addressed questions from The Committee. Mr. Moses, on behalf of himself and Ms. Newcomb, requested a third-party special education audit. They will meet with Dr. Lang soon to further discuss this request. To fully appreciate the entire presentation, please view it on Chelmsford Telemedia/You Tube.

## **5. Approval of Conference and Field Trip Requests**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the conference and field trip requests as listed. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

### **Reports**

#### **1. Liaison Reports**

Ms. Newcomb shared that The Chelmsford Friends of Music will hold an instrument test-drive on February 8<sup>th</sup>. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, South Row will host a pancake dinner. Parker's musical will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. On March 21<sup>st</sup> Parker and Harrington are sponsoring the Harlem Wizards.

Ms. Santos spoke of the success of the recent Harrington Heritage Fair, which brought the whole community together. The EL Council will meet on March 19, 2020. McCarthy's science fair will be held on March 5<sup>th</sup> and their popular "Rock 'n' Roll Bingo" will take place on March 27<sup>th</sup>. At the McCarthy PTO meeting, parents had questions about the H2 and level 3 classes at CHS. CHS will be hosting the first round for the competition plays soon.

Mr. Doherty attended the CHS PTO meeting and they are looking for parents to help with the breakfast held after the prom.

### **Public Comments**

Al Thomas, of precinct five, spoke in support of Town Manager, Paul Cohen. Mr. Thomas stated that good town managers are hard to find and often do not stay with a town for many years. Through his 14 years in Chelmsford, Mr. Cohen has received positive reviews for his performance, and has worked hard on capital budget needs and collective bargaining with the school district. Mr. Thomas does not understand why Mr. Cohen, who is so dedicated to the Town, has been asked to leave his position in Chelmsford. He asks that Committee members support Mr. Cohen.

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of conducting strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and not return to regular session. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.**

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

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Giglio*