

**Richmond Consolidated School - School Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, September 8, 2020
6:00 PM

Approved

Present: Adeline Ellis, Ina Wilhelm, Peter Dillon, Jill Pompei, Mary Shook

Guests: Anna Smith, Brian Grebeldinger, Cristina Lenfest, Errin Roney, Joy Mullen, Julia Padilla, Kim Kuster, K Leeco, Kristin, Michael Jezak, Michelle Smith, Neal Pilson, Rachel Kanz, Natalie Gingras, Richard Stover, 8 others

1. Call to order: 6:04pm

DW noted it is being recorded per MGLCH30A,Sec20f

Meeting to be held by conference call due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

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.

Web: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/604547149>, Phone: (646) 749-3122 Access Code: 604-547-149

2. Motion to move to Executive Session 6:07pm, for the listed purpose by AE, 2nd DW, Roll call: all in favor
Purpose: to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for teacher contracts (because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining position of the School Committee, and to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-bargaining unit personnel, both pursuant to MGL c.39 § 23B (3)).

Return to open session: 6:40pm

3. Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Richmond Educators Assoc (REA):

Peter provided an overview of the agreement for the public. Thanked the REA, Neal, Jill, Dewey for the work done. Next week we will be starting remotely, move to Hybrid on 9/21 which is several weeks early that initially thought. Agreement creates a Joint Health and Safety Committee including three from the district, three from the REA. This group will meet weekly at a minimum to review local and regional data to determine if an adjustments are needed. If we need to take action due to indications showing virus is spreading, this will be very quick (ie, within a day), but if remote to hybrid, or hybrid to more face to face, we would give significant notice. Air exchanges set at 4 and higher. Peter asked the Committee to support this agreement.

There were no more questions from the committee. DW asked if there were questions from the public specifically on this topic. One chat: is there a hybrid schedule set yet? Jill is expecting to finalize tomorrow and send out.

DW said he appreciated the efforts towards teaching and learning and we have to be very attentive, very agile, keep talking and working together as the year progresses.

Motion to approve the MOA with the REA of Sept8: IW, 2nd AE, Roll call: all in favor.

4. Public Comments:

PreK question on chat: Peter responded that we are planning on four days per week

Dick Stover: Asked questions about SPED. He said back in the annual town meeting no one from School Committee was present to answer his question, so still has the same one: what is the cause for the \$126K increase in SPED? [Note, DW was in attendance, Sharon Harrison, Business Admin responded, Roger Manzolini also provide point of view]. Dick asked if we are sending kids to other locations which we are paying for. Peter responded saying that the cost were for a range of needs for several students. The topic later on the agenda is new.

Cathy Gamberoni: she received the schedule and is concerned about the number of hours in front of the screen (5.5hrs). But she knows it is a difficult balance. Jill explained student should not be on line for synchronous learning for more than 3.5 (less for younger). He will check in with teachers to clarify. Cathy was appreciative of option to go hybrid while the numbers are good.

Kara Smith: asked for update on how working parents will be able to manage the hybrid schedule. Older student is fine, concerns with younger student. Recorded lesson for afterhours is being looked at. The school is continuing to look at how to accommodate various family situations. Peter noted there are various organizations setting up programs to help (was including in Principals note previous week).

5. Review and approve minutes:

7/2/2020: Motion to approve: IW, 2nd AE, Roll call: all in favor, 8/7/2020: Motion to approve, as amended: AE, 2nd IW, Roll call: all in favor, 8/11/2020: Motion to approve, as amended: IW, 2nd AE, Roll call: all in favor, 8/26/2020: Motion to approve, as amended: IW, 2nd AE, Roll call: all in favor.

6. Principal's Report

Building: Our custodians have worked hard to prepare our building. We have moved the nurse's office to the former Superintendent suite where there is a separate space for any potential covid cases. It also has a separate door to allow an ill person to leave the building without having to walk through the building.

We had folks checking heating units and vents and were told everything is working very well.

Our custodians have a schedule for cleaning shared spaces and classrooms. Teachers were provided masks, sanitizer and wipes.

