

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
MARCH 24, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

The Organizational Meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Andrew Corey, Superintendent, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Kenneth Haag
 Rebecca Howie
 Karen Jew
 Alison Marsano
 Erin Sarris

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
 Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
 Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy

ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL BOARD

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Superintendent Corey called for nominations for Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

**MEMBER SARRIS NOMINATED MEMBER HAAG
SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF KENNETH HAAG TO THE POSITION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE
BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2021-2022 TERM
MOTION CARRIED**

5-0-0

Superintendent Corey declared Kenneth Haag Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

Superintendent Corey stepped down and Chairman Haag presided.

Chairman Haag called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

**MEMBER MARSANO NOMINATED MEMBER SARRIS
SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF ERIN SARRIS TO THE POSITION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE
BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2021-2022 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Chairman Haag declared Erin Sarris Vice-Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

Chairman Haag called for nominations for Secretary of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

**MEMBER HAAG NOMINATED MEMBER JEW
SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF KAREN JEW TO THE POSITION OF SECRETARY OF THE
BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2021-2022 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Chairman Haag declared Karen Jew Secretary of the Brookline School Board for the 2021-2022 term.

Members Howie and Marsano were appointed as signers of the manifests.

Chairman Haag announced the following committee assignments:

	(Liaison)	(Alternate Liaison)
Brookline Policy Committee	Erin Sarris	
Facilities Study Committee	Kenneth Haag	

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3, II (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Karen Jew, Rebecca Howie, Alison Marsano, Erin Sarris, Kenneth Haag

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 6:06 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 6:27 p.m.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey noted Principal Thompson would be arriving shortly and would be able to provide the Board with an update on the vaccination clinic conducted over the course of the past two days. He thanked the 120 volunteers who participated in the event.

Superintendent Corey noted a communication received from Tad Putney, Town Administrator, which posed two questions relative to the Planning Board’s decision on the proposed workforce housing. Asked were when enrollment is seen to be trending up and why the district could not house the students. Superintendent Corey responded noting the anticipated increase in enrollment over the next 18 months and two factors relating to housing additional students; one being the work the Board has done to put together the class size policy and the other that decisions had been intentionally made to bring special education programming in-house based on the belief it is best to educate our students in district and the cost avoidance aspect.

The second vaccination clinic will be conducted on April 13th and 14th. Superintendent Corey spoke of areas being reviewed; manning the event and the experience had in some districts regarding the second dose and a number of teachers being out. If conducted on the 13th and 14th, it may be that a snow day is considered for the 15th. If that is what occurs on the 14th (Thursday), there may be debate on how to address the half day on Friday.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brookline School Board – **Public Hearing** [January 13, 2021](#)

The following amendment was offered:

Page 11, Line 7; replace “The” with “There”

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Jt. Brookline School Board / Finance Cmte [January 13, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

Delete Lines 31-33 as they are repetitive

Page 4, Line 18; delete “if”

Page 10, Line 18; insert “Superintendent Corey stated” prior to “His recommendation”

Page 12, Line 21; insert “Chair” before “Rater”

Page 13, Line 8; replace “now” with “know”

Page 17, Line 7; delete “\$490,000”

Page 18, Line 35; replace “slow” with “low”

Page 20, Line 36; replace ‘Kew’ with ‘Jew’

MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Brookline School Board – **Public Hearing** [January 26, 2021](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Brookline School Board – **Information Session** [February 1, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

Page 7, Line 37; insert “amount” following “dollar”

Page 8, Line 35; replace “\$200,000” with “\$20,000”

Page 9, Line 10; end the sentence following “will be true”

Page 9, Line 37; following “noted” insert “A chat message received from Tom Solon, which states”

Page 11, Line 2; replace “cross” with “across”

MOTION BY MEMBER HOWIE TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Brookline School Board [February 1, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

Page 3, Line 17; insert “opportunities for students” following “extra-curriculars and”

Page 3, Line 24; replace “on” with “of”

Page 4, Line 15; delete “was” before “that” and end the sentence with a period.

