

Richmond Consolidated School - School Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 5:30PM

APPROVED

Present: Adeline Ellis, Dewey Wyatt, Susan Benner, Peter Dillon, Jill Pompei, Jenevra Strock

Guests: Cristina Lenfest, Joy Mullen, Gill Romano, Sharon Renfrew, Lauren Broussal, Errin Rooney, Natalie Gingras, Michelle Smith, Beth Smith, MacAdmin, Rachel Kanz, Clarence Fanto.

1. Call to order 5:33pm
Dewey announced the meeting is being recorded per MGL Ch30sec20(f) requirements, and that the meeting was posted and being held according to current Open Meeting Law requirements.
Meeting was held by conference call due to the COVID-19 issue.
[An Executive Order from the Governor of Massachusetts relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body in real time.
In addition, all members of a public body may participate in a meeting remotely; the Open Meeting Law's requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location is suspended.
All other provisions of the Open Meeting Law, such as the requirements regarding posting notice of meetings and creating and maintaining accurate meeting minutes, as well as the limited, enumerated purposes for holding an executive session, remain in effect.]
Conducted Remotely: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/302304693>, Phone: [\(571\) 317-3122](tel:(571)317-3122), Access302-304-693
2. Positive messages:
Dr Dillon heard from parents that really appreciated signs for 8th grade students. Jenevra: heard from SPED student parents how they are very pleased what is being done going above and beyond meeting student the needs. Jill: echoes what Jenevra said. Parents have given feedback how impressed staff has gone above and beyond. Joy Mullen: Berkshire Eagle reported a Taconic senior performed at Carnegie Hall in the High School Honors Performances Series. She is former RCS student.
3. Public Comments:
Joy Mullen representing REA wants to thanks SC for voting to infuses a little more in the budget to make teaching whole. Asked where refund in the transportation costs stands. Sharon Renfrew: Appreciated finding extra \$20K. Read on Dept. of Ed website about other grants that might be applied for to offset costs related to COVID (ie, mental health service). Adeline: It feels good how Sharon R is spending time looking for funding and Peter and Jill are already on top of it.
4. Correspondence:
 - a. Letter from parents of 3rd grade, expressing concern about staffing changes impact heir kids
 - b. Email from Mr Swinson dated 4/14/20 expressing concerns with Superintendent and School Committee.
5. Review and approval of the minutes from:
4/9/2020: motion to approve DW, 2nd AE, all in favor (SB not in attendance). 4/14/20 and 4/17/20: tabled to next meeting, 4/28/2020: motion to approve DW, 2nd AE, all in favor (SB not in attendance).
6. Berkshire County Education Taskforce Proposal: Dr Dillon provided an update. BCETF proposed creating a learning management system, or electronic backbone, structure for everyone in county to use for remote learning as it is likely this is needed in the future. Need a more robust system if needed in future. AE: teaching staff have done a remarkable job so far. Concern and efficiencies have learned a lot. More to learn about teaching entirely through technology The RCS staff as a lot to offer to this task force. Dr Dillon with continue to provide updates and help make connections. He noted RCS values autonomy and not being forced to do something that doesn't make sense so will continue to look at what works. We'll only partner is it make sense. The task force has access to stipend funds. DW: asked how Principals are able to get involved. The Task Force is still in the early planning stages, but the time sensitively is to have something to pass on in July/early Aug for Principals and staff to work with.
Susan Benner joined.
7. Principal's Report: Jill is planning to send a survey to Staff and one to families to understand what is going well and what needs to be improved. The extra money added to budget will be used to add music and SAC positions. Jenevra is retiring after 46 years. Mary Shook has accepted the SPED Directors position. Several parents/guardians are attending the remote learning sessions. Crisine Lendfest leading wellness hour, answering student question. Finding different ways to

meet student needs. Acknowledge PTA who purchased materials for students. Modified report card. Graduations plans are being worked on. Custodian doing a nice job getting the school ready. The Kitchen has been making over 100 meals a day. The staff has gathered up student belonging, families able to pick up last week. Working hard to keep moral high for school community (wave parades, videos..).

Many people doing great things to sustain student learning is this challenging time.

8. Superintendent's report
 - a. COVID-19 Update: Governor office continues to provide guidance and pathway.
 - b. Commissioner's Guidance: output seems to be mostly "we give you an update in 2-3 weeks." Provided relative to updated grading, teacher evaluations, testing.
 - c. Initial Graduation Ideas: thanks to those putting out signs. We want to put together a program that is engaging, meaningful, memorable, but also safe. Circumstances may change between now and then.
9. Special Education Director's report: State required written remote learning plans which have been done and sent to parents (this replaces IEP for the moment until directly teaching/learning resumes). Mary Shook will make the transition after Janevra retirement easy has background, knows the school, the kids. Janevra will stay on for a short time as well.
10. Budget Status: The Finance Committee has voted 4-1 to approve (endorse) the town appropriation amount. DW noted work done on the budget. Dr Dillon: it will be good to have support at Town Meeting. Keeping an eye on what is going on at the State level. We don't currently rely on a lot of state money so not as vulnerable as other communities.
11. Upcoming town meetings: Baby Town Meeting Saturday June 13, Town Meeting Wednesday June 17 (may be able to meet in person with proper spacing in gym and cafeteria), Town Elections: Saturday June 20. SB has decided to not to continue, Ian Wilhelm is on ballot, as well as AE. Thanks Susan for the time and efforts put forth for the students.
12. Financial Report: Dr Dillon provided an update on negotiating an amended contract with the bus company. Statewide, districts are looking for \$10-20K which is mostly for fuel. In this crisis, we do want the bus companies to exist, so expectation there will be some reduction, but not entirely. Current bus contract expires mid-2021. We are at that point of the year to reconcile line items, but no concerns about meeting budget. DW mentioned some discussion in the previous Budget Advisory Committee around wondering what happens with extra money before year close. Dr Dillon said we have a good track record of giving back money but also investing in things that are needed or important. DW ask what additional savings may come due to the building not being in operation. Dr Dillon reported there will be some but are also needing new laptops, Chrome books. AE is concerned about making certain the Chromebooks are available in the future. Jill has been communicating with families to insure they have what is needed. There are currently 46 ChromeBooks out. DW asked to be kept up to date on funding of CAP and Garden programs.
13. Superintendency Contract, Advisory Committee Update: Engaged Karen Fierst as a consultant to bring an intendent process. Meeting with various committees. Lauren asked for clarification on how the Superintendency Advisory Committee role should be from here out. Karen to meeting with SC next to square up on that point. DW still sees the purpose of the SAC role is to gather information, data, bring objective information to the forefront so sound decisions can be made. AE feels the question about what BHRSD wants is still open. Dr Dillon expect Karen lead the process to bring out hopes and expectations are for everyone, and bring clarify of what is mutually beneficial. Look for more clarity in the near future. Richmond has much more to sort out, and has more risk. SD said we want to be proactive on setting the future rather than have the State stipulate something. DW feel Karen is a component to help us a better process to get answers to the questions, and move forward.
14. Other unforeseen items: none
DW asked if there were any Public Comments before adjourning. There were none.
15. Adjournment and Warrant -
Sue motioned to adjourn at 6:50pm. AE seconded. Unanimous approval.

Submitted DW