Health/Safety: Cristina spent last week making sure we have appropriate signage throughout the building to ensure distancing and mask use. She continues to be in close contact with Emilie Jarret, our town nurse, and the B of H, always reviewing any new info from DPH. Our FAQ, which includes some health/safety info was sent to staff and families last week. Additional information will be provided to staff this week related to COVID health and safety as well as health and safety in general. An email with more information will go home in the next few days.

PD Days: Our PD has focused on CANVAS. Ronna Zigmand, Roger Kohler, and Gill Romano have helped our teachers navigate the system and begin building their courses. It is a heavy lift, there is learning curve, but I see a lot of collaboration.

Opening:

- Teachers were able to send Welcome letters and provide families with schedules.
- We were able to distribute approximately 70 chromebooks. We ordered 20 additional devices in March and more chromebooks and ipads in August with grant money. We were hoping the ones we ordered in the spring would be delivered, but even those are backordered.
- In place of our Open House, we have google meets scheduled for families both tomorrow night and Thursday night. On Wednesday, Ronna, Roger and Gill will provide an overview on Wednesday for all families and then specialists such as art, PE and music will have a 25 minute session to introduce families to their sites. On Thursday classroom teachers will provide a 25 session to introduce families.
- I am "tweaking hybrid schedules, finalizing cohorts, working with the bus company to ensure a smooth start to hybrid learning. I am also finalizing documents related to arrival/dismissal, playground use etc. to send to families asap

In other news, I got word last week that a Donors Choose project I submitted prior to COVID got funded. It was for a robotics kit. So now we have one from Onyx Paper and one from Donor's Choose.

The School Committee expressed appreciation for all the work being done.

7. Superintendent's report:

Peter reiterated appreciation for all the work being done by Jill and her team. They are a pleasure to work with. The world is upside down, guidance changes daily. It is not obvious how much work is being done by so many to make the best of a very challenging year.

He also wanted to acknowledge Nurse Cristina Lenfest who has done an extraordinary job working with the Health Departments, making sense of state guidance, and working closely with doctors and school physicians.

Special warrant article for special education tuition: Peter provided some context of how SPED costs are funded, how reimbursements work. We first have a moral obligation to meet the needs of all students; second, we have a legal obligation. We work to integrate all kids in to normal classroom setting. Occasionally there case with are extraordinary, wide ranging needs needing a residential program. The warrant article in the special town meeting is for \$238K, which is a lot for a small district like ours. The district pays up front, the following year the get reimbursed for a portion through what is called circuit breaker.

Peter was open to question about process, but will not go in to anything individual or personal. Peter and Sharron have met with Town Hall on the topic. Neal noted the topic will be discussed at the Selectmen meeting the next night, an options for funding. Dick Stover asked two questions: does parent of child make residential decision, or school? Is this particular student a Richmond resident? Pete: the decision on placement was based on IEP meetings. This is a Richmond resident (if School Choice, sending districts cover SPED costs). AE noted everyone in the community wants to support those with needs, but this is a big chunk of money for district our size.

Re-opening updates: Peter said it will be good to get back to working with families and students. He said he is a little nervous that we're all going into a year having worked so hard already, but everybody he is working with has demonstrated a real commitment to kids. In negotiations with the REA we talked a lot about people in Richmond going above and beyond. He said folks are really doing that and thinks that will show in kids and families experiences.

8. Special Education Director's report:

Twenty-one students returning, seven will be remote for the year. She is working with parents to provide services in the various models.

9. Policy:

Face Mask, File EBCFA: Motion to adopt, as amended: AE, 2nd IW, all in favor, Acceptable Use, Visitors File KI: Motion to adopt as revised IW, 2nd AE, Roll Call: All in favor.
EBC Supplemental: Second Reading

10. Financial Report: Early in the year so not much posted. DW asked about textbook line being over already. This will be reviewed and update given. Sharon meeting with Town Hall to insure previous FY is finalized. DW asked if we could get report a few more days ahead of meeting for review and questions.

11. Other unforeseen items: none

12. Adjournment: Motion at 8:07pm IW, 2nd DW, Roll Call: all in favor.