

Wareham School Committee Meeting
February 17, 2022

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Multiservice Center.

Call to Order/Roll Call:

Present from School Committee: Joyce Bacchiocchi, Geoff Swett, Kevin Brogioli, Mary Morgan, and Apryl Rossi attended remotely. Also present, Dr. Kimberly Shaver-Hood, Superintendent (remote), Dr. Andrea Schwamb, Assistant Superintendent, and Jamie Wiksten, Recording Secretary. The meeting was recorded, broadcast and streamed live by WCTV.

The Chair lead us in the pledge of allegiance

Good News:

Mary Morgan shared that she is happy that break is next week.

The Chair shared that the elementary school concert was a great success.

Report of the Student Representative:

Adrienne Padden shared that Wareham reached the 100th day of school. Students are excited about the possibility of not wearing masks. The “tree” fundraiser is underway and a donation was made of 20 trees in memory of Kathy Gleason. The senior class is in the process of picking their Graduation song.

Wareham Middle School Presentation:

Mrs. Cote introduced five Middle School students and gave a presentation about the Middle School projects, programs, and activities that students participate in. They shared information about after school programs including intramurals. The students shared a video with the School Committee.

Wareham High School Advisory:

Brendan Tremblay and Gisele Priestly presented.

Brendan Tremblay, Freshmen, shared that lockers have been made available to everyone who requested one. About ¼ of lockers are being used, as lockers were not utilized last year due to covid and hallway passing. Gisele Priestly shared that there is a student poll regarding masks and students are feeling more comfortable to remove their masks. 242 students responded to the poll in just one day.

Ms. Rossi thanked the students for sharing their voice.

Senior Prom Vote:

Brigid Irving, President, Olivia Powers, Treasurer and Ms. Zac, Advisor presented.

They announced the need to change their venue location. The Cape Club is an indoor facility, and requested a location change at Plimoth Plantation which offers indoor/outdoor space. If it rains, there is a tent.

Adrienne Padden asked about the dress drive. Ms. Zac responded they are collecting dresses for those in need.

Adrienne Padden also inquired about outside guests. Mr. Palladino responded that the seniors will be in a better position to do this than last year and is sure the senior class officers will be down to see him soon, and will make a decision that is safe for the students.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to approve the prom venue change, seconded by Mr. Swett.

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett– yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea – 5, nay – 0, abstain - 0

VOTE: 5-0-0

Public Participation:

Deanna Semple, President of WEA spoke on behalf of paraprofessionals. She stated that the schools could not run effectively without paras. They are seeking a fair increase in salary. The district has received \$4 million dollars, and poor financial spending. She also mentioned that per the superintendent “I love paras facebook post” on the WES page be removed.

Michelle Houghton, Sub-separate teacher. She expressed to the committee that without paras she could not do her job without them. She continues that she feels they go above and beyond and our paras know the kids and make things normal when the teacher is out. But, in the end everything comes down to money.

Kevin England, former student. Mr. England shared that paras made an impact in his life academically and socially. He received 1:1 help from amazing paraprofessionals. As a result, he was able to graduate at the top of his class and served on the National Honor Society.

Amy Gaitane and daughter Hailey Gaitane. Ms. Gaitane shared that Hailey has ASD. She was non-verbal and could not interact with her peers. She needs assistance at different times of her day. She has grown close to all of her paras and are a huge part of her education.

Indiana Troupe, student, read a letter from some of the High School student body (signed by 27 students) which stated that paras are not being offered an adequate increase and are losing valuable members due to inadequate pay.

Karen Monteforte is proud to be a paraprofessional at Wareham Public Schools. She loves her job but has to work two jobs. She shared that her students love her and count her.

Sonya Rogers paraprofessional, Unit C Representative read a letter from Jamie Pelletier, Paraprofessional for 7 years. The letter requested the School Committee to reconsider the 2% raise. Her letter continued urging the Committee to “ask yourself what you are saying when offering the lowest paid group the lowest percentage raise”. Paras are the first and last face the students see as we put students on and off their bus.

Maisy Doyle, Grade 2 Teacher. Ms. Doyle shared as a regular Ed teacher, her para supported her throughout the pandemic. This year she has two ELL students, and her paraprofessional uses her own personal time every morning to help support these students so they do not fall behind their peers.

Nicole Roberge, PreK Teacher, teaches sub separate classes and stated that we can value our paras to step in for us. If we don't value them, they will leave,

Jennifer Feeney, Para at WHS. We work in unison with teachers and are a valuable resource for our students. Kids are back in the classroom and need paras more than ever. This shows the dedication of the paraprofessional. We care about what we do every day. Please support us and show that we matter.

Lara Schofield spoke about the hardships of living on a paraprofessional income.

The Chair thanked everyone who attended Public Participation tonight. There is not an agenda item for the subject, therefore the Committee could only listen, and shared that they appreciated their attendance.

Mask Mandate Public Participation:

Michele Lefrancois, WEA Vice President

In regards to lifting or not lifting the mask mandate, she urged the Committee to listen to both minority and majority and no one should be shamed. If Wareham takes the stance that it is a choice it should be handled so that everyone feels comfortable.

Ronald Besse, a parent of children attending each school. Mr. Besse shared that his philosophy is that he doesn't care for masks. Mandate gives masks a bad vibe. We need to offer choice and normalcy.

