

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HULL, MA 02045

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY

Jennifer Fleming, Chair (present)
David Twombly, Vice Chair (present)
Lucas Patenaude, Secretary (present)
Ernest Minelli, Member (present)
Stephanie Peters, Member (present)

OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY

Judy Kuehn, Superintendent of Schools
David DeGennaro, Business Administrator
Maggie Ollerhead, Secretary to the Superintendent

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jennifer Fleming, Chair at 6:31 p.m. remotely, via Go-To-Meeting.

Ms. Fleming explained remote participation protocols for this meeting.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: David Twombly

Second: Stephanie Peters

Move to approve the December 14, 2020 as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: David Twombly, Stephanie Peters, Lucas Patenaude, Ernest Minelli and Jennifer Fleming

3.0 Input from Public on Agenda Items

None

4.0 Approval of Minutes

Motion: Stephanie Peters

Second: David Twombly

Move to approve the following minutes, as presented:

- November 16, 2020 Regular Meeting
- November 16, 2020 Executive Session

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Stephanie Peters, David Twombly, Lucas Patenaude, Ernest Minelli and Jennifer Fleming

5.0 Superintendent's Business Items

5.1 Shipwreck'd Update

Ms. Kuehn explained that Adrian Muir and Susan Regan, owners of Shipwreck'd Restaurant, are here tonight because the School Committee voted on their modification for expansion and liquor license on November 4, 2019, contingent upon them coming back to the School Committee a year after licensing with an update. Mr. Muir thanked everyone for their support this year and, despite the pandemic, they were still able to support the Hull Boosters Club with a 40% increase in their donation. They have hired back Hull High School students and added new high school

staff. They have had a successful year, again, despite the pandemic. Ms. Fleming said she is happy it worked out and Mr. Patenaude added, we are so glad we found some good neighbors across the street from the high school.

5.2 Theatre Arts Update

Ms. Kuehn said she was excited to be able to say the theatre arts department will perform a radio broadcast of A Christmas Carol. Mr. Charles Jodoin, Theatre Arts Director/Technical Director said he was really excited and everyone has been working remotely for several months. He stated there are 21 7th-12th grad students in the play. On Saturday mornings they did meet via Zoom. He said he is excited for these students because this is a radio play, which is letting them work with their voices and accents. He said vocal work sometimes gives way to dancing and acting in plays so this is actually helping the students by solely using their voices. Mr. Ian Barkon, Music Director, echo what Mr. Jodoin said and added that it is giving the kids something to look forward to. It is untraditional and includes middle school and high school students. The students came in on Saturday, socially distanced, to record their voices and the music in the background. The performances will be held remotely on this Saturday and Sunday night's at 8:00 pm. You can buy tickets on several pages of the HPS website or go to ShowTix4U. Ms. Kuehn thanked Mr. Jodoin and Mr. Barkon and said she was impressed with the ability to keep the theatre program open and this radio type show is exciting. Committee members also thanked the staff and students for pivoting and figuring it out.

5.3 Out-of-State Field Trip – PHI Spring 2022

Mr. Timothy MacKenzie, Hull High School social studies teacher and Project Humanitarian Involvement (PHI) Advisor, asked the Committee for preliminary approval for their service learning project. He said this is his 7th trip and the current juniors would like to put this trip together. The trip two years ago was to the Dominican Republic to a home with underprivileged girls and the members of PHI want to go back in the spring of 2022. When asked, Mr. MacKenzie responded the trip is thru EF and they will have travel insurance.

Motion: Stephanie Peters

Second: Lucas Patenaude

Move to preliminarily approve the PHI trip to the Dominican Republic in the spring of 2022.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Stephanie Peters, Lucas Patenaude, David Twombly, Ernest Minelli and Jennifer Fleming

5.4 Student Opportunity Act Vote

Ms. Kuehn explained that months ago the leadership team had to make a plan on how to spend the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) funds, even though we did not get any funding. The plan was to focus on students with disabilities to close the gap and would be used for Adjustment Counselor's. She stated that even though we did not receive the SOA funds we haven't changed the plan, we will use carryover services in the home to develop coping skills. The vote of School Committee was supposed to take place in September but with so much going on with COVID-19 we lost track so a vote is now necessary.

Motion: Ernest Minelli

Second: David Twombly

Move to accept the Student Opportunity Act as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Ernest Minelli, David Twombly, Lucas Patenaude, Stephanie Peters and Jennifer Fleming

5.5 COVID-19 Update

Snow Days – Ms. Kuehn stated there will be remote learning snow days if there is power in Hull. If staff doesn't have power they should push out work for students beforehand. Staff should be prepared to bring home work and be responsible for getting work out in advance. If there is no power in Hull it will be a traditional snow day. She said she will let everyone know if the day will be traditional snow day or a remote day when she makes the call.

Dashboard – Ms. Kuehn stated that we now have a COVID Dashboard on the website and each week it will be updated with student positive cases.

Flu Vaccine – Ms. Kuehn asked the school nurses to update the Committee on flu vaccines. Ms. Keegan, Jacobs School nurse, said she has been notifying parents since September and some have received their flu shots from their doctor's offices but some offices have run out. She said she had a supply for 355 students and all students but 120 have been vaccinated. She is working on getting the rest done. Ms. Striglio, Memorial School nurse, stated that 65 to 70% of students have been vaccinated. She has been in touch with every parent and some are just waiting for their child's doctor to give the vaccine during their physicals, which are behind due to the virus. Ms. Roach, Hull High School nurse, said 20% of students at the high school have been vaccinated. She is hopeful that physicals will be done soon. Ms. Peters commented that there are probably a lot of high school students at this meeting for other reasons so get your flu shot. Ms. Kuehn said if there is a student who wants to get a shot fill out the form. The consent form is on the web and sent home with students so just fill out the form and send it in.

Winter Sports – Ms. Fleming stated that she knew there are a lot of student on the meeting and explained that Ms. Kuehn will give a presentation of winter sports and the Committee will decide as a School Committee whether to go with that or not given their roles as School Committee members that all live in Hull. Ms. Kuehn said after consulting with David Twombly, School Committee Vice Chair, and Jennifer Fleming, School Committee Chair, all along the way, she still stands on her recommendation from Friday, which is that there will be no winter sports. She added that she knows parents and students may be disappointed but with the spike in cases all around Massachusetts since Thanksgiving she feels it is best for our students. She added; please know the Athletic Director recommended not having winter sports. The Hull Board of Health recommended not having winter sports. The school nurses recommended not having winter sports. The high school administration recommended not having winter sports. How could I possibly go against the recommendations of these professionals? Ms. Kuehn talked about after school intermural. Mr. Paine said he had a few quick comments to add as Athletic Director he was trying to come up with a plan to create safety for all involved but he said he could not make a recommendation when the experts in the field tell us we shouldn't go forward. Ms. Striglio, Memorial School nurse, said she looked out a month ago and on November 12th 69% of our cases came from 30% in one month and the 8% daily rate is up from 2% positivity rate to now 3.11%. Ms. Kuehn reiterated that she could not go against medical advice.

Mr. Minnelli said he spoke to Ms. Kuehn about postponing the season. They discussed the focus is on all students, staff and the community in keeping the balance of student athletes using intermural. He added we as a School Committee have a responsibility. There are compelling points on each side. He said this is happening in colleges too and the state of Minnesota has pushed out hockey. Mr. Paine said all coaches would be running a good intermural program, which would be very good for our coaching staff and students. Mr. Twombly said he spoke to Ms. Kuehn about Mr. Paine's intermural ideas and offered to help if he needed assistants and/or guest speakers. He also said since January this Committee has made a lot of tough decisions and

this is by far the hardest. This decision was not made in a bubble. When asked if there would be late buses for intramurals Ms. Kuehn said late buses will begin in January so anyone who wants to join can, even if they are not current basketball or hockey players. When asked, Mr. Paine said there would be no locker room use, one bathroom per team and limit the size of the rosters to only 12 players and a maximum of two coaches. He said there would be no spectators. Ms. Peters asked if someone got COVID would everyone be quarantined and if someone gets it at basketball would their classes also be quarantined. Ms. Roach, high school nurse said it would be on a case-by-case basis as it is with all quarantining; there are protocols in place that need to be followed. Ms. Peters asked about different scenarios, one being if a player on another team was diagnosed with COVID would our active team participants need to quarantine? Mr. Paine said if they were active in the game then yes. Ms. Peters commented that we are a small district we could essentially have most of the school go remote and we have been successful in keeping students in school so as a small district we could be wiped out. Ms. Fleming said it has been stated that part of our reasoning for not participating is because we don't want people outside our community in our buildings. The way the virus is transmitted it's when people are in close contact. The risk is not so much outsiders being in the building because the virus lingers in the gym and carries over and Mr. Paine's plan calls for segregating the people in the gym. If Mr. Paine or a nurse could comment on the rationale. Ms. Kuehn said we don't let people in the buildings because of exposure. It is when the people are coming in from other towns there is potential for close contacts. We don't let parents in the buildings because of transmission rate. We are trying to keep our staff safe. We have been very strict with these protocols and that is the reason for our success. Mr. Paine talked about his plan, which included visiting team one team plays then everyone leaves the building for cleaning; numbered seat assignments; bring their own water; no food; one bathroom with one player in at a time; mask break area; home team basically the same setup on the other side of the gym. Ms. Kuehn added that we still have the exposure problem with kids being sweaty with paper masks on and when the masks get wet and sweaty they are not functioning and not doing any good. Ms. Fleming asked that when the nurses do speak it would be helpful to have a distinction between if we opt out of participating in league but if we offer intramurals basketball is not a socially distanced sport. I think there is a disconnect. We need to make a clear distinction of the risks of the sport and the risk of outsiders coming in. Ms. Keegan, Jacobs School nurse, said having outsiders in is increasing numbers and with extra exposure rate there is potential for a higher transmission rate. If they play intramurals they will be with the students that they are in school with. I don't believe Mr. Paine's plan was addressed the day that he met with the Board of Health, the school nurses and the Superintendent but it was a unanimous decision between all of you that day not to hold sports and to cancel the winter sports without hearing your plan. Ms. Kuehn said that is correct Mr. Paine had the plan but he did not present it because he felt he could not put on a safe program. Ms. Roach, Hull High School nurse, added that if you are bringing in more people you are increasing the risk and the exposure, it is just numbers, and that is probably partly why Hull has done so well because we are small and we have been able to stay hybrid. When students come in to my office they do express that it is extremely difficult on remote days. She said she has heard that from almost every single student that they hate remote learning and want to get back to school. Mr. Twombly asked if we delayed the decision what would be the consequences. Ms. Kuehn said she doesn't think the recommendation will change in a two weeks or three weeks. I think we give our kids false hope and I would rather concentrate on a comprehensive program in-house and be with their friends for their social and emotional wellbeing we could run a program here for them.

Ben Olivieri, Senior Class President said that in this past fall the boys and girls soccer teams played in successful seasons with not one single COVID scare. Also the ice hockey team played club, which is out of town and were able to walk in to school the next day with no COVID

scares. Youth basketball started up in Hanover. He said it makes no sense why we can't play here when we are going outside of the town compete. Ms. Kuehn stated she understands what Ben is saying but we did have some scares at the beginning of the school year with soccer and with hockey, our first cases at the high school were involved with that. She said she can't control what happens elsewhere but she can control what happens in our buildings. She said that as the high school nurse said, kids are struggling on remote days. I am trying to keep school open so all students can have access to their education. Ms. Fleming said she was curious and asked Ben how many signatures he has from his petition and said she appreciates what he did. Ben said 580 and people who comment had positive feedback. Jennifer Olivieri, parent, in August we never thought we would be here, we thought we would be remote. Why can't we start that way with sports, just practicing with their coaches? The come January if there are COVID cases then we stop. Now there is no hope. When mental illness is ramped, we don't need to have players in our schools. They all play elsewhere anyways. Ms. Kuehn reiterated that it is about exposure. The amount of high school students with D's and F's is staggering. We need to do everything we can to keep our buildings open. Ms. Fleming asked Mr. Paine about the eligibility rate how the students did academically for the fall coming into now. Mr. Paine said one student would have been academically ineligible. Ms. Kuehn said that is typical with every season. We have followed the recommendation of the medical professionals. With people suggesting that we open them up now and let anyone in our buildings now. Do people think that is OK? It is not, we need to limit our exposure as much as we can. It's the right thing to do. We need to look at all our students and their access to education. Education is our first priority.

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: None

Move for Hull High School to participate in basketball and hockey as members of the South Shore League for the 2020-2021 season with the full expectation that if at the state level or the MIAA recommends closing the league it ceases.

Not seconded. No vote was taken.

Ms. Fleming opened the meeting up for questions from community members. When asked why Hull is the only town in the league not playing Ms. Peters said she believed that we are the only south shore town having our elementary students in school 4 days a week. Ms. Kuehn added that Randolph, Rockland and Abington are currently remote. Abington has 100 COVID cases in a 72 hour period and Rockland as 22 staff and students with COVID. Mr. Paine added that both Rockland and Abington are delaying their winter sports season till later. Ms. Kuehn also said that other towns are waiting for MIAA to cancel the season. The community member's comments were in favor of holding winter sports for various reasons, including: the safety protocols in place now; kids are already playing these sports elsewhere; sports are a safe environment with locker rooms being closed; and keeping student athletes engaged and not get together socially.

Ms. Fleming asked Mr. Paine if it was possible to be in favor of winter sports as part of the South Shore League but then withdraw if we think it is too risky. If we vote in favor of starting in the league and then reassess in two weeks like we did in the fall. Mr. Paine said no we can withdraw at any time, in the fall schools did withdraw because of issues with the schools. Other community members were also in favor of letting the season start and if things get worse, cancel at that time. Ms. Paine said to be totally honest, is it too bad, yes but in my heart I could not put anyone in harm's way, not the students, custodians, coaches. I don't feel comfortable doing that. Ms. Kuehn said she would like the School Committee to comment on how could we not listen now when we have worked with the Board of Health and school nurses from the beginning of COVID. Do we throw their advice right out the window and have them not trust us. We are in a pandemic. Ms.

Fleming added, my hope is that even if we go against the Board of Health they will be there for us but at the same time we have to do what MIAA has said.

Ms. Fleming stated that she is cutting off commenting now at 8:47 pm.

Ms. Fleming stated that there was a motion on the table and we as a School Committee will vote for participation of Hull High School in the South Shore League athletics, namely basketball and hockey. There was no second.

