

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
May 19, 2020
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Those present included Chair Melissa Martin, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Matt Kelley, members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Joan Dabrowski and Cindy Mahr; and Student Advisory representatives Rachel White and Violet Lahive.

Ms. Martin announced that the meeting is being held remotely and recorded by local media and broadcast live by Wellesley Media.

PUBLIC COMMENT No one wished to address the Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Gray reported on Thursday's **PBC meeting** where schematic design was discussed in detail in an effort to reduce the building's square footage. Value engineering and the selection process for the construction manager at risk was also discussed. Five firms have been selected to submit proposals. Mr. Kelley asked what kind of benchmark is being used to determine the appropriate square footage. Ms. Gray indicated benchmarking of educational spaces is based on MSBA standards. She indicated the Educational working group will review any changes to ensure they do not impact scope.

Ms. Chow addressed the petition from town residents requesting limited **usage of athletic fields** which was sent to NRC and shared with the School Committee. The petition addresses family usage of fields while social distancing. Ms. Chow reminded the community that fields are still closed but the Governor did include references to opening certain athletic fields by May 25th, with restrictions. There is some ambiguity around the guidance, so this is a decision that will be made in coordination with the Board of Health and NRC.

Ms. Martin recognized **Student Advisory representative Violet Lahive** for being named part of the BAA Scholastic Mile Class of 2020. Student athletes were nominated by coaches and selected by the BAA to represent their hometowns based on their athletic and leadership achievements.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lussier referenced the update he sent to the WPS community on a **phased re-opening of Massachusetts**. He and his colleagues across the state await additional school-related guidance from the Governor's Office, as well as from DESE, relative to the extended year program/summer school and next year's opening.

Dr. Lussier reported that work continues on planning for celebrations for the **Class of 2020**. The parade and diploma distribution will occur on June 6th as planned, however, there is support for additional opportunities to more formally acknowledge the graduates some time during the summer should restrictions allow.

Dr. Dabrowski announced an upcoming **webinar** sponsored by the District's partners at **Challenge Success** on how to navigate this preK-12 remote learning world, in particular the impact on academics, as well as the social emotional journey. The webinar is free and open to all families.

Dr. Dabrowski recognized **Carolyn Collins**, Department Head for preK-5 Science and Engineering, who has been doing some great lesson planning for all elementary students. This week Ms. Collins started a segment on watching seeds grow, and as part of this remote learning, she wanted to ensure that all families had materials needed for the project. Carolyn reached out to families last week asking if anyone needed help with getting these materials to reach out to her. This afternoon, care packages were delivered to 82 doorsteps, mailboxes or front doors around Wellesley! Dr. Dabrowski thanked **Bates Principal Toni Jolley, Fiske Principal Rachel McGregor, and Sprague's Karen Lindquist** all of whom helped deliver these packages to families.

Dr. Lussier reminded the community to contact the **WPS Registrar** if they will be moving away, do not plan to have their child attend Wellesley Public Schools in the fall, or have not yet completed the registration process.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Martin entertained a motion to approve the May 5, 2020 Open Session minutes as presented to the Committee this evening.

MOVED: Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Gray; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Abstained; Ms. Chow – Abstained;

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: Yes – 5; No – 0

2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR UPDATE

Dr. Lussier addressed the work of reopening schools for summer programs and for the 2020-21 school year, indicating there are a number of considerations in structuring the planning process for different opening possibilities for both the summer and fall, including a full opening, a blended schedule of in-school and remote learning, and the possibility of having to shift to full closure mode at some point during the year. He informed the Committee that the state has sent strong signals for a unified approach on how schools will be reopening, however no formal guidance has been received as yet. Since time is of the essence, he and his staff have begun work on planning for next year and identifying some of the major issues that will need to be addressed such as scheduling, transportation, food service, personal hygiene, and building cleaning under any of those scenarios.

Dr. Lussier announced the creation of a high level, advisory group with representation from administrators, a principal from each level, the Facilities Management Director, Health Director, Head of Nursing, and parent and student representation. The function of this group is to identify and address the larger themes that will help inform the specific working groups around the details and technical work that need to unfold. He plans to assemble the advisory group next week and begin meetings after Memorial Day and throughout the summer. He hopes that once state guidance is released, it can be incorporated into the ongoing work of these groups in a seamless manner.

With regard to parental expectations, Dr. Lussier is asking for flexibility about expectations, as he fully expects that final decisions will not be made until the summer after the Governor's phased in approach is known and specifically what restrictions will be in place. In developing a reopening plan, Dr. Lussier plans to leverage the experience with remote learning of the past few months, as well as the voice of various stakeholders in this process.

The Committee thanked Dr. Lussier for this update and asked questions relative to whether DESE will be issuing separate guidance from the Governor; whether the guidance will be primarily educational- or health-related; whether there is any impact on the Academic Calendar that was voted by the Committee? Ms. Martin noted the challenge of having flexibility to move between learning models as seamlessly as possible and that a coordinated effort state-wide would seem a more efficient manner to approach re-opening rather than individual districts working through these issues.

LEE FIELD UPDATE

Tripp Sheehan of the Playing Fields Task Force joined the meeting to provide an update on the Lee Field project and its funding. He provided an overview and history of the project which includes the Lee Field and the multipurpose field.

Mr. Sheehan discussed funding for the work, which was slated for approval at this year's Annual Town Meeting, included \$400,000 from town funds (\$200,000 from the CPC and \$200,000 from DPW), and then some private donations. With the postponement of ATM due to COVID and related concerns with Town finances, the Town requested a reduction of departmental capital budgets, which resulted in the DPW withdrawal of its \$200,000 for the project. A revised application was submitted to the CPC for funding of up to \$400,000, which the CPC has approved.

Once Town Meeting certifies the payment, work can be completed for the final items at Lee Field and the renovation of the multipurpose field. Mr. Sheehan also indicated there is concern that the multipurpose field may not be ready before Labor Day and youth football teams will need to find an alternate location for practices.

The Committee thanked Mr. Sheehan for the update.

TECH DEPARTMENT JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The Committee was joined by Technology Director Kathy Dooley, IT Operations Manager Joe Hutton and Software and Web Analyst Amy Ritterbusch. Dr. Lussier acknowledged the entire Technology Department staff for all their work in remote learning.

Ms. Dooley reviewed the major changes to the three Technology Department job descriptions and the reasons for these changes. The positions are: Help Desk Specialist, Technical Support Specialist, and Technician. She indicated that these positions require updating to ensure the work aligns to the changing needs of the District, noting that technology extends beyond computers and includes security systems, phone systems, 2-way radios and PA systems for the buildings. In addition,

there are more software systems that affect the District's workflow and there is also the need for remote learning support.

The timeline, process and communication that occurred in the development/revisions of the positions was reviewed. The revised organizational chart reflecting the updated positions, as well as the work schedule and hiring process for the positions, was discussed. She noted that the changes are a shift in FTEs and are therefore budget neutral.

The Committee asked clarifying questions and thanked Ms. Dooley and her team for all their work during the implementation of the remote learning platform.

PUBLIC COMMENT No one wished to speak

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 7:45 pm, Ms. Martin entertained a motion to adjourn.

MOVED: Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Gray; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: Yes – 5; No – 0

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

SC Meeting Agenda/Posting – May 19, 2020

Draft Minutes 5/5/20

Lee Softball Field History, CPC Application 2019, ATM 2019 Presentation

CPC Updated Application 2020

Technology Dept. Job Description Memo & Presentation, Job Descriptions for Help Desk Specialist, Technology Support Specialist, and Technician