

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
MAY 25, 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at 6:06 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Kenneth Haag, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Karen Jew, Vice Chairman
 Colleen Micavich, Secretary
 Alison Marsano (arrived at 6:40 p.m.)
 Kelly Zakar

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

A request was made to amend the agenda by adding a non-public session to discuss non-union compensation.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE AGENDA BE ADJUSTED AS REQUESTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his nomination of Rebecca Gelinis for the position of Case Manager at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy. Ms. Gelinis comes to the district with her Bachelors in English from Plymouth State and Masters in Special Education from Grand Canyon University. She will be at a masters step 8 and a salary of \$57,314.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT’S NOMINATION OF REBECCA GELINAS FOR THE POSITION OF CASE MANAGER AT THE CAPTAIN SAMUEL DOUGLASS ACADEMY AT A MASTERS STEP 8 AND A SALARY OF FIFTY SEVEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED FOURTEEN DOLLARS (\$57,314)
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

The Board was provided with a copy of the Notice of Public Hearing for the hearing conducted on January 12, 2022. The second to last line should have read “lease/contingency bond warrant article”. The voters passed the bond, but as a result of not putting the word “bond” into the notice, we did not procedurally notice the bond hearing correctly. The special meeting scheduled for June 9th will discuss that procedural

defect. The intent is not necessarily to speak about the bond, but rather to determine if the citizenry will approve moving forward beyond the procedural defect.

Superintendent Corey suggested, in the event the first public hearing concludes prior to the 6:30 start time of the second public hearing, that the Board move forward with other items on the agenda until reaching the publicized start time.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE AGENDA BE ADJUSTED BY MOVING THE PRINCIPALS REPORT TO APPEAR PRIOR TO THE SECOND PUBLIC HEARING
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brookline School Board [April 20, 2022](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 3, line 27; replace “Mr.” with “Ms.”
- Page 8, Line 29; replace “here” with “her”
- Page 10, Line 13; replace “Member Zakar” with “Vice Chairman Jew”
- Page 10, Line 44; replace “Vice Chairman Jew” with “Member Zakar”

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-1

Member Micavich Abstained

Brookline School Board – **Non-Public** [April 20, 2022](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-1

Member Micavich Abstained

Brookline School Board - **Special**. [May 11, 2022](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-1

Member Marsano Abstained

PUBLIC HEARING

- **Special Education Expendable Trust Fund** – this Public Hearing is being held in accordance with RSA 198:20-c to expend funds from the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE BOARD RECESS UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-0

The Board recessed at 6:15 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS) highlighted items from the report (included as part of the [agenda](#) packet).

Current enrollment is 591. Friday, May 27th, is early release. Aimsweb testing will be conducted at both buildings in June. Grade 6 graduation is scheduled for June 16, 2022. Last day of school for students is June 17, 2022 (early release will be prior to lunch).

Vice Chairman Jew commented on the 6th grade visit to the Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS) and asked for clarification Step-up is not planned. Principal Molinari stated the PowerSchool parent portal would be used to register and upon completion, the teacher identified. Being considered is whether Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA) would be visiting RMMS to talk to the 3rd grade students with a teacher or whether the students will be bused to CSDA. It is believed Principal Bouley will visit RMMS.

Asked about the growth in enrollment, Principal Molinari noted the year started at around 325 at RMMS and 240 at CSDA. More students are expected to be gained over the summer months.

Member Micavich questioned the NESDEC prediction for kindergarten (97) and the actual of 80. Superintendent Corey spoke of kindergarten as the most difficult to predict because it is based on birth rate, move-ins, and building permits, which tend to fluctuate. That number will likely grow over the summer. Although he would not expect it to reach 97, he does expect it will increase.

Member Zakar spoke of having spoken with Brookline residents regarding School Resource Officers (SROs). She questioned the process for studying/considering the topic, in light of the current tragedy as well as behavioral/conduct issues. Superintendent Corey suggested the item be included on the August agenda. Leading up to that, he can reach out to William Quigley III, Chief of Police, for input. A discussion can occur at the Board level. From a budget standpoint, the item could be reviewed as an additional line within the operating budget, or the cost presented as a separate warrant article so that voters could specifically choose if they wish to see funds allocated.

In Hollis, the district reimburses the Town for the cost of the officer. At times, some portion of the cost has been able to be covered through grant funds. In the COOP, there is an SRO and in Hollis there is a

Community Resource Officer. Those different titles allow greater flexibility for the Chief when we hit the summer months, etc.

PUBLIC HEARING

- **Special Meeting – Bond Hearing Notice** – the purpose of this public hearing is to vote to cure the procedurally defective bond hearing notice related to the \$1,500,000 bond for an elevator and security improvements project at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE BOARD RECESS UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-0

The Board recessed at 6:30 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 6:40 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

Policy [BEDH](#) allows for a maximum of 15 minutes to hear public comment. The period may be extended by a majority vote of the Board. Individual speakers will be allotted three minutes per person. Speakers may not relinquish allotted time to another speaker.

No public comment was offered.

DISCUSSION

- Revenue & Expense Reports

Superintendent Corey stated, as of 5-16-22, on the expense side, the district is running in the black at \$95,396. The district has been able to narrow the encumbrances, identify areas where we could experience cost avoidance and had savings due to the inability to fill some open positions and the ability to fill some of the open positions at a lower cost.

On the revenue side of the ledger, projected is a balance of \$293,622. With the Unreserved Fund Balance (UFB) for Food Service of \$197,074, the result is a total UFB of \$191,944.

With this amount, the district is able to fund the FY23 trusts approved by the voters (\$75,000 to the Maintenance Trust Fund and \$25,000 to the Special Education Trust Fund). The maximum fund balance the district is permitted to retain would be \$140,161. The resulting projected fund balance would be a negative (\$48,217). That would be offset by a vote of the Board to utilize an amount up to \$40,000 from the Special Education Trust Fund.

The Business Manager continues to believe this to be a conservative estimate. The anticipation is that the gap can be further closed between the balance of the Special Education Trust and the expenses. That is the reasoning for requesting an *up to* amount.

If, for any reason, there is a change, the intent would be to reduce the Retained Fund Balance. This year that was set at \$129,000. It has been set, for the moment, at the maximum allowed for planning purposes. Should the Board wish to maintain the \$129,000 there would be approx. \$11,000 to reduce the \$48,217 over and above the allocation from the Special Education Trust Fund.

Chairman Haag noted funding of the Special Education Trust is one of the warrants that is voted upon yearly. The Retained Fund Balance is the new mechanism that replaced the Contingency Fund. It is an all encompassing fund that can be utilized as needed. The district is permitted to retain “any unused portion of the year-end unassigned general funds, from the preceding fiscal year in subsequent fiscal years, provided that the amount of year-end unassigned general funds does not exceed, in any fiscal year, 2.0 percent of the current fiscal year’s net assessment under RSA 198:5.”

Asked, Superintendent Corey stated the recommendation of the Business Administrator is to utilize up to \$40,000 out of the Special Education Trust Fund. The belief is that, over the next 6 weeks, the gap will be lessened. If necessary, the recommendation would be to allocate less to the Retained Fund Balance rather than any additional funds from the Special Education Trust.

- Curriculum Update

Superintendent Corey informed the Board Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug has been putting extensive time into the website. She will bring forward a presentation at next month’s meeting, which will display all of the different grade level curriculum, identification of supplemental materials, etc. that can be found on the website. Gathering that data is what the faculty focused on during the early release days this year. Those documents are intended to be living documents that will continue to be updated over time.

With regard to art and music, the intent is to move existing employees to full-time positions (Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)). There are currently 4 part-time employees between the buildings. Two of those individuals (1 in art and 1 in music) are moving on from the district. This is something that has been experienced on a regular basis. The district has become a training ground for these positions. Through the efforts of the Principals, a schedule has been created that will work for both buildings so that we can provide the required prep time, lunch time, and pieces that go into those two elements for planning purposes. The hope is that by moving to FTE positions, which from a budget standpoint is basically a wash, this change will provide for a more cohesive curriculum in those areas, which is such a strength for many of our students. Periodic updates will be provided next year to keep the Board apprised of the status and bring forward any concerns.