Mr. Minelli said there is a lot of passion here and we want to get this right. I just want to say as a Committee member I hear what the Superintendent is saying. I hear what the Athletic Director is saying and I hear what the Board of Health is saying and I think when I look back at the policy and procedure manual in terms of what we have ownership of as a School Committee I know that we have to approve the participation in athletics but I also recognize in that same language that the Superintendent has to authority to establish safety and well-being guidelines that would govern our participation. He said he knows some districts are revisiting this on December 28th. He asked if there would be any benefit to a two-step process where we discuss tonight, vote on a conditional plan but if we did revisit in two weeks. It might be too early to fish or cut bait but when you go against a Superintendent, Athletic Director and Board of Health that have all been right up till now and they are all lined up on one side of the field that takes a lot of courage. My question is how can we make this the most informed decision? Ms. Peters stated that she does not think this is a School Committee decision either. Ms. Kuehn has spoken and has been our advocate and if we have to pivot to remote it is going to Ms. Kuehn's decision to do that. She said she hears what everyone is saying but we are literally in the middle of a pandemic and no one cares more about this than Ms. Kuehn and Mr. Paine. She stated that she does not think personally that it is a School Committee decision; I think it is not our decision. I think the decision Ms. Kuehn made needs to stand. I don't think this is something we should vote on. Ms. Fleming stated that she knows we did have a conversation earlier with our counsel and her initial opinion is that this is our purview, and it is. And we would be derelict in our role as School Committee members not to vote on this. Ms. Peters said she was pretty certain that counsel said it was grey. I am giving you my opinion on the grey, if your opinion is that it is in our purview then that is certainly fine. Ms. Fleming said she does think we made decisions on every other aspect of our school opening that it is our place to make a decision and if it is premature to make a decision tonight I appreciate that but I think at the very least in our capacity as elected members of the School Committee who represent the public we shouldn't just pass it off and not do anything here. We've got a public forum. Ms. Peters said I agree with you but we should have it earlier in the process. Ms. Fleming stated that she was informed by the Superintendent that it wasn't our decision. That she controlled the meeting, she controlled the buildings and we could not vote on it because I offered multiple times because I felt that it was more appropriate for us to be voting on this as we have voted on other aspects of our school opening, as residents of Hull, as parents, as representatives. So it is absolutely our purview and Ms. Kuehn and I have worked so closely together throughout all of this. I respect her tremendously. On this particular decision I disagree that it's the right thing to do. At the very least if we vote in favor of the Superintendents plan that's terrific but that's our role to do that.

Mr. Twombly said he read the policy and it did look like Ms. Kuehn is the person to make the decision. I've been on the Committee for 10 years. I get it it's not good. We didn't cause this virus and we don't control this virus. I look at it like what if they lose their mom or dad. We have a big responsibility. We are responsible for teachers, lunch workers, bus drivers. How many people are we going to sacrifice because of this? Some of the best colleges in the entire country

didn't have sports. Fall sports were outside. The cases now are out of control. We are not experts. We are following what our experts are telling us. I feel bad for the athletes but that's the way it stands.

Mr. Patenaude said that they are students first, that is the focus. All levels have done so much, hybrid and middle and high school and all in at Jacobs. He said he thinks the risk is increased by people coming in and going out of town and going to informal, unregulated gatherings before or after a game. We have heard from parents and students that they are just going to do clubs so if that is the case then you have other opportunities. We are all called to make sacrifices. If you are going to be participating in AAU or other teams wear your mask and be cautious so everyone can play sports later in the year.

Ms. Fleming stated that when we make decisions I like to make them with knowledge now. There is a risk playing with others. We know firsthand what our falls sports were like and in school they regiment themselves and COVID is happening in informal gatherings not games. There is a social emotional toll and also an equity issue but some of our students won't be able to have a chance. MIAA has strict protocols. I hate to kick the can down the road but like we did with opening the schools, I think teams can be assembled and can perform now and put students in place, if numbers spike we stop but if not we keep diligent. We can revisit in a few weeks. I am more inclined to do this with sports. To miss a season for seniors is will be detrimental on their college admissions, they will miss opportunities for them, they may never play their sport again, this is their season and they may never get the opportunity again.

Substitute motion.

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: None

Move that to the extent that Hull High School is part of the South Shore League to be able to begin practicing.

Not seconded. No vote was taken.

Mr. Paine stated that Abington and Rockland are reevaluating their sports on December 28th because they are currently in remote. The Superintendent and School Committee discussed reevaluating our programs on and adding a School Committee meeting on December 28th so they could reassess the situation. They discussed ways to start the process to allow students to practice and have Ms. Kuehn come back on December 28th with a metrics that is data driven and winter sports will be revisited. Mr. Twombly stated that hockey is a co-op with Cohasset so the kids would be practicing with other towns.

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: Ernest Minelli

Move for Hull High School to participate in the winter athletic events hockey and basketball, both boys and girls for the 2020-21 season.

No vote was taken.

Substitute motion

Motion: Stephanie Peters

Second: Jennifer Fleming

Move to continue with our season paused and revisit it on December 28th with Ms. Kuehn and Mr. Paine with the data again and they continue on the path of trying to get the kids into practices and offering opportunities to do things after school.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Stephanie Peters, Jennifer Fleming, Lucas Patenaude, Ernest Minelli and David Twombly

Schedule a School Committee meeting on Monday, December 28, 2020 to discuss winter sports and have the Superintendent come back with some metrics.

5.6 NEASC Conference

Nicole Nosek, Hull High School principal, reported that NEASC has changed the way they are working during the pandemic and we are now scheduled for a two day mini visit on March 18th and 19th, 2021. She said that a teacher, Karissa Connors, went out on a NEASC visit to see what it is all about. Ms. Peters stated that she was asked to participate in the last visit and that if anyone is asked to participate this time you do it.

5.7 Memorandum of Agreement with HTA (Paraprofessionals)

Ms. Kuehn said that the paraprofessional negotiations have settled and a vote is necessary to accept the Memorandum of Agreement.

Motion: David Twombly

Second: Stephanie Peters

Move to accept the Memorandum of Agreement with HTA (Paraprofessionals)

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: David Twombly, Stephanie Peters, Ernest Minelli, Lucas Patenaude, and Jennifer Fleming

6.0 School Committee Policy Issues

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: Stephanie Peters

Move to approve the following policy for first reading.

JLIAA Teacher-Student Relations

JLIAB Staff-Student Relations

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Jennifer Fleming, Stephanie Peters, David Twombly, Ernest Minelli and Lucas Patenaude

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: Lucas Patenaude

Move to approve the following policy for second reading.

FFA Memorials

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Jennifer Fleming, Lucas Patenaude, Stephanie Peters, David Twombly and Ernest Minelli

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: David Twombly

Move to approve the following policies for second reading.

JBB Educational Equity

JEB Entrance Age

JLA Student Insurance Program

JLC Student Health Services and Requirements

JLCA Physical Examinations of Students

JLCD Administering Medication to Students

JM Selection of Class Valedictorian and Salutatorian

JMB Scholarships

JP Student Gifts and Solicitations

JQ Student Fees, Fines and Charges

JRD Student Photographs

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Jennifer Fleming, David Twombly, Ernest Minelli, Lucas Patenaude and Stephanie Peters

7.0 Old Business

7.1 Subcommittees

- Paraprofessional negotiations are over
- The Economic Development Committee met with Board of Selectmen, Town Manager and a lot of other in town to discuss CIF and tax incentives. Mr. Minelli said the Chamber of Commerce is very active.
- ARC – Anti Racism Committee met and will hold subcommittees to look at priorities and long term Strategic Plan.
- Custodian negotiations will start in January

7.2 Donations

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: David Twombly

Move to accept the following donation:

- \$300 from anonymous to be used as a scholarship for a named preschool student's tuition.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Jennifer Fleming, David Twombly, Lucas Patenaude, Stephanie Peters and Ernest Minelli

Motion: Jennifer Fleming

Second: David Twombly

Move to accept the following donation:

- \$518.19 from Matthew & Chelsea Accetta to pay down all student meal balances greater than \$10.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Jennifer Fleming, David Twombly, Ernest Minelli, Stephanie Peters and Lucas Patenaude

8.0 New Business

None

9.0 Correspondence to and Comments from School Committee Members

None

10.0 Executive Session

No need

11.0 Adjournment

Motion: Stephanie Peters

Second: David Twombly

Move to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 pm.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Stephanie Peters, David Twombly, Lucas Patenaude, Ernest Minelli and Jennifer Fleming

These Minutes of a meeting of
the Hull School Committee were
approved and adopted by the
Committee on January 11, 2021

Lucas Patenaude, Secretary
Hull School Committee