

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 2020**

Present: Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Chair
Ms. Catherine Bowen, Secretary
Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Tara Donner
Ms. Evelyn Gomez
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to Order

Andrea Prestwich called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

1.2 Citizens' Concerns

Ann Paretti, Co-President of the Wellington PTO Student Care Board asked when the Aftercare Programs would have access to the buildings. Superintendent Phelan suggested he reach out to her by phone.

1.3 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.4 Chair's Report

In the interest of time, the Chair did not provide a report.

1.5 Superintendent's Report

In the interest of time, the Superintendent did not provide a report.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias welcomed Megan Horling. Megan is a rising senior at Belmont High School and member of Scout Troop 304 in Belmont. She is working towards her Eagle Scout rank and is on track to become one of the first female Eagle Scouts in the Boys Scouts of America organization. Megan has been working on her Eagle Scout Service Project that will help her community.

Megan has designed "Ear Savers", which will help make wearing a mask safer and more comfortable. "Ear Savers" are made with a laser cutter and have hooks that pull the ear loops to the

back of the head, releasing some of the strain on the ears. They also pull the mask closer to the face, closing air gaps.

Megan's project will provide over 5,000 Ear Savers for Belmont schools staff and students plus some extra for free, as a community benefit. The design comes from Glowforge and is publicly accessible. Volunteers from Troop 304 have worked over 150 hours creating the "Ear Savers", which will be delivered to schools next week.

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 September Opening of School Update

Superintendent Phelan stated an email was sent to families today. The email provided information on upcoming meetings over the course of the week and meetings Principals will have at the school level with families about opening remotely and eventually hybrid.

The Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) is meeting with Ken Kramer, Director of Student Services, Jonathan Libby, Assistant Director of Student Services, Patric Barbieri, Director of LABBB and Brianna Wall, Director of Preschool on September 10. This meeting will be an opportunity for parents to ask questions regarding how the Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be implemented along with other services.

Belmont teachers have been in Professional Development courses for several days. Students with complex needs will start school on September 16.

The elementary Principals have sent class assignments and the Middle School and High School schedules will go out this week. Start and end times for the school day will remain the same. This decision was because once schools are open in hybrid, the buses will be able to service all six schools.

School administrators have been working with the Food Service Director on how to provide boxed lunches for students who are in school half days. There will be a meeting on September 10 to finalize plans.

3.2 Fall Athletics (Vote)

Jim Davis, Director of Athletics provided an overview of the fall 2020 Belmont High School Athletics. (Document: "Fall 2020 BHS Athletics.pdf")

The Middlesex League Superintendents and Middlesex League Athletic Directors recently met to review the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), guidance on fall sports offerings. Using these guidelines, Belmont hopes to allow the following sports to run boys and girls programs during the fall of 2020: Field Hockey, Soccer, Golf and Cross Country. Guidance provided by EEA, DESE and MIAA will be followed and sport specific modifications will be in place. Mr. Davis relayed several of the points outlined in his memo provided to the School Committee ("COVID_19_2020_Fall_Middlesex_League_Athletic_Offerings.memo.pdf").

Because the district is returning to learning in a remote manner, a vote of approval of the School Committee is required to accept the athletic plan.

Mr. Davis discussed the different ways the plays would change for each sport and the safety measures. For example, during practice and contests, there will be increased physical distancing. Contests will take place outdoors whenever possible. Activities will be shortened whenever possible with fewer participants taking part. There will be no sharing of equipment between participants. Practices will be limited to three per week for varsity and two per week for sub varsity. Players will not be moved from JV to varsity or varsity to JV. There will be a limit of one spectator per student athlete. Field use would be limited to the teams, such that intramurals would not be possible at this time.

The Committee discussed the plans as presented and Mr. Davis provided further information, including some sports he did not think were feasible for logistical reasons and that the MIAA had not recommended any reduction in league fees due to COVID. Some consideration was given to creating an intramural program, however he recommended the modified athletic program. Supt. Phelan proposed a reduction in student fees, in addition to the athletic plan. Approximately 400 students would participate in the fall program.

Extracurricular plans were still being drafted for other groups by those respective organizers, and would need to demonstrate how they would meet the needed health protocols.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Michael Crowley, the School Committee **VOTED** in favor of implementing the fall sports program in compliance with MIAA guidelines as described in tonight's presentation, not taking into consideration changes in fees.

The School Committee agreed to review athletic fees at their September 15 Finance Subcommittee meeting and to vote on athletic fees at their September 15 School Committee meeting, in keeping with School Committee policy guidelines.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee will be meeting on Tuesday mornings on the off week from School Committee meetings. Given that the School Committee may be meeting every Tuesday, it was decided to schedule the first Finance Subcommittee meeting on September 15 at 8:00 a.m.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

The Policy and Procedure Subcommittee will be scheduling some meetings in the near future.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on September 17 at 9:00 a.m.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee met last week to discuss the Warrant Article and will meet again next week.

4.6 Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee

The Middle and High School Building Committee will meet tomorrow at 8:00 a.m.

4.7 Community Path Committee

The Community Path Committee recently met with the designer.

4.8 Financial Task Force II

The Financial Task Force II met last week and will meet on September 18.

4.9 Rink Working Group

There was no report from Rink Working Group.

4.10 EDCO

EDCO will hold a meeting on September 17.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Consent Agenda

None

5.2 Personnel Business

None

5.3 Business Items

For future business, Superintendent Phelan reminded the School Committee of their recent discussion on creating a subcommittee on equity. He suggested adding the topic to the School Committee agenda on September 15 or September 22. He noted another option is to discuss it at a Policy Subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Donner noted the School Committee calendar needed to reflect the current meeting practice. Superintendent Phelan expressed an interest in meeting in person and that the IT staff had been preparing for hybrid meetings. The Committee agreed to discuss meeting format changes at a future meeting. School Committee member Tara Donner suggested inviting the Town's Internet Technology Advisory Committee representatives to a School Committee meeting for a discussion on technology that would allow the School Committee to meet in person while community members could take part in a virtual meeting. Ms. Bowen conveyed that this was a discussion among MASC members and that there were access and equity issues the committee should take into consideration.

5.4 Approval of Minutes

August 4, 2020

August 6, 2020

August 11, 2020

August 27, 2020

On a motion offered by Michael Crowley and seconded by Amy Checkoway, the School Committee **VOTED** unanimously on a roll call vote to approve the minutes of August 4, 2020, August 6,

2020 and August 11, 2020 with the understanding that should a member see a needed change, it may come before the Committee to be voted anew.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was voted 5-0-1 on a roll call vote to approve the minutes of August 27, 2020, Ms. Gomez abstained.

6. ADJOURN

*On a motion offered by Amy Checkoway and seconded by Evelyn Gomez, it was **VOTED** unanimously on a roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted by



Catherine Bowen, Secretary