Chairman Haag asked for clarification there were two 0.6 FTE positions for each role. He questioned if the growth that would be seen would be with the option of benefits as FTEs. Superintendent Corey stated a cost growth would be seen there, but the part-time people received pro-rated, personal and sick time. There were those expenses over 4 people as opposed to there now being 2 individuals.

Superintendent Corey commented on what the district outlays every couple of years in new professional development, training, etc., noting, from a cost point of view, it is basically a wash. If we can maintain 2 people in those positions over time, we will gain the benefits of the longevity.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the approval of the general assurances for grant submissions to the Department of Education

Each year, the Administration brings forward a large document that outlines the procedures that have to be followed (included as part of the agenda packet). This did not exist as of 3-4 years ago as it falls under the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent's certifications that they must adhere to the assurances. Because of things that were occurring outside of our district, the State Department of Education put this in place to ensure this was being discussed with the boards.

The Board's approval permits the Chairman to place his initials and signature on the document. All grants, IDEA (special education funds), Title II (professional development/reducing class sizes) and Title IV (technology grant) are administered by the Administration (Superintendent / Assistant Superintendent / Business Manager). There is some redundancy in the accounting that forces the communication between the various entities to ensure the funds are being expended in accordance with requirements.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIRMAN TO REPRESENT THE SCHOOL BOARD, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT HAS CONSULTED WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, IN FURTHERANCE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD'S OBLIGATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE ENUMERATED IN [RSA 189:1-A](#), AND PURSUANT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD'S OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL FUNDS THE DISTRICT WILL BE RECEIVING AND OF THE GENERAL ASSURANCES, REQUIREMENTS AND DEFINITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SAID FEDERAL PROGRAMS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take on the questions proposed by the Business Administrator in the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund memo

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR FOR AN EXPENDITURE OF AN AMOUNT UP TO FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS FROM THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TRUST TO ADDRESS UNEXPECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION COSTS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW

ON THE QUESTION

The Business Administrator has requested the Board review three items:

- What is the up to amount the Board would like to use for the Special Education Trust?
- Is there a targeted amount the Board would like to return to the taxpayers?
- Does the Board want the Retained Fund Balance to remain at the maximum amount of \$140,161 prior to any adjustment needed to zero out the deficit?

Member Zakar asked if approving the up to \$40,000 amount from the Special Education Trust and maintaining the maximum Retained Fund Balance of \$140,161, would leave anything to be returned to the taxpayers.

Superintendent Corey responded it would depend on the actual year-end Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB). If the estimates are correct, \$40,000 is required to be utilized from the Special Education Trust, and the Retained Fund Balance is \$140,161, there would not be funds remaining to return to the tax base. Another example was provided of the need to utilize the \$40,000 from the Special Education Trust, a decision of the Board for the amount of Retained Fund Balance to be \$129,000, and if the projected UFB is correct, there would be approx. \$11,000 that could be returned to the tax base.

Chairman Haag questioned if there is a line within the budget withholding an amount to be returned to the tax base. Superintendent Corey stated his belief that is taken into account. Asked what the original amount was that was anticipated to be needed to cover unexpected special education costs, he stated it began at \$200,000, was reduced to an up to amount of \$125,000 in March, and now is at an amount up to \$40,000. It is believed that number will narrow. The Board could make that motion now and revisit it in June.

Member Marsano questioned the expected return to the tax base at the time the amount needed to cover the unexpected special education costs was at \$125,000. The response was theoretically it was probably still in the neighborhood of \$0-\$10,000.

Member Micavich asked for clarification if we gave \$140,000 back to the taxpayers it would be about \$17 to each taxpayer. She suggested the administrative costs would far outweigh the return.

Member Marsano explained the funds would not be returned to individual taxpayers but to the tax base to offset/reduce what has to be raised through taxes to support next year's budget. She would like to see an amount similar to what was projected being returned.

Superintendent Corey commented on the Retained Fund Balance being the only safety net in place. In prior years there was a contingency fund. When the question of the Retained Fund Balance was put before the voters, it was stated that, with passage of that, the contingency fund would go away. Were the Retained Fund Balance to be set at the same number as this year (\$129,000), there would likely be the ability to return the \$10,000.

Asked, Superintendent Corey stated the Hollis School District maintains a Contingency Fund and the COOP School District eliminated it when moving to the Retained Fund Balance.

Member Marsano commented having built up the Special Education Trust Fund with the intent of having it available for unexpected special education costs, she is in support of utilizing the fund, and although not wanting to deplete the fund, she is uncertain \$40,000 is sufficient.

Superintendent Corey noted the special education costs the district was not prepared for have now been budgeted for in next year's budget. Unless we have summer move-ins, which is a probability, we do predict we will be good. His recommendation, at this point, would be to follow the guidance of the Business Administrator and use the same amount for the Retained Fund Balance (\$129,000), and let the dust settle. Another Revenue & Expense Report will be provided in June. By having this discussion it is made clear to the auditors that this is what the Board wished to happen. Asked what the balance is in the trust, he stated his recollection it is at \$280,000 or \$285,000.

Chairman Haag stated agreement with the recommendation of the Superintendent as well as the desire expressed to look to return \$10,000 to the tax base.

Asked if there would be the requirement for an additional public hearing should the amount to be utilized from the trust change, Superintendent Corey stated if the dollar amount were to drastically change it would. If necessary, that could be incorporated into the June meeting. The Business Administrator is very conservative, and he believes there is the likelihood the \$40,000 number will be reduced and, if the Retained Fund Balance is set at \$129,000, there is the potential of returning between \$10,000 - \$20,000 to the tax base.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding District's policy **ACE** – Procedural Safeguards: Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap/Disability

Given its first reading;

Vice Chairman Jew stated the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) has policy recommendations based on legislation that has passed. This one is a priority. Existing language (struck through) was replaced with the last paragraph (underlined).

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY ACE –
PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF
HANDICAP/DISABILITY, AS PRESENTED**

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding District's policy **IGE** – Parental Objections to Specific Course Material

Given its first reading;

Vice Chairman Jew noted this policy is new to the Brookline School District. Both the Hollis and COOP school districts have the policy in place.

Member Zakar spoke of having reviewed the recommendations of the NHSBA for this type of policy and questioned if there is a reason that before going to the building Principal or designee the discussion would not start at the teacher/instructor level. Member Micavich commented her impression of the language is that it is addressing the point when a parent has decided they do not want their child to participate. You could likely get to that decision by any means you choose. If you get to the point of not wanting your child to participate you would meet with the Principal or designee, which is a better person than putting teachers on the line; you need an administrator. Otherwise you would have individuals making determinations about things that could differ teacher by teacher.

Vice Chairman Jew remarked you want the building administrator in each building looped in on any objection regardless.

Member Zakar commented knowing that the policy already exists in Hollis she spent some time looking for the form and was unable to locate it. The only form she could find was to opt out of standardized testing. It would be helpful to see what the form looks like.

Superintendent Corey stated his awareness the COOP School District recently changed their policy to read “a notice in writing”.

Member Zakar noted the NHSBA guidelines state this notification and request shall be in writing and that the building principal and parent/guardian must mutually agree to the alternative instruction. She agrees with the Superintendent it would be appropriate to change the language.

Vice Chairman Jew stated she would bring the recommendation back to the Policy Committee.

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY IGE – PARENTAL OBJECTIONS TO SPECIFIC COURSE MATERIAL, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

- To see what action the Board will take regarding District’s policy **KEC** – Policy on Reconsideration of Instructional Material

Given its first reading;

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY KEC – POLICY ON RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**

ON THE QUESTION

The third paragraph should be amended by replacing “Hollis School Board” with “Brookline School Board”.

Member Marsano stated the need to define the makeup of the Book Review Committee.

Member Zakar suggested identifying the anticipated steps to be taken. Chairman Haag stated that to be more of a procedure than policy.

**MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (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 JEW**

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

Yea: Colleen Micavich, Kelly Zakar, Alison Marsano, Karen Jew, Kenneth Haag

5

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 7:18 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 7:26 p.m.

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Superintendent's recommendation for non-union personnel compensation

MOTION BY MEMBER MICAVICH TO APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION FOR COMPENSATION OF NON-UNION PERSONNEL

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADJOURN

SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

The May 25, 2022 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____