Mr. Swett read a letter from **Brian Fitzgerald**, Teacher regarding masks. In his letter, Mr. Fitzgerald stated that when the mandate is lifted, it will be difficult to reinstate it. If the mandate is lifted, Mr. Fitzgerald will continue to wear his masks.

Minutes of the meeting of January 20, 2022

Mr. Brogioli made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Rossi

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett– yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea – 5, nay – 0, abstain - 0

VOTE: 5-0-0

Article Warrant for East Elementary School

Dr. Shaver-Hood presented a warrant article for the town and original deed of East School. It has always been said the East would be used for educational purposes. The deed that was registered back in 1918, states it was given to the Town of Wareham for this purpose. The Superintendent would move to bring this article to Town Meeting and give – East Elementary back to Wareham. The District explored the use of East for students, but could not use it unless there is a lot of money invested into the building.

Ms. Rossi asked how much would the District save by no longer being responsible for the building. The Superintendent responded that the District would save \$30K to \$40K.

The Superintendent has spoken to the Town Manager prior to bringing the article to the School Committee.

Mr. Swett responded that the District will not have a use for it, and it would cost a lot of money in order to make it usable.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to approve the article as written, seconded by Ms. Morgan

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett– yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea – 5, nay – 0, abstain - 0

VOTE: 5-0-0

January Financial Monthly Report

The Superintendent confirmed that the District is on target, but are concerned about substitute account lines, and are in the negative for substitute lines, and cost of transportation for out of district transportation.

Minot/Decas accounts will be transferred to “Wareham Elementary School.”

Mr. Swett asked if there is a similar document for ESSER Funds and could it be presented at the next meeting.

Mask Discussion and Vote:

The Superintendent shared that it came as a surprise that Commissioner. Gov. Baker would be reinstating the mask mandate on February 28. Masking would be a local school decision. There are compelling arguments on both sides.

Lifting the mandate was 2/3 greater than keeping the mandate in recent polls. The Superintendent’s recommendation is to allow it to be a personal choice. Students will need to wear masks on the bus and nurses office, and if a person had covid, must wear a mask for 5 days after covid. After examining comments and listening to opinions, the Superintendent recommended following the governor and commissioner would be the right way to go.

Ms. Rossi agrees that it should be a choice and asked if we have a plan in place after vacation in case we have a repeat of the last vacation.

The Superintendent confirmed that the District does have a plan and will be hiring additional subs to prepare to open our buildings safely.

Mr. Brogioli asked if we know what the vaccination rate is in school. The Superintendent believes it is close to 30-40% vaccination. Mr. Brogioli worries we are moving quickly and asked that we consider extending the mandate 2 weeks after February 28. He would like to lift, but wants to be sure we do it in a prudent fashion.

Ms. Morgan agreed with Mr. Brogioli extending the mandate two weeks after February vacation.

Mr. Swett did research and phone calls with several concerns after a nine-day break of a resurgence.

The Chair stated she is in favor of lifting the mandate on February 28th. Our decisions have aligned with the state thus far, and would like to continue and lift the mandate on February 28th.

Dr. Schwamb informed the committee that the District has not had a lot of push back from students or staff regarding the masks and make notifications when there is a positive student.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to vacate the mask mandate under the state recommendation, and remain mask optional thereafter, seconded by Ms. Morgan.

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett–nay, Kevin Brogioli – nay, Mary Morgan –nay, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea –2, nay –3, abstain - 0

VOTE: 2-3-0

Mr. Swett made a motion to extend the mandate to March 14th, seconded by Mr. Brogioli

Further discussion: Mr. Brogioli offered an exemption to the students in the Basketball State Tournament as that puts an unfair advantage to a team that is not masked.

Mr. Palladino feared we are sending mixed messages.

It was noted that Milton extended the mandate 7 days, and Fall River 14 days.

The SCC conference is not extending it. Wareham would be the only school masked.

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett–yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan –yea, Apryl Rossi –nay, Chair Bacchiocchi – nay.

yea –3, nay –2, abstain - 0

VOTE: 3-2-0

Superintendent's Report:

The Superintendent asked the committee to approve the bill and payroll warrants as listed in the Superintendent's Newsletter.

Ms. Rossi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brogioli

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett– yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea – 5, nay – 0, abstain - 0

VOTE: 5-0-0

COVID UPDATE:

Dr. Schwamb provided information regarding covid update. Instead of the “test and stay”, we moved forward with the initiative. Family letters were sent out explaining the program. Tests are distributed on

Thursdays. So far it has been fairly successful. We were on an every other week schedule. Dr. Schwamb included that this week we are at zero cases this week.

Report of the School Committee:

Superintendent Search Committee deadline was February 16th with 12 of the 13 positions filled. We will have to choose the community member on March 3.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 3rd.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Roll Call Vote:

Geoff Swett– yea, Kevin Brogioli –yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea, Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

yea – 5, nay – 0, abstain - 0

VOTE: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: _____



Agenda

Superintendent's Newsletter

Class of 2023 Prom Proposal

Food Service 2021-2022

FY 22 Gifts and Revolving Accounts

Minutes January 20, 2022

January Financial Report

Town Warrant East Elementary School

Personnel and Vacancy List