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Brookline School Board – **Annual Meeting** [February 8, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

Page 28, Line 17; remove “HOWIE” following “TO”

Page 29, Lines 9 and 31; insert “TO” before “MOVE”

MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Jt. Brookline School Board / Finance Cmte [February 8, 2021](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

Special Brookline School Board [March 16, 2021](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

PUBLIC INPUT - None

PRINCIPALS’ REPORT

Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA) remarked she and Principal Molinari wished to thank, on behalf of the district, the SAU staff for running the vaccine clinic. It was incredible how organized the event was, and there is gratitude for the opportunity to be vaccinated.

Principal Bouley highlighted items included in the Principals’ Report (copy provided with [agenda](#)).

In May, the Statewide Assessment System (SAS) test will be given. The test is in English Language Arts, reading and writing, and math. The fifth grade will also have a science section. She has attended several of the trainings provided by the Department of Education over the past few months. Last week she was able to provide training to teachers in grades 4-6. They will be implementing some of the training (modular) tests that will provide practice on how to take the test, give samples to the students within their classroom, e.g., during the math session they might practice 1 or 2 problems before their regular math class to get the students used to taking the test and understanding all the different buttons and how to manipulate the applications of the test. The hope is not only to familiarize the students, but to reduce the level of anxiety when they are taking the test.

A phone call was received from Laura Landerman-Garber, the individual who formed the non-profit corporation “Holiday Cards 4 Our Military – NH Challenge” in 2018. There is a gentleman from Brookline whose daughter (Faith) has started her career in the Army. Laura reached out to the district asking if the students would be interested in creating cards for Faith and her battalion. Both the Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS) and CSDA are participating.

Regarding in-person and remote learning, at RMMS total enrollment is 325. In March, a total of 36 students moved from remote to in-person (grades K, 1,2,3), including the 4 remote teachers. At CSDA total enrollment is 248 with 4 students returning from remote to in-person (between grades 5 and 6).

DISCUSSION

- Revenue and Expense Report

Superintendent Corey thanked Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator and Donna Smith, Assistant Business Administrator, for the yeoman's work done.

The Revenue and Expense Report (as of 3-10-21) projects an Unreserved Fund Balance (UFB) of \$394,804. With the approval of allocations to the Maintenance Trust Fund (\$75,000), Special Education Trust Fund (\$25,000), and Contingency Fund (\$40,000), the projected End of Year UFB is \$254,804.

The citizens also approved the article, which allows the Board to start an Unreserved Fund Balance account that can retain up to 2% of the balance remaining at year end. Typically that action is not taken until August following the complete audit and awareness of the exact amount remaining. At that point, the Board can choose to retain an amount from \$0 to 2% of the total.

Next year, he would not envision an article being put before the voters concerning the Contingency Fund. If there came a need for funding, the Board would determine if it would look to the Contingency Fund, UFB, or grant funding.

Vice Chairman Sarris asked, and was informed monies remaining in the Contingency Fund at year-end (this year) would become part of the overall Unreserved Fund Balance, and the Board will determine what, if any, amount of the total UFB (up to 2%) will be retained with the remainder anticipated to be returned to the tax base to offset the amount that has to be raised in taxes the following year. He spoke of the opportunity this fund provides in terms of the ability to address unanticipated maintenance issues, etc.

Asked if any additional federal grant dollars are anticipated regarding COVID-19 expenses, Superintendent Corey spoke of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) Fund, which covers expenses incurred during the second half of the year (approx. \$34,000). With the recent passage of what is referred to as ESSER III, the belief is the district will receive 2.1 to 2.3 times the amount received through ESSER II.

Asked if the same formula is used for distribution of grant funding, Superintendent Corey responded the largest amount received was when the Governor set distribution at \$200/child. The other three have been ESSER grants; approx. \$34,000, \$34,000, and then 2.1 times that amount.

Asked if the district has had success in signing up families for the free and reduced lunch program understanding some of the grant funding is based on the number of participants signed up for that program, Superintendent Corey stated it continues to be struggle. There are several bills in the legislature that would hold the district harmless because it is difficult for many districts to get students to sign up at this point. If we are held harmless, then we would use our data from the previous year. In this case it would have been a day that we submitted a year ago fall. That would be the funding mechanism with the goal of trying to regenerate the attendance and forms for the fall of 2022.

- COVID-19 – Update; Teacher Recall, Class Sizes and Transportation

Superintendent Corey spoke of the class sizes being right around specification. We have one large remote section in the 2nd grade, but that goes well. Following the second round of vaccinations, the Administration will begin discussions with the union around bringing our teachers back to in-person. There remain some who are dealing with family issues. We do not envision the district as being fully in-person. It is the goal to be fully in-person come September.

The Board made the conscious decision at the start of the year to run our bus fleet. Our numbers on the buses have been attractive because so many of our families have car-pooled or driven their children. As students started to return it increased the number of students who needed ridership. However, many of our buses were underutilized. Although students have been added, we can continue to maintain what is now becoming the 3' of social distancing.

The district remains at 6' for physical distancing in our classrooms. When we do contact tracing, the criteria are now 3' for 10 minutes rather than 6' for ten minutes. The district will continue to follow the recommendations of the CDC and ultimately those from the New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services (NH DHHS).

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug added that, at RMMS, the 4 remote teachers were returned to in-person, but there remains a need for remote learners. As part of the problem-solving for how we return students that have requested to return, maintain our class sizes, and maintain our 6', the remote teachers are teaching in-person students while teaching remote students at the same time (Zoom in the Room).

Asked if what is intended with recall is that there may be teachers that are asked to come into the school to teach their remote classes, Superintendent Corey stated there to be the potential for that.

- Facilities Discussion

Superintendent Corey stated there to be two objectives; to provide the Board with an update and, under Deliberations, take a vote to move forward with the study at RMMS.

Enrollment increases are projected as time moves forward. Prior to the development on Route 13, it was believed increases would be phased in, and the Administration was looking to determine if that would be a bubble or long-term trend. A bubble is something we could handle through different alternatives than if the increase becomes a long-term issue.

Regarding facilities, as part of the RMMS discussions, Ms. Seeley is recommending the discussions expand and view the issue from PreK-6. We have the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), know some of the issues being faced with the aging building (RMMS) and a building 20[±] years of age (CSDA).

Two presentations were done during the year where two strategies were discussed. The committee will work with Ms. Seeley to finalize the strategy to bring before the full Board for a recommendation. Superintendent Corey remarked it is a fine balancing act as although we have aging buildings, they serve us very well. When looking at our neighbors in Amherst, they have a K-5 elementary school and just completed a study with a recommendation that at some future date it be replaced. A K-5 elementary school for approximately 500 students has a \$66 million price tag. They also have the issue of those students eventually moving to their middle school, which is a \$31 million price tag.

Similar issues were discussed in Hollis, and approached from an energy efficiency standpoint, e.g. wrapping the building, renovations, lighting, etc., and now Phase II, which continues with energy efficiencies, e.g., removing oil tanks. The first bond there was slightly over \$2.5 million and the current one slightly over \$3 million. One thing the citizens will face is an escalation in cost; lumber, steel, etc., have gone up drastically. Also a challenge of the times is the lead time for delivery of materials.

If following the structured approach; bringing forward a mission statement for Board approval. The committee, which includes Board members, would be authorized to make some of the expenditures should

the voters, down the road, approve funding. This type of structure will go a long way towards ensuring a successful building season, which is only 10 weeks long.

Superintendent Corey stated his belief the district is in good shape, and that it is fortunate that discussions were already underway. The timeline will have to be accelerated to potentially catch up with what is occurring in the Town.

Vice Chairman Sarris asked for clarification regarding travel; does the district have a policy for families who travel outside of New England or is it just a recommendation in terms of the need to quarantine. Superintendent Corey stated the district is not promoting or asking families to travel. The district has and continues to follow the recommendations of NH DHHS. He spoke of the positive level of communication received from families and of how families have limited themselves to essential travel. What he is hearing from families is that, although not essential, they need to visit family. With the guidelines that have come out around the practices at airports, etc., he is of the belief it will not cause difficulties and can be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If international travel, there is an automatic requirement for a quarantine. Parents will continue to be encouraged to communicate with the district.

Chairman Haag noted NH DHHS has authorized domestic travel whether commercial or individual car.

- Policy Update – Utilization of the New Hampshire School Boards Association to Conduct a Policy Review

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) offers a Policy Manual Review service for its Policy Subscribers. Their staff attorney will review the Board's policy manual and provide a written report covering format, organization, style, and content. Notation will be made of any policies required by state or federal law that are not included in the manual. Policy manual review is a contract service provided for a flat fee of \$1,500.00. She recommended the Board authorize the expenditure.

Superintendent Corey commented he believes the district's manual is in pretty good shape. The problem is the Legislature often ends their session in June and only gives you 60 days to get something in place. The desire is to ensure we are not missing something of substance.

Chairman Haag commented on the cost being reasonable particularly considering the potential for exposure.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the formation of a Facilities Study Committee

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ESTABLISH A FACILITIES STUDY COMMITTEE
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Haag was appointed as the Board representative to the study committee.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see action the Board will take regarding the Administration’s recommendations regarding teacher nominations.

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT’S
RECOMMENDATION FOR TEACHER NOMINATIONS, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Administration’s Proposed School Calendar for 2021-2022

**MOTION BY MEMBER HOWIE TO APPROVE THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR, AS
PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**

ON THE QUESTION

Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent, remarked in preparing the calendar they looked to remain consistent with what is normally done; teachers return the Monday prior to Labor Day. Students return the Thursday and Friday prior to Labor Day.

Moving into November, we have Veterans Day on November 11th, which is a Thursday. The thought is to put the professional development day on that Friday (November 12th) allowing families to have a four-day weekend.

Looking into December, the 24th is a Friday. Proposed is to put the 2nd professional development day on December 23rd, and just extend that December vacation a little for families. The reason she looked to December for that 2nd professional development day is if looking at February, Presidents Day is late this year, and would put our vacation for New Hampshire on the 4th Monday of February. That means the bulk of our vacation would fall in March. At times, the Administration looks at voting day (March 8th) as a professional development day; however, that would result in students having a week off, come back for one day and then have a day off. Rather than doing that, the 2nd professional development day was put in December. The December timeframe is a good time for professional development as you can put new ideas into action for trimester 2 and 3.

April is typical as is May. This puts the last day of school (including 5 snow days) as June 21st for students and June 22nd for teachers.

The proposed calendar has been approved by the COOP School District and has not yet been before the Hollis School Board.

Asked if any thought was given to scheduled remote days or remote days around snow days, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated conversations continue around the potential for some snow days to be remote days. However, an agreement has not yet been reached around that. Currently, the Administration is planning, and building into the calendar, 5 snow days.

Vice Chairman Sarris questioned if there is any discussion of policy language providing guidance around the parameters of offering a remote day, Superintendent Corey stated his belief the State will take the old

concept of what was called a blizzard bag and replace it with remote, leaving it up to the individual districts.

The other question discussions are occurring with the union around is situations such as the November 22nd and 23rd dates, he would be interested in gathering information from community members to determine if there is an appetite to have a remote day that Monday and Tuesday so families could travel for the Thanksgiving holiday. He spoke of the skillset students have developed. He understands that many are burnt out on the idea of remote learning but should there be an instance of an impending storm, for example, we could tell everyone in advance that there would be a remote day.

Also being discussed with the unions is the end of this school year. One of the things we want to capture is identification of any gaps. We are looking at what the balance is between students getting out of school and doing some professional development to gather data so that when we come back in September, we are using that data to drive instruction. If we do not do anything to capture that information that would end up being the first discussion when teachers come back. The desire is to hit the road running at the start of the new school year.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ADJOURN

SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

The March 24, 2021 Organizational Meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____