

I. **CALL OF MEETING
TO ORDER AND
FLAG SALUTE**

A meeting of the School Committee was held virtually.

Present: Ms. Wendy Happel, Chair; Mr. Chris Coyle, Vice-Chair; Ms. Danielle Grafton, Secretary; Ms. Julie Groom and Ms. Heidi Hernandez, Members. Also in attendance were Mr. Peter Schafer, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Felicia Moschella, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Elizabeth Lindo, Student Representative; and Ms. Theresa Minnehan, Administrative Assistant.

II. **HEARING OF VISITORS**

None.

III. **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. December 7, 2021.

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Heidi Hernandez the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of December 7, 2021, as presented.

IV. **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT**

A. Mathematics and Computer Science Department Presentation (M. Doherty)

Ms. Doherty was present this evening to give a presentation on the Math and Computer Science Departments to School Committee members. Last month she reported on the MCAS results for math and was asked to give more information on the grades 7 and 8 cohorts historical results. Ms. Doherty stated that the goal for both cohorts is to stop the trend of widening the gap between Abington and the State. She stated that the curriculum will be reevaluated in order to help in this area and that discussion has taken place during PD days with the middle school math department staff. She also reported on the strengths and areas in need of improvement in both the math department and the computer science departments. She also took the time to explain the AP courses, exams and college acceptance of AP exam credits.

V. **REPORT SUBCOMMITTEES**

A. Business and Finance Subcommittee.

Mr. Schafer thanked Julie Groom and Danielle Grafton for meeting with him and Felicia as members of the Business and Finance Subcommittee and for their thoughtful work on the FY-2023 budget. Ms. Grafton and Ms. Groom thanked Peter and Felicia for all the work put into this budget and all the work putting into the numbers and focus on the areas in need. Mr. Schafer stated that the budget he is about to present is in a draft form and is a snapshot in time where we stand for next school year. This will change over time.

Ms. Happel asked for a motion to enter the FY-23 preliminary budget hearing.

FY-2023 Preliminary Budget Hearing @ 7:36 p.m.

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to enter the preliminary FY-2023 budget hearing.

Mr. Schafer asked to roll out the information and then receive questions from the Abington School Committee and then questions from the public. Any questions not answered this evening, he asked that they be directed to him or Felicia either by email or phone call. He started that there is no information on the revenue sources for FY-2023 and that this preliminary budget hearing is in line to meet certain deadlines. He hopes to have more definite numbers by spring prior to Town Meeting. He reviewed the budget packet by page beginning with enrollment figures and class sizes, breakdown of regular staff, budget proposal by account, proposed major increase by major category, budget material requests such as staffing and instructional materials and then the budget book and warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. Important to note is the growing populations of students. The budget maintains reasonable class sizes for all students in grades PreK-12 and offerings at the high school. It also addresses the needs of our growing EL student populations which now represents approximately 10 percent of our student population. It also maintains our commitment to required resources like hardware, software and books. He stated that certain built-in increases for fixed or mandated costs will automatically cause our budget to increase. Mr. Schafer continued by reviewing prioritized positions as well as considered positions but not included in this preliminary budget proposal. The increase from FY-22 is approximately 5.88% or \$1,556,011. Committee members asked questions around instructional materials and updates, when Chapter 70 funds will be known, class sizes, and accommodating the numbers coming to Woodsdale from Beaver Brook, and offerings for high school math courses with the addition of a high school math teacher.

Ms. Happel closed the FY-2023 budget hearing at 8:21 p.m. to return to the regular session of the Abington School Committee meeting.

VOTED: on motion of Chris Coyle (Wendy Happel) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to close the FY-2023 budget hearing and return to the regular meeting.

VI. **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

- A. Presentation and Public Hearing on the FY-2023 Preliminary School Department Budget Proposal. Mr. Schafer stated that the votes on the budget take place in the regular session.

VOTED: on motion of Wendy Happel (Danielle Grafton the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to submit for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant a proposed FY-2023 budget figure of \$28,034,824 as the amount requested for the School Department's operating budget.

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Julie Groom) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to submit for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant a proposed figure of \$14,560 as the amount requested for student transportation services to Abington students attending out-of-district vocational schools as non-resident students for the 2022-2023 school year. The School Committee or their designees shall be authorized to expend from this fund, or act on anything relative thereto.

VOTED: on motion of Heidi Hernandez (Danielle Grafton) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to submit for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant an article to continue a revolving account in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E1/2. Said account to be funded by the fines levied against Abington businesses which violate state or local tobacco control laws, by-laws and regulations, to be expended by the Abington School Department, to fund the substance abuse prevention program, not to exceed \$8,000.⁰⁰ for the ensuing fiscal year; or take any other action relative thereto.

VII. **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT**

A. FY-2023 Capital Plan.

Dr. Moschella reviewed the FY-23 Capital Plan items to submit to Town Hall to put in with other departments' requests to the Town. She stated that the leadership team at the Town prioritizes requests. Some of these requests have been submitted in previous years. She reviewed the needs at the Woodsdale Elementary School such as a roof replacement, refurbishing the walk-in cooler/freezer and replacing cafeteria furniture, Beaver Brook Elementary School items such as assessment of the entire HVAC system, resurfacing of all paved areas, update playground equipment, replace cafeteria furniture and resurfacing the gym floor. She also reviewed the Frolio School building items, such as replacing the main electrical switch electrical subpanels and the lead paint abatement and painting of the exterior.

VOTED: on motion of Danielle Grafton (Wendy Happel) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the FY23 Capital Plan as presented and submit to Town Hall.

B. Update on Hourly Rates to Reflect the Increase in the Minimum Wage.

Dr. Moschella reviewed the increase in minimum wage that went into effect on January 1st and stated that the handout reflects non-collective bargaining positions and steps that are connected to the increase as well as the cafeteria workers' steps. She asked for support of the increase from the School Committee members.

VOTED: on motion of Heidi Hernandez (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the hourly rates to reflect the increase in the minimum wage as presented.

C. Update on COVID-19 Protocols.

Dr. Moschella reported on the current increase in COVID cases this week and that the nurses were updating the numbers today, but we are looking at over 200 cases in the past couple of weeks. The weekly email will go out on Friday. She stated that if your child is not feeling well or showing symptoms of COVID, please keep them home and call your school nurse for guidance. The vaccination rate at Abington High School is steady at 72 percent and she encourages you to get your child vaccinated. Call your school nurse to report your child's vaccination status. She also discussed the CDC guidelines on isolation from 10 days to five after you have been diagnosed with COVID if you are fever free for 24 hours and your symptoms are resolving. She also stated that the guidelines from the Department of Education are in contrast to the Department of Public Health around quarantining and fully vaccinated and that she and the nurses have been working with the Abington Health Department on this guidance so please be patient as the information comes out.

VIII. **ESTABLISHMENT OF NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATE**

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. Regular Monthly Meeting

IX. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- Communication from the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC)
- Communication from Commissioner Riley to the Abington School Committee
- Abington High School Fall 2021 Season Recap

- **Dates to Remember**

1. Wed., January 5 – Green Wave Boosters’ Meeting @ AHS Cafeteria @ 7 p.m.
2. Mon., January 17 – Martin Luther King Day – All School Offices and Buildings Closed
3. Tues., January 25 – Regular Monthly School Committee Meeting – Location TBD
4. Fri., January 28 – Inservice/Early Release Day for Students

- **Personnel Administration - Informational**

1. The Superintendent has accepted the resignation of Anton Faynberg as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on December 22, 2021.
2. On the recommendation of Chris Basta, Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Melissa Foley as a tutor within the Abington Public Schools effective on Monday, December 6, 2021.
3. On the recommendation of Jonathan Hawes, Principal of the Woodsdale Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Kelsey Finnerty as a substitute special education teacher effective on Monday, January 3, 2022.
4. On the recommendation of Chris Basta, Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Victoria Garvin as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on Monday, January 3, 2022
5. On the recommendation of Chris Basta, Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Rachel Lemoyne as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on Monday, January 10, 2022.
6. On the recommendation of Chris Basta, Principal of the Beaver Brook Elementary School, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Bridget McDonough as a paraprofessional within the Abington Public Schools effective on Monday, December 6, 2021
7. On the recommendation of Jason Linn, Director of Maintenance, the Superintendent has approved the appointment of Craig O’Connor as a custodian within the Abington Public Schools effective on Monday, December 13, 2021.
8. The Superintendent has granted Ms. Holly Hynes, a special education teacher within the Abington Public Schools, a parental leave of absence in accordance with Options B and A as stipulated in Article XXIV of the Unit A Agreement. This leave of absence will begin on or about January 31, 2022, and continue to on or about April 25, 2022.

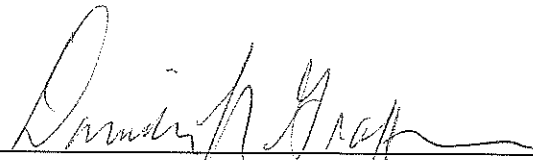
9. On the recommendations of Jonathan Bourn, Principal of Abington High School, and Peter Serino, Athletic Director, The Superintendent has approved the appointment of the following volunteer coaches for the winter season:

- Ed O'Neil Hockey
- Nick Malafronte Hockey
- Chris Tighe Boys' Basketball
- Chris Marquardt Boys' Basketball
- Sue Peck Cheerleading

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

@ 9:06 p.m.

VOTED: on motion of Heidi Hernandez (Chris Coyle) the members of the School Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the January 4, 2022, School Committee meeting at 9:06 p.m.



Danielle Grafton, Secretary