

*Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
October 4, 2021*

The School Committee held a meeting on Thursday, October 4, 2021 at 6:30pm in the School Committee Room and via Virtual Meeting. Vice Chair Collins called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:34pm.

Members Present: Cathi Collins, Shai Fuxman, Catherine Brunell,  
Henry Haugland, Donna McKenzie

Members Missing: Julie McDonough arrived at 6:42pm during Executive Session, Hayley Sonneborn arrived at 6:53pm

Others Present:	Dr. Anna Nolin	Superintendent
	Mr. Tim Luff	Assistant Superintendent
	Rose McDermott	Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
	Susan Balboni	Interim Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation
	William Spratt	Director of Facilities
	Jefferson Wood	Teacher Representative
	Kyra Hacker	Student Representative

Vice Chair Collins moved for approval for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, Maintenance and Custodian's Local #1116, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares;

Dr. Fuxman seconded. Vice Chair Collins called for a roll call vote. All in favor of entering into Executive Session for this purpose:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Vice Chair Collins – Yes

It was approved by a vote of 5-0-0. Vice Chair Collins stated that the School Committee would be returning to the general session at approximately 6:55pm. The School Committee proceeded to the Training Room to conduct this session.

At approximately 7:13pm, the School Committee returned to open session.

### **Announcements**

Dr. Nolin made the following announcements: She reminded the community of the upcoming Kennedy Middle School tours. The tours will be on Saturday, October 23, 2021. There will be a dedication of the Planetarium to Ed Jameson. Mr. Jameson was a former teacher and Director of the Planetarium. Dr. Nolin showed a picture of the just completed turf field. Michelle Parven, Art teacher at Brown School was featured as a contributor in the Art of Education podcast series called Everyday Art Room. They are

considered one of the premier national resources for art educators in our country. Rasheedah Clayton, METCO Director has been chosen for the State's Influence 100 Superintendent Training Program. Their expressed purpose is to find strong candidates of color for future Superintendentcies. Ms. Clayton has also received another high honor. She has been elected as the Chair Elect to the New England Regional Council for the College Board.

### **Public Speak**

Chair McDonough did not receive any virtual requests and she asked if anyone in person wished to come forward for Public Speak. No one came forward.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of PTO/PTA/501(c)(3) budgets
2. Approval of School Committee Minutes of September 1, 2021 and Executive Session Minutes of August 16, 2021

Ms. Collins moved approval. Dr. McKenzie seconded. It was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Return to School Memorandum of Understanding, August 2021 between The Education Association of Natick and the Natick School Committee: Ms. Collins moved to approve the return to school Memorandum of Understanding August 2021 between the Education Association of Natick and the Natick School Committee. Dr. McKenzie seconded. It was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

2. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with Maintenance and Custodian's Local #1116: Ms. Collins moved approval. Dr. McKenzie seconded. It was approved by a vote of 6-0-1

3. Vote Position of Warrant Article 14: Mr. Haugland motioned to vote to support Article 14. Dr. McKenzie seconded. It was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

### **Town/School Planning Updates - Overview of strategic partnership for long-range planning and budget demands/controls, review of ARPA spending proposal, review of Warrant Article 14 (revisions to budget timeline)**

Dr. Nolin welcomed and congratulated the new Town Administrator, Jamie Errickson. She also welcomed Bill Spratt, Director of Facilities. The three of them have spent all summer collaborating. There's been an analysis of challenges and values and have begun making some priority statements. The documents shared are a first draft of long range planning frameworks that they have tried to capture during their conversations this past summer. They also reflect draft ideas for long range planning consideration and different idea/focus areas. Tonight's discussion serves as a backdrop for the School Committee's decision in key areas – capital and space planning, cost containment and considerations for Covid recovery. Mr. Jamie Errickson, Town Administrator thanked the school department for having him tonight. He sees a lot of great things coming out from our relationships. He announced that John Marshall has been selected and accepted the position of Deputy Town Administrator. Mr. Errickson gave a presentation that has been approved by the select board. He shared his decision making around our process and around the American Recovery Act Funding. He asked for the School Committee's support on Article 14. There was a proposed area spending plan - we have to allocate the funds by the end of 2024 and spend it by the end of 2026. Expects updates to the town and schools. The select board has approved. This funding has certain targets and stipulations. The current numbers and estimates are sure to change as we begin the projects. He is very excited about the human/family resources - study (service, etc.). The Family Engagement Center gets included as well as the Chief Diversity Officer - is the DEI coordinator that's listed. Mr. Errickson is trying to revamp how things are done on the town level. He continued by explaining, line-by-line, ARPA funding

and reviewed next steps. There are various grants coming out. He wants to maximize the grants first - take advantage of using them and getting the most bang for our buck. They have pulled 6 million dollars from the stabilization funds. We still have some funding, about 5 million dollars. We are still waiting on certified free cash. If we need to pull money from stabilization again, then how do we plan 4-5 years out? That's when we think about an override. We aren't in a sustainable model now and how do we get to one? There are decisions that need to be made regarding space and buildings. There is a need for office space for the Town Hall staff. We need to start looking at that and look out for the best interest for the entire town. Mr. Errickson discussed the upcoming budget season. How can we ensure that when we go into January budget season that we go in without a battle? The battle was occurring because we don't have accurate information. We are building an imperfect budget for January when there's going to be a gap. The ideal situation would be to move the process as far into the year as possible, however, that's not possible. Can we consider pushing out the town meeting for 2 weeks? A lot of expenses and reimbursements are back by February. These big expenses and revenue drivers will make the difference. Motion a will be to push out town meeting for 2 weeks after local elections.

### **Capital - FATM 2021 school building capital items, long-range capital planning for Johnson, Memorial, and Natick High School**

Dr. Nolin introduced Mr. Bill Spratt, Director of Facilities. Mr. Spratt reviewed the presentation he had presented to the Finance Committee. He reviewed the items on the fall capital list, each building and each capital piece that will be going to town meeting. It was asked of Mr. Spratt to walk us through with information that would be useful to us about Johnson School, Memorial School and Natick High School. He first reviewed how best practices and facilities management – capital planning happen. He reviewed the rating and life expectancy of systems, some pieces of equipment in those buildings and gave current information about each building and the work needed. Mr. Spratt referenced the Dore Whittier report from 2012. He believes those reports are valid and we haven't done a whole lot to the buildings since then. Some of the other systems are the same. Dr. Nolin reviewed decision making scenarios that are pending including space needs at the high school and if there are properties under our care. How and whether to address building needs for Johnson and Memorial schools. Sustaining positions and recovery positions. Dr. Nolin listed all of the School Committee's requests and questions created during the recent retreat in regards to the buildings. Dr. Nolin, Dr. Gray and Mr. Spratt will work together to answer all of the questions and requests. There will be two virtual community forums to answer questions. Chair McDonough reminded everyone that some sites have already been reviewed when building the Kennedy Middle School was being planned. Dr. Nolin reminded and re-shared the capital and planning website. Mr. Spratt quoted the Ciccariello report which estimates the cost for Johnson to be 14,400 million dollars to bring Johnson School up to code and the ADA compliance as well as the practical/legal/financial aspects of the building. Administration was asked to verify that one million dollars is 40% of the Johnson building MSBA threshold. Dr. Nolin clarified that if one handicapped child moves into the Johnson district, we cannot accommodate that student. Dr. Nolin reviewed that Johnson School would not be eligible for renovations through the MSBA, not due to its enrollment but due to size and square footage. Johnson School is only 60% of the suggested size. It's too small to meet the MSBA's minimum requirements. The discussion of closing a school in general was discussed. Dr. Nolin shared the several scenarios. Mr. Wood, teacher representative encouraged the School Committee to think aspirationally.

### **Appoint Member as the Natick School Committee's Representative to the Natick Fire Chief Screening Committee**

Chair McDonough asked for volunteers and four School committee members expressed interest. Ms. Collins nominated Dr. Fuxman. Dr. Fuxman will be the School Committee's representative.

### **Subcommittee/Liaison Updates**

Chair McDonough discussed the need to appoint a School Committee member to the Maintenance and Custodian's Local #1116 bargaining team. This is a new position and Ms. Collins and Ms. Brunell were on the food service workers negotiating team. Ms. Brunell and Ms. Collins will become the Liaisons

### **School Committee Communications**

Chair McDonough discussed establishing a process for better communications. In general, they need a better communications output. Chair McDonough will put this on one of the upcoming agendas.

### **Covid Testing Update**

Dr. Nolin provided an update. Pre-K-6th grade participated in their first week of testing and they have had no Covid cases. The dashboard will be updated every Friday. Met with the Board of Health because DESE has extended the mask mandate through November, and we too will extend. Elementary schools are outdoors for lunch with parent volunteers. She thanked all the volunteers. We are still hiring cafe monitors and supervisors for lunch.

### **Enrollment Update**

Dr. Nolin stated there were no notable changes. We continue to have a steady trickle of 7-8 students enrolling. We are up 7 students since last month.

### **Member Concerns**

Student Representatives: Ms. McDermott shared a message from the Student Representatives. They have begun freshmen elections and are beginning to plan an outdoor pep rally. She hopes to have more information to report at the next meeting.

School Committee- Dr. McKenzie announced the library is celebrating Indigenous People's Day/Columbus Day and she would like for everyone to enjoy the long weekend. Mr. Haugland would like to suggest for the communications, that it may be more effective to create a subcommittee that would be reviewed with the whole School Committee vs. an unlimited dialogue.

At approximately 10:36pm Dr. Fuxman motioned to adjourn. Mr. Haugland seconded. It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 7-0-0.

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:

Superintendent's presentation

Motion Article 14

Article Warrant questionnaire

Johnson PTO Budget

Wilson PTO Budget

School Committee Minutes of September 1, 2021 and Executive Session Minutes of August 16, 2021