



Winthrop School Committee
Winthrop, Massachusetts

A regular meeting of the Winthrop School Committee was held on Thursday, March 19, 2020 via Zoom teleconference. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ms. Barry, Mr. Boncore, Mr. Capobianco, Ms. Swope, Ms. Powell, Mr. Perrin

Mr. Martucci was not present

Also meeting with Committee:

Lisa Howard, Superintendent of Schools

Patricia Hames, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools

Susan Eccles, Office Manager

Mr. Perrin led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT SILENCE

A Moment Silence was held for Anthony Martucci, a strong supporter of Winthrop Public Schools.

GENERAL INFORMATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

DELEGATES & VISITORS

None

MINUTES

Mr. Capobianco made a Motion to approve the Minutes of March 2, 2020. Mr. Boncore seconded the Motion.

Ms. Barry-abstain, Mr. Boncore-yes, Mr. Capobianco-yes, Ms. Swope-yes, Ms. Powell-yes, Mr. Perrin-yes. The Motion passes with one abstention.

FINANCIAL & BUSINESS PROCEDURES

Mr. Capobianco made a Motion to approve Warrant SVW20-15 in the amount of \$217,622.60.

Ms. Powell seconded the Motion.

Ms. Barry-yes, Mr. Boncore-yes, Mr. Capobianco-yes, Ms. Swope-yes, Ms. Powell-yes, Mr. Perrin-yes. A unanimous vote.

Ms. Swope made a Motion approve Payroll Warrant SPW20-15 in the amount of \$712,452.09 Mr. Capobianco seconded the Motion.

Ms. Barry-yes, Mr. Boncore-abstain, Mr. Capobianco-yes, Ms. Swope-yes, Ms. Powell-yes, Mr. Perrin-abstain. The Motion passes with two abstentions.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

None

GENERAL REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Howard provided the committee with the following report:

Communication/Planning

- I am participating in weekly conference calls with the DESE, getting updated guidance from the Commissioner.

- Weekly conference calls with the North Shore Roundtable of Superintendents regarding day to day business.
- Weekly Conference calls with Mass School Business Office (Jay Sullivan) regarding the legal aspects of billing, employee pay, grants, deadlines, etc.
- Daily communication with the Town Emergency Operation Center regarding the day to day town business
- Monday, Wednesday, Friday Zoom Meetings with the Administrative Team and Tuesday and Thursday meetings with Facilities.
- Daily Zoom Meetings with Town Department Heads at 1:00pm and 4:00pm.
- Weekly parent communication thru Blackboard Connect.
- Weekly staff communication thru blackboard Connect.
- Various student group communications with Principals (Senior Class this Friday at 10:00).

Closure & Student Opportunity Plans

- I have met with the Union and agreed to staff expectations during the closure. Expectations were communicating to staff by the Union President and include responding to parent emails during work hours, completing lesson plans, report cards, progress reports and Principal check ins. PPS is working with all Chairpersons to ensure special education is in compliance with the expectations set forth by the DESE.
- All learning opportunity plans have been developed using a template and uploaded to the website. Parents were emailed by Principals.
- Parents were provided a host of additional websites by me.
- Opportunity Plans are updated weekly by Principals with added resources from teachers.
- Adjustment Counselors, Special Education Staff and Specialists have included sites to the plans.
- Teachers are available during working hours for parent/student emails.

Technology

- High School students all have Chromebooks.
- Middle School Students are not 1:1 but use Chromebooks on site all day. Mr. Curley is working with any family that needs a Chromebook to facilitate learning and has paper materials if needed.
- Grades k-5 have limited Chromebook use during the day. Principals have paper learning materials for families who do not have technology at home and will work with individual families to discuss options.
- All staff members have Laptops

Facilities

- A Draft Pandemic Cleaning Plan has been developed and reviewed with all custodial staff to ensure proper attention to detailed cleaning and employee safety (approved products, cleaning checklists, proper safety wear provided, schedules being worked on).
- Working on a plan with the Town for an additional sanitizing of each school by a company prior to opening of school.
- Purchase 4 Electrostatic Machines for MS/HS. Currently backordered until sometime in April.

There is a conference call the Commissioner on Friday at 10:00am.

PERSONNEL

The following positions have been posted: Grant Funded Kick Start Team, K-3 Literacy Mapping (12 positions); Long-term Substitute (Grade 6 Special Ed Teacher).

NEW BUSINESS

Julie Barry was appointed to the school committee on March 10, 2019.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Textbook/Material Discard Request

This will remain under Unfinished Business.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Mr. Perrin welcomed Julie Barry, who was appointed to the School Committee on March 10, 2019. Mr. Perrin thanked Lisa Howard for her leadership.
- Mr. Boncore thanked everyone for all their work – people are really coming together right now.
- Ms. Swope expressed concerns about social distancing. The Superintendent has advised parents to keep children home and away from playgrounds. It is not an easy thing to enforce. We can only hope that people will listen and use common sense.
- Ms. Powell inquired about lunches. To Go Bags are being provided for all students, which includes breakfast and lunch.
- Mr. Capobianco inquired about MCAS guidance from the State? He also wanted the record to reflect that he feels everyone should be paid at this time, including hourly employees.
- Ms. Howard stated at this time, all employees including hourly workers are being paid.
- Ms. Swope inquired as to how we can ensure the students have the opportunity to learn enough so they do not get held back?
- Ms. Howard stated that school principals are not withholding students. Students will be graded where they were standing when schools were shut down. Not students will be penalized. The standards are on the DESE website. The Commissioner has been very helpful.
- Mr. Boncore thanked Ms. Howard for cooperating with the Town. We are unified and doing our best under the circumstances.
- Ms. Howard addressed the Chromebook issue. At the middle school level, 90% of their homework is done on Chromebooks. We are ready, willing and able to provide students in need. No student will be denied. We do not have enough Chromebooks for Pre-k to Grade 5.
- Ms. Powell stated concerns about the budget. Ms. Howard informed the committee that she placed a freeze on the budget about a month ago. There is no spending without prior approval. The impact will depend on how long the school closure is. The Superintendent has had discussions with the Town Manager and the Police Chief about the possibility of grants to assist. Ms. Swope asked if we are prepared for an extension to end school. Ms. Howard stated we are not prepared for this. As of this date we are closed until April 6, 2020. The CDC and the Governor are guiding us.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:18pm, Mr. Capobianco made a Motion to adjourn. Ms. Powell seconded the Motion.

Ms. Barry-yes, Mr. Boncore-yes, Mr. Capobianco-yes, Ms. Swope-yes, Ms. Powell-yes,

Mr. Perrin-yes. A unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Hames

Executive Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools

Documents used in this meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes of March 2, 2020
- Warrant SVW20-15 in the amount of \$217,622.60
- Payroll Warrant SPW20-15 in the amount of \$712,452.09
- Departmental Expenditure Report
- Job Postings
- Updated Sub-committee List

The above non-confidential documents can be found in the Superintendent's office, upon request.