

*Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
October 9, 2020*

The School Committee held a meeting on Friday, October 9, 2020 at 3:15pm via a Virtual Meeting. Chair McDonough called the meeting to order and took roll call at 3:20pm.

Members Present: Julie McDonough, Henry Haugland, Donna McKenzie, Matthew Brand, Cathi Collins

Members Missing: Hayley Sonneborn, Shai Fuxman arrived at approximately 3:29pm

Others Present: Dr. Anna Nolin Superintendent  
Mr. Tim Luff Assistant Superintendent  
Ms. Rose McDermott Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

**Public Speak**

Due to the nature of a virtual meeting, the instructions from the Attorney General were to submit public remarks via email to Chair McDonough. Chair McDonough received 1 email from Katy Denning of Natick. Ms. Denning submitted her concern for what she believes may be a significant difference in the anticipated schedules and time on learning between cohort A and cohort B. She believes Cohort B will have greater hours of in-person learning in their core subjects than their peers in cohort A. Ms. Denning shared how she calculated the totals.

**Update on Finance Committee Hearing on Article 19  
Review of Covid Expense Budget Request to Fall Town Meeting**

Chair McDonough opened up the discussion by reviewing the last Finance Committee and Ed Sub-Committee meetings. The meetings the week prior, had gone well. This week, the Finance Committee had a lot of questions for Dr. Nolin. They asked that she and her team, to go back to the table.. They asked us to work this out. We were trying to have Article 19 cover the total cost - 1.136 million. We were proposing to take some money out of the circuit breaker account. This will make our total need 860,101.79. There was a robust discussion of all the different angles however, Ms. Malone wasn't amendable so we were going forward with this. Dr. Nolin went over the detailed chart with Ms. Malone. However, Ms. Malone believes the real need is \$300,000 and is willing to expand the Finance Committee emergency fund with an additional \$500,000 and there is history of doing that. This is basically an insurance policy. The money is in this fund if we need it. This will give the town the transparency that they want. Ms. Collins explained how the Finance Committee account works - it's authorized under Massachusetts General Law. The funds get deposited there and the Finance Committee can vote to move it out and into someone else's budget for unforeseen and unexpected costs. Majority of people in attendance is all the votes you need from the Finance Committee. As we accumulate costs, we go back to the committee to request funds. We have to be clear with the extraordinary and unforeseen things. Dr. Nolin reviewed the FY21 projected analysis of spending. We will update this figure as necessary because if we stay open, as we suspect, our costs will be higher due to substitutes. We shared the new article #1 put forward by Ms. Malone, Town Administrator:

Fiscal 2021 Omnibus Budget  
(Town Administrator)

Move that the Town vote to increase the appropriation voted by the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 8 for the following budgets by the sum of \$751,093, said sum to be distributed as follows:

- To supplement the Shared Expenses budget as voted under Article 8 Motion G of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$118,828 to the Debt Service budget.
- To supplement the Shared Expenses as voted under Article 8 Motion G of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$100,000 to the Employee Fringe budget for the benefits reserve line item.
- To supplement the Shared Expenses as voted under Article 8 Motion G of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$500,000 to the Reserve Fund – Finance Committee line item.
- To supplement the Public Safety Budget as voted under Article 8 Motion B1 of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$32,265 to the Police Department Budget for police salaries.

With the above Budget be raised from the following sources:  
State Aid for Fiscal Year 2021 - \$751,093

Dr. Nolin went on to review in detail the COVID costs - \$1.137 million dollars to date (detail and narrative) adjusted since September 28 to reflect reductions in unemployment costs and real numbers for bus fees (down from \$1.4 million). Town collaborative discussion continue to occur looking for the most advantageous manner to address these needs and the needs of the town as a whole. Review of use of CARES, FEMA, CVFR etc. and square that with strategic use of capital stabilization is needed on ongoing basis to turn the town to best strategic advantage financially. Dr. Nolin reviewed the grants obtained and applied since June 2020. She went on to review the positions added to address the 43 staff members with medical excuses and documentation for accommodations to teach remotely. Dr. Nolin also reviewed the costs sustained by surrounding towns. She also provided and reviewed an analysis on revolving funds. The 5 largest accounts (Circuit Breaker, Bus Transportation, School Choice, ASAP and Food Services account for approximately 90% of the revolving account balance. The majority of these accounts can be only used one time. This cannot continue to be used in upcoming fiscal years as they have been reduced to minimal amounts necessary to operate the programs. Dr. Nolin also reviewed what was given up:

- Communications Director not replaced on leave
- Two central office positions not yet filled for first quarter
- Reduced three consultant contracts for early literacy training
- Not all courses were offered at NPS due to staff availability
- Latin, German and Mandarin class levels are condensed into one classroom/one teacher (reducing sections and levels)
- Reduced sections of physics, chemistry and some courses had to be moved totally online due to restrictions on teachers or demand
- Performance classes unable to be held in person (band, choir, music)
- PE classes not held live due to space issues
- Possible reduction of the financial literacy course

Ms. Collins moved that the Town vote to supplement the appropriation for the Natick Public Schools, voted under Article 8 - Motion A1 of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$300,000 for the purpose of addressing increased salaries and expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the above appropriation be raised from the following source: 2021 State Aid: \$300,000 Mr. Brand seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes  
Mr. Brand – Yes  
Ms. Collins – Yes  
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 6-0-0.

Ms. Collins moved that the school committee vote to support the following motion in the event that article 1 is not successfully amended as described. Move that the Town vote to supplement the appropriation for the Natick Public Schools, voted under Article 8 - Motion A1 of the 2020 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$860,101.79 for the purpose of addressing increased salaries and expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the above appropriation be raised from the following source: 2021 State Aid in the amount of \$860,101.79. Mr. Brand seconded Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes  
Mr. Haugland – Yes  
Dr. McKenzie – Yes  
Mr. Brand – Yes  
Ms. Collins – Yes  
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 6-0-0.

At approximately, 3:59pm, Ms. Collins moved to adjourn. Mr. Brand seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. McKenzie – Yes  
Dr. Fuxman - Yes  
Mr. Haugland – Yes  
Mr. Brand – Yes  
Ms. Collins - Yes  
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 6-0-0.

Anna Nolin  
Superintendent  
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Rose McDermott  
Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

**Documents Provided in Novus Agenda** and materials used at this meeting can be found [here](#).