

*Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2020
Virtual Meeting*

Present: Mrs. Leah Miller, Mrs. Ruth Lynch, Mr. John Geary, Mrs. Libby Corbo and Mr. Pete Miraglia

Also, Present: Matthew Ferron, Thomas Raab, Debbie St. Ives, Keith Guyette, Matthew Paquette, Daniel Birolini, Jane DeGrenier, Michael Oates, Matthew Plummer, Patricia Smith, Andrea Sheehan, Kate Sullivan; Diane King, Bill Scarpelli, and Caroline Jackson

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 4:01pm by Mrs. Miller

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes:

September 14, 2020: Motion was entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the September 14, 2020 School Committee Executive Session minutes as written. The motion was moved by Mrs. Lynch and seconded by Mr. Geary. The motion carried unanimously.

September 30, 2020: Mrs. Miller requested the minutes be postponed until the next meeting.

Report of the Superintendent presented by Mr. Ferron:

Introduction of new SEPAC Leadership

Mr. Guyette: Welcome to the two new co-chairs of SEPAC: Diane King and Kate Sullivan.

Mrs. Miller: Welcome! We have a great relationship with SEPAC and we are happy that you have stepped up. We look forward to working with you.

Introduction of new HPTA Leadership

Dr Raab: Welcome to the new President Andrea Sheehan. We met and spoke briefly last week and I am confident it will be a seamless transition. The previous President-Mrs. McCormick is going to stay on as parliamentarian to help out with the transition.

Mrs. Sheehan: Introduced Meaghan Hohl-Vice President, Kate Dauphinais-Vice President, Nicole Fly-Secretary, and Kerry Benjamin-Treasurer. We are very enthusiastic and ready to start.

Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Lynch met with Mrs. Sheehan and Mrs. Benjamin last week and are very excited to work with the new team.

CPC Project: Sylvester School

Mr. Scarpelli (Chair): CPC is the funding potential mechanism for a renovation project at the Sylvester School. The two-step preliminary plan is to use CPA funds which will be significant. This will be the biggest project ever for the CPA. Step one is to renovate the Sylvester School, so it is useful for the school department by potentially moving the administrative department out of the Salmond School into the Sylvester School. Step two is the Salmond School will be the location for affordable housing. Two separate projects. Once the Salmond School is sold, the proceeds would go to the redevelopment of the Sylvester School. There have been no applications of funding presented. The School Committee must decide if they are willing to move the staff currently at Salmond School to an appropriately renovated Sylvester building and to then turn over the Salmond building to the Selectmen so they can proceed with the sale of the property. The Board of Selectmen will also need to commit to move forward. The CPA funds will then be used to hire consultants who would work with the school department to find out what the space, technology and ADA needs would be. Once we an estimated figure, it will determine if it is financially feasible. It may not be. The ADA access alone will be an expensive

figure. There is a strong sense that the citizens of Hanover would like the building to be used and not be dismantled. Looking for a commitment from the Committee that states it is ok to move forward.

Questions:

Mr. Ferron: Last year at this time, one of our goals for the year was to develop a plan to consider what it would take to move our operation over to Sylvester School. We looked into space for the School Administration, Adult Education, Learning Center, and programs from our Family and Community Engagement Office. I am completely behind it. A lot of the leg work necessary has been done to move from a conceptual to a specific conversation. We would be happy to work with the CPC Committee and a consultant, as necessary.

Mrs. Lynch: Will this property be strictly a school department building or would it be available to other organizations in the community if they wanted to hold a function or use the facilities?

Mrs. Miller: The reason it is being brought up now is because it is the CPC funding cycle so we need to get the request in for the consultant by the end of October or we are looking at an additional year.

Mr. Scarpelli: We are trying not to lose a year and move this forward. The CPC would not be making that decision, but it is envisioned that the principle tenant would be the school department. There would be opportunities by other town committees, boards, and citizens to use the space as necessary when the school department is not.

Mr. Ferron: Agree that that is a fair statement. When the project was considered last year, we were walking through options and we were envisioning that there would be plenty of opportunities for a community and meeting space. Specifically, we were thinking of rooms being used for trainings and meetings.

Mrs. Corbo: Does the CPC Committee intend on funding the whole bill or does this need some type of community financial investment by tax-payer dollars? Also, when we previously met, there were a couple of different plans that we looked at that were staged, as far as financial impact, and was wondering the scope of the project as you envisioned it right now.

Mr. Scarpelli: Unfortunately, I cannot answer that. It is going to depend on the total cost. Ideally it would be a 3 to \$5-million-dollar project and that is something the CPC could handle, if it was agreed too. If it is a significant cost or much larger investment than that, it could be a problem for funding. There may be other resources that would have to be tapped into. I do not see the town floating a separate bond for the renovation. The principle purpose of the consultant is to figure out at a minimum what the school department needs and what those needs will cost and whether those costs are something that the CPC could handle.

Mrs. Corbo: Don't we already have that? In the stages that Victor had done, wasn't the first floor only being used and it was about \$5 million?

Mr. Ferron: There was a great deal of discrepancy between the numbers of the initial project scope. I think it is too early for us to try and guess what the number may be. We do want to take a fresh look and get an idea of what the cost will be and scale the project accordingly. Mrs. Corbo's number is close to the last estimate. I think we move forward with an open mind and the support of the School Committee to go with someone from the outside for guidance.

Mrs. Miller: All we are committing to is that if it works out for our Town (finances), we would be willing to move the administration building over to the Sylvester School. This summer we would potentially work with a consultant to map out our needs for the move to happen.

Mr. Miraglia: Sounds like this commitment the CPC is requesting tonight is pushing us in one direction. It seems like the property is not in the school departments jurisdiction. How is the public involved in this movement? Does it require a Selectmen or Town vote? What are the steps if we choose to move in this direction?

Mr. Scarpelli: The next step after the School Committee approval is to get the same commitment from the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen legally has control of the property and it is under their jurisdiction. They can decide if they want a vote to say go ahead. That is all we need at this time. The only point in which the town citizens get involved is when we present our funding application for a consultant and then, if it gets that far, when we present a much larger funding application for the work to begin.

Mrs. Miller: I feel good about making the commitment and willing to work with a consultant if everything worked out for the Town. Does anyone disagree?

Mrs. Lynch: Does not disagree and sees the need for it.

No one disagrees

Mrs. Miller: Public statement that the Committee has committed that the school department will be willing to work with a consultant funded by the CPA funds this summer, for the purpose of estimating costs to renovate for potential use of Sylvester by the school administration.

Health Services Update

Mrs. Smith discussed COVID-19 Update as of October 14, 2020. Her presentation can be found on the Hanover Public Schools website by clicking [here](#).

Mrs. Smith highlighted key data for the Town of Hanover COVID-19

- Total of Number of Cases Town-wide: 120
- Number of Cases Over last 2 Weeks: 22
- Number of School Related Positive: 5
- Number of School Related Quarantine: $19 + 44 = 63$
- All students no staff
- 63 under quarantine
- 44 hockey related

September 27 through October 10, 2020-

of Positive Cases over 2 Weeks

14-day positive	22
Daily Average	1.5
Population	14,325
14-day average cases per 100,000.	10.5 (puts Hanover over 8 and into the RED zone)

Mrs. Miller: How do you calculate the big number?

Mrs. Smith: You take the daily average divided by population x 100,000.

14 Day Average

8/15	8/29	9/12	9/26	10/10
0.2	0.2	.05	0.4	1.5
1.3	1.3	3.49	2.79	10.47

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Testing

HMS	Cedar	Center	HHS	Total	Positive
49	33	27	80	189	3

- Testing was done because individuals exhibited symptoms or had been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID.
- These numbers are just students and staff.
- 2 other positive COVID tests came from an outside testing center.
- Mobile Integrated Health is an organization run by our Hanover Fire Department.
- Usually receive results over night so the district can act on it and allow people to go back to school.

The Hockey Impact

48-Students

2-positive.

8-quarantined.

36-Hanover hockey players in quarantine.

Staff

3 Quarantine

Community-Wide

6 positive cases in 14 days

*Youth hockey cases are being looked at as a regional cluster and the State is assisting.

Questions:

Mrs. Miller: What is our positive test rate?

Mrs. Smith: I do not know but can find out.

Mr. Miraglia: If we are successful in isolating all the cases we can control, does that bring our 22 cases down to a number that keeps us yellow?

Mrs. Smith: If we take hockey out of the equation, it still puts us in red.

Mrs. Miller: When do they consider them not active cases?

Mrs. Smith: A whole new count starts Sunday. We can do a 14-day calculation every day to see where we are heading and to make sure we are moving in the right direction. The one they publish is on Wednesday at 6:00pm every 2 weeks.

Mrs. Miller: We are in the red but only have .15% of our population has COVID. The tracing this team has done with the work of the Board of Health and the testing is unbelievable. I commend you!!

Mr. Miraglia: Commends Tricia and the administrators. You are keeping the schools clean and keeping the spread at low levels. A common question in my mind is why wouldn't we close the school when we have a positive case or keep the Cohort home. Red is going to shock some people. What are the criteria for keeping the school open? How are we going to use the data? Where do we stand on this? How do we move forward carefully?

Mrs. Miller: We will move Mr. Miraglia questions to the re-opening plans discussion.

Mrs. Corbo: The simple designation of being in the red, while shocking and scary does not necessarily have direct impact on the school system. We are not required to take any action other than what we decide to do with our school district. Is that correct?

Mr. Ferron: That is correct.

Mrs. Corbo: How do you trace back a positive case? How far back do you go to determine which contacts to quarantine?

Mrs. Smith: When we have a positive case, we determine if the person is symptomatic or a-symptomatic. If they are a-symptomatic, we use day one as the test day. If they are symptomatic, we use the first day of symptoms as the first day. The infectious days goes from two days before their positive test or onset of symptoms all the way through 10 days beyond the onset of symptoms or test date.

Mrs. Miller: First indoor recess this week and kids not being able to share games, is that something they can do if both kids wash their hands? Are they going to be able to share/play games anytime soon?

Mrs. Smith: Not at the moment. We need to think of games they can play together but not manipulating the same items.

Mrs. St. Ives: Principals and the PTA are already thinking of games for the kids. The principals and teachers are trying to be creative as possible.

Mascot Selection Process:

Mr. Paquette: A public decision was made to formally retire the Indian mascot. The High School is in charge of creating a mascot adoption process. I have been thinking of some students who could represent a cross section of the students who also showcase leadership qualities. I pulled a group of four or five kids together and asked; how do we do this? How do we adopt a Mascot for the entire school system? Caroline Jackson said WE do not have to do this and WE should not do this? This should be a community decision. She has been by my side through the whole process. Caroline Jackson is a senior at Hanover High School and was invited to join us.

Ms. Jackson: Thankful to be asked to speak today. I was never proud of our Indian mascot. The biggest struggle we are going to have is community backlash. The plan being set forward will hopefully be able to eliminate that as well as create friendly competition, creativity, and a sense of anticipation. This is a great opportunity to re-up the strong sense of community that comes with being a resident in Hanover which is fading a little because of COVID. Students do not feel as connected anymore because we are not in school with our classmates five days a week and spectators can't be at the sports games anymore. In the end, the Mascot is a representative of Hanover students. I hope for your support and endorsement of the plan that Mr. Paquette is going to propose today.

Mr. Paquette: Our proposal brings in the voice of the community. It is not us making the decision. The first task is to establish a working group to create a name and logo. This working group will be made up of a wide range of community voices from faculty, students, Historical Commission, School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Boosters, HYAA and HPTA to get a cross section of our entire Hanover Community. With the School Committee endorsement, we will be sending out a letter to the community along with a google form that will invite each and every person in Hanover to submit what they feel should be the mascot name. Also, what they feel the characteristics of that name embodies along with a brief rationale of why their name adequately represents Hanover. The working group will sift through community submissions, pulling together the top three to five choices, then resubmit them back to the community requesting creative ideas for a logo associated with one of the choices. The names and collection of logos will be submitted back to the working group where they will sift through and come up with a final three to five pairings of a name and logo. Those pairings will be sent back out to the community to vote. Hopefully there is a clear winner. We plan on revealing the new mascot on New Year's Eve by lifting the curtain. The final step of the process is to come back to the School Committee for a final endorsement of the new Hanover Public Schools mascot.

Questions:

Mrs. Lynch: In your opening, this is the Mascot for the Hanover Public Schools, yet you and Mr. Paquette seem to be very focused on the importance of involving the community. If this mascot is a representative of the Hanover Public Schools, then why doesn't the Hanover Public Schools make that decision? Why not a

collaborative body made up of students? Also, when the decision was made to retire the Indian mascot, we did not involve the community. Does the HYAA have the mascot on their uniform?

Mr. Geary: Yes, they do but they will be phasing it out when allowed by the budget and a new brand is established. It hasn't been officially voted on but we most likely will follow suit with the Hanover Public schools.

Ms. Jackson: The School Committee is elected as representatives of the community, however, I think this is such a large decision and can go in so many directions that it is important to get ideas of what everyone wants. A mascot is a representative of the Hanover students.

Mrs. Lynch: When I saw the mascot process of having people vote, I wondered about the senior citizens of the community who may not be technologically sophisticated. How active are they going to be in this voting process? Will you go to the Senior Center? Will you have a voting place at the Town Hall?

Mr. Geary: I appreciate that you, Ms. Jackson, recognize that the Committee is a body of elected officials. My perspective is a lot of the backlash that Caroline mentioned earlier is that we are voters in this community and we want to have a voice in these decisions. I commend you, Ms. Jackson, for recognizing that as it is an important component in this decision-making process. Mr. Paquette you mentioned the Historical Society and I know they would like to be involved because they know the history of the Town. There were other members of our student population, our coaching staff, and our paid staff members within our school district that were also part of the change. I challenge both of you to make sure those individuals are part of the solution.

Mr. Paquette: I believe a public school should not be separated from its community and the community should not be separated from its public school. The community will always be here. It begins and ends in the same spot. Right here!

Mr. Miraglia: The Committee agreed that the community should be allowed input on retiring the mascot. I agree that we should go back to the community to extend the pool of ideas and that ultimately it is the school department who will narrow the choices for a School Committee final vote. The process should be fun and interactive.

Mr. Ferron: The team needs a little time to see how this evolves. This does need to be fun. The last six months have not been fun. Retiring the mascot was not fun. Dealing with the issues we have to deal with every day is not fun. Enjoy the process and come up with something excellent.

Ms. Jackson: People need to be engaged. We need something positive in such a negative time.

Mrs. Miller: Thank you! Come back and give us updates!

Reopening Plans

School Committee:

Mr. Geary: My proposal is to run our current hybrid model but bring back some grades full-time, in addition to Cedar that is already full-time. Phase 1-bring back 2nd, 5th, and 9th grade full-time. These are the transition years and these students have not yet been able to experience their new school. Run that through November and monitor it's affects with COVID. Phase 2-in December, if we had no COVID increases with Phase 1, bring 4th, 8th, and 12th grade back full-time. Those three cohorts will be in their last year in each building. We evaluate how it went and in January, we continue or we go backwards. The community is asking us try something new, different and unique. Proposed it today then it gives us a week or two to think about it and make a decision by the next School Committee meeting. Just an idea but wanted to put it on the table.

Mrs. Miller: LOVE the idea! It is our goal to get the students back to in-person learning. The hybrid learning is hard to manage with kids at home and in person. Anything we can do to start that process; we should think about it.

Mr. Miraglia: Fantastic idea. We should always be thinking about how we would phase this back. The safety part of this is always in the balance. What criteria do we have to move forward? The numbers despite the colors are still low. If we feel confident, then we work with all of the stakeholders to move forward.

Mrs. Corbo: Are you looking at proposals? Do we have to talk the Union about this?

Mrs. Miller: This is an open-ended conversation for the School Committee to talk about it. The Union would be 100% involved in this decision.

Mrs. Corbo: Interested to see DESE recommendations on full-time education. I would like to see how other schools are doing this too? I'm very interested in moving our kids back full-time.

Committee discussed if other district's plans should be reviewed and that they need to keep an open mind when finding the best solution for Hanover.

Mr. Ferron: This discussion is helpful to guide us. We are looking at what other districts are doing. We have a MOA with the teachers and will start talking to them. We are really open to whatever it takes to move this forward. At the moment, we are trying to get through the next few days after Mrs. Smith's report. Great sign if there is no spread that we can trace within our schools, that opens the door for us for a phased re-entry.

Mrs. Miller: Any ideas or thoughts, send her way and she will work with Mr. Ferron. They will work with the HTA on moving the process forward.

Report of Finance Department presented by Dr. Raab:

FY '21 Update:

- 1) Special Town Meeting Article 7 allows us to apply for foster care transportation reimbursement. There are a small number of foster care children in the Hanover Public Schools but it may provide a couple of thousand dollars by end of the school year. On Monday night we anticipate a positive vote by the Board of Selectmen and this will be on future agendas for the School Committee to vote as well. As long as we have the paperwork all filed with the Department of Education by December 1, 2020, we will be eligible for reimbursements this year.
- 2) Hanover has been approved for a Green Communities Grant to convert all of the lights in the cafeteria and library at the High School to LED. The new LED's will use less than have the half the electricity of the current bulbs. They can last up to 10 years.
- 3) The USDA has extended free lunch for all students thru the end of the school year. Families on remote days, have the opportunity to pick up free lunch.
- 4) Today Governor Baker is going to be submitting a new budget to the legislature. It is important to us that he maintains and honors his commitment to level funding Chapter 70.
- 5) Critical piece to our FY '21 budget is flexibility and our ability to adapt to change and make it work in whatever capacity that may be. Hiring has settled down. We have the staff in place that we have currently identified, but needs are changing day by day. This is one of the reasons we are postponing transfers as that indicates finality.

Report on Teaching and Learning presented by Principals:

Update on Technology Workshops

Mrs. St. Ives: Update on our Tech Talk Series. We conducted three workshops.

9/30 - Google Classroom facilitated by Anne Coates a teacher at Hanover High School. Viewed 637 times only 26 live participants.

10/7 - Seesaw Training hosted by Mindy Anderson, Ellen Burns and Anastasia Frank all teachers at Cedar.

10/14 - Zoom at 6:30pm by Mr. Plummer.

Thank you to each of the teachers! They are navigating this new normal by planning and being as creative as possible.

We picked the three most used platforms to help families navigate through the tools they will use most this year. All sessions were taped and posted on the website under Virtual Learning.

Action Items

No items at this time.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2020 at 4:00pm. Expected agenda items will be: Time of School Committee Meeting, FY '21 budget update, COVID Health Update

Motion by Mrs. Lynch adjourn at 5:58pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geary. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tahnee Warner

Tahnee Warner
Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary