

**Pelham School Board Meeting
December 2, 2020
Pelham Elementary School
6:30 pm**

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Megan Larson, Chair, Debbie Ryan, Vice-Chair, Troy Bressette, Darlene Greenwood, and David Wilkerson (virtual due to Covid-19)
Superintendent: Chip McGee
Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments: Sarah Marandos
Student Representative: Joe Wholey

1. Public Hearing:

Chair Megan Larson opened the School Board meeting with a Public Hearing to accept unanticipated revenue under RSA 198:2-b, III. Ms. Larson asked Business Administrator Deb Mahoney to speak about the acceptance of the funds.

Ms. Mahoney discussed the below funds:

- a. Supplemental Public School Response Fund (SPSRF) for a total of \$350,000. The School District received a check from the Corona Virus Relief Fund. The fund was issued to the State, and the State then issued the revenue to the local Districts. Ms. Mahoney commented that every District in the State was eligible to receive a payment.

The Pelham School District received \$350,200 from the Corona Virus Relief Fund. Ms. Mahoney noted that the Business Office had identified all of the Covid-19 related expenses that will be applied to the funding that the District received. The Pelham School District has also applied for additional funding that is available from the State.

Ms. Mahoney requested that the School Board accept the funds and authorize an increase in the appropriations. The District will then apply expenses that they have already identified against the increased appropriations. She stated that the amount to be accepted is \$350,200.

- b. HealthTrust Surplus Premium Reimbursement for a total of \$199,422.93. HealthTrust is the medical and dental company that the Pelham School District uses. Ms. Mahoney mentioned that this year, because of Covid-19, HealthTrust found that they had a surplus amount of funds. The company has issued back the excess funds to the Pelham School District. The District received \$199,422.93 back from HealthTrust for the medical and dental premiums paid for the Fiscal Year 2020.

Ms. Mahoney commented that employees and retirees pay a portion of their insurance. Ms. Mahoney requested that the School Board accept the funds as unanticipated revenue. The School Board can then authorize the District to reimburse the employees and retirees their portion of the refund.

Ms. Larson closed the Public Hearing at 6:36 pm.

2. Call to Order:

Chair Megan Larson called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm, followed by The Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Larson asked Mr. Wilkerson and Ms. Greenwood if each was alone, and they responded, 'yes.'

53 a. **Public Input:**

54 None

55

56 b. **Student Opening Remarks:**

57 Mr. Wholey mentioned that he heard remote learning was going well. He said that some of the clubs have started,
58 and they are meeting virtually. Mr. Wholey noted that the Drama Club is beginning with a virtual play at some
59 point, and he commented that the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) had their first meeting the other
60 day. The Honor Societies have begun acceptance and interviews. The planning of the Honor Societies ceremony
61 has already started.

62

63 Mr. Wholey stated that winter sports had started their skills and drills in the gym, and the teams are following the
64 safety guidelines that were outlined. He noted that basketball, wrestling, and cheer had used the gym. The Music
65 Department is in communication with Ms. Mead to develop a virtual performance, and the Art Department is
66 looking into virtual ways to showcase the student's artwork. Mr. Wholey stated that starting this week; he will
67 provide all the PHS students with a summary of the School Board meeting. He will give a link that will allow
68 students to provide input and feedback.

69

70 c. **Superintendent Opening Remarks:**

71 Superintendent McGee mentioned that the Virtual Honor Society induction ceremony would be on January 7,
72 2021, at 6:30 pm. Dr. McGee thanked Jim Greenwood and Pelham Television (PTV) for agreeing to live stream the
73 ceremony, and commented that he was proud of the Pelham students. The VFW 10722 Auxiliary has selected
74 Nathan Sprague to advance to the District level to judge further his essay and presentation in the Voices and
75 Democracy column.

76

77 Dr. McGee mentioned that tomorrow starts the second trimester for the parents of students in grades
78 kindergarten through eighth. He stated that the District put in place the actual schedule related to the Family
79 Choice Survey. Dr. McGee noted that this topic is difficult because everyone is remote. He mentioned how proud
80 he was of the work done by Dr. Marandos and Ms. Maghakian.

81

82 Dr. McGee said that the District would be putting out the Family Choice Survey for PHS students. This Friday, Dr.
83 McGee will send out an announcement to the families of PHS students. The Family Choice Survey will begin to be
84 visible on December 11, 2020. The survey will be very similar to the one sent out to the families of PMS students.
85 The options for remote students are to stay remote, considering going to in-school, or requesting to go in-school.
86 In-school students' choices are to remain in school, considering going to remote, or asking to go remote.

87

88 **3. Presentations:**

89 No Presentations

90

91 **4. Main Issues / Policy Updates:**

92 a. **Pandemic Update:**

93 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that as of the meeting, he does not have a recommendation. He asked the
94 School Board if they would meet on Monday, December 7. The School Board discussed the idea of the meeting and
95 agreed to meet on Monday at 6 pm. The meeting on December 7 would allow the District to make a
96 recommendation that may begin on December 14.

97

98 Dr. McGee walked the School Board through the pandemic update. He mentioned that the two early-release days,
99 right before Thanksgiving break, were very helpful. The time allowed the professional staff to do some planning
100 and work for Special Educators. He mentioned that this week and next week, the District will be fully-remote. Dr.
101 McGee thanked the families for their flexibility.

102

103 Dr. McGee noted that the District is not fully remote. The pre-school students are continuing to attend in-school
104 learning, and he mentioned that the attendance is strong and the students are engaged. Dr. McGee added that on
105 a case-by-case basis, the District has in-school learning for Special Education students. Dr. McGee mentioned that

106 even though the District is remotely learning, the Family Choice Survey is still in effect. If a student chose to learn
107 in-school, the student would be back to in-school when the District restarts in-school learning.
108

109 Dr. McGee reviewed the statistics for the level of community transmission. He provided the School Board with the
110 statistics from November 18 and from December 1. When the District first decided to pivot to remote learning, the
111 Covid-19 PCR test positivity as a 7-day average was 3.8%, which is now at 4.8%. The number of new infections per
112 100,000 population prior 14 days was 240.4; it is now 441.6. And the number of new hospitalizations per 100,000
113 people over the prior 14 days was 1.4; it is still 1.4.
114

115 The next statistic reviewed was the level of school impact. Dr. McGee pointed out that the figures were not
116 available because the students are presently not in school to transmit the virus, and the students are not
117 considered absent. The only statistic that has remained similar is the staff capacity, and the staff is still strained. Dr.
118 McGee discussed how the staff had been impacted because of Covid-19. He pointed out that several Instructional
119 Assistants have requested Leaves of Absences. Dr. McGee is waiting to see how the holiday travel will affect the
120 Covid-19 rates.
121

122 Ms. Ryan asked, in the event, the District goes full remote for the rest of the year, will that impact the sports and
123 clubs? Dr. McGee said that sports and clubs could be affected depending on the severity of Covid-19. If the District
124 can staff and keep the gymnasium clean, then it should be used. He noted that the dilemma is staffing. Regarding
125 the clubs, Dr. McGee said that his directive to the clubs was that they meet virtually, to begin with.
126

127 Dr. McGee mentioned that he believes that the perfect date to make a decision about the learning is Monday,
128 December 7. Monday will give the District enough time to make an informed decision and allow the families to do
129 some planning. Ms. Larson agreed and stated she believed that the District would see the actual Covid-19 numbers
130 from families who traveled. Dr. McGee noted that he is impressed with the speed with which the Federal
131 Government is making decisions. He did not know if he would be able to apply the CDC's new quarantine guideline
132 by Monday's meeting.
133

134 **b. Substitute Pay Rate:**

135 Dr. McGee commented that he would present the topic, but Mrs. Cote and Ms. Mahoney put the presentation
136 together. Dr. McGee acknowledged that he has concluded that the District will need to develop many small
137 solutions to help with the pandemic problem. He stated that one area that the District has struggled is with finding
138 substitutes to hire. In August, the Board discussed increasing the substitute pay rate, and the Board did not
139 increase the substitute pay rate because they thought the District was doing okay. Dr. McGee pointed out that the
140 District is no longer competitive with substitute pay rate, and the District is seeing substitutes being hired by local
141 School Districts.
142

143 Dr. McGee said that he would like to align with Merrimack and Windham. Both towns are paying \$110 per day for
144 school substitutes. The District would also like to increase the daily nurse substitute's pay rate to \$150 per day. Dr.
145 McGee anticipates that the cost would be around \$30,000. He said that the cost could be as high as \$75,000. That
146 amount would be the full liability. The District is currently underspent on substitutes and other unfilled positions.
147 Dr. McGee believes that those funds can help fund the increase to the substitute pay rate. Mr. Bressette
148 mentioned that he was recusing himself because his wife is a substitute for the Pelham School District.
149

150 Ms. Ryan made a motion to approve the temporary pay rates of daily substitutes at \$110 per day and daily nurse
151 substitute at \$150 per day, effective November 30 through June 30, 2021. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion.
152 The motion passed (3-0-2). (Mr. Bressette and Ms. Greenwood abstained)
153

154 **c. Audit Report:**

155 Business Administrator Deb Mahoney went over the audit report that the District received from Plodzick &
156 Sanderson. Plodzick & Sanderson audited the governmental activities' financial statements, each major fund, and
157 aggregate remaining fund information of the Pelham School District for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2020. Ms.

158 Mahoney mentioned that she submitted the audit report to the Department of Revenue and the Department of
159 Education.
160

161 **Audit Results:**

162 Ms. Mahoney commented that Plodzik & Sanderson informed her that the School District did quite well. Plodzik &
163 Sanderson recommended the following:

- 164 a. Student Activity Funds – They suggested that deposits be made weekly and never kept over the weekend or
165 vacation weeks in the school. The staff has been trained.
166 b. School Policies – As a best practice, financial policies and procedures should be reviewed and updated every
167 three to five years and reaffirmed. They recommended that the School Board review their financial policies to
168 ensure that they are accurate.
169 c. Federal Compliance – They recommended that the School District check and ensure that the vendor has not
170 been disbarred. The staff has been trained.
171 d. Purchasing of Goods and Services – They recommended that the School District not order items without a fully
172 approved purchase order. The staff has been trained.

173
174 Mr. Bressette complimented Ms. Mahoney on the great work she did concerning the audit. He noted that the
175 findings by Plodzik & Sanderson were minor and an opportunity to sure up the practices.
176

177 d. **Acceptance of Unanticipated Funds:**

178 The first unanticipated funds that were discussed came from the Supplemental Public School Response Fund
179 (SPSRF). Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the State has already submitted a payment of \$350,200, and she asked the
180 Board to accept the funds. The District will take the funds and deposit the funds into Fund 22. The District will then
181 transfer all the expenses that were previously identified against this project. Ms. Mahoney added that the State
182 had identified \$10,000,000 of additional money. The State has asked the School Districts to submit for
183 consideration of funds.
184

185 Ms. Ryan made a motion to accept the Supplemental Public School Response Fund payment in the amount of
186 \$350,200.00 as unanticipated revenues. Mr. Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).
187

188 The second unanticipated funds that were discussed came from the HealthTrust premiums for medical and dental
189 in the Fiscal Year 2020. Ms. Mahoney requested that the School Board accept the funds and authorize the District
190 Business Office to pay back the proportional amount that the employees and retirees had paid.
191

192 Ms. Mahoney stated that the District received a check in the amount of \$199,422.93 from HealthTrust. The District
193 will increase the General Fund to reflect that amount and pay out the expenses. The difference between the
194 amount paid out and the amount accepted will be unexpended appropriations. Mr. Bressette asked why the
195 District would pay less to the employees and retirees than the District received from HealthTrust. Dr. McGee
196 stated that the amount that is being refunded is for the portion of the premiums that were paid by the employee
197 or retiree. The District paid the remaining portion of the premiums.
198

199 Ms. Ryan made a motion to accept the HealthTrust return of 2020 surplus check in that amount of \$199,422.93 as
200 unappropriated revenues. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).
201

202 Ms. Ryan made a motion to refund the employee's their share of the \$199,422.93 HealthTrust return of 2020
203 surplus check accepted as unanticipated revenues, and that except for the funds used to refund the employee's
204 their share of the refund, no additional monies of this refund will be spent without prior approval of the School
205 Board. Mr. Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0-1) (Ms. Greenwood abstained).
206
207
208
209
210

211 e. **Policy Revision:**

212

213 **Policy Revision – First Reading:**

214 The School Board reviewed the policies listed below. Dr. McGee mentioned that he did not have substantive
215 changes to make to the policies. No action was required by the School Board.

216

217 a. Policy BA – School Board Self Evaluation and Goal Setting (Revised Policy)

218

219 b. Policy BAA – Evaluation of the Board (Proposed Rescission of Full Policy)

220

221 c. Policy BB – School Board Legal Status (Revised Policy)

222

223 d. Policy BBA – School Board Powers and Duties (Revised Policy)

224

225 e. Policy BBAA – School Board Member Authority (Revised Policy)

226

227 f. Policy BBB – School Board Elections (Revised Policy)

228

229 g. Policy BBBC – Board Member or District Officer Resignation (Revised Policy)

230

231 h. Policy BBBB – Board Member Removal from Office (Revised Policy)

232

233 i. Policy BBBF – Student Members of the School Board (Revised Policy)

234

235 **Policy Revision – Second Reading:**

236 The School Board revisited the policies listed below. The School Board discussed Policy JLDDB – Suicide Prevention
237 and Response. The Board discussed the actual date that the Policy needed to be in place. Dr. McGee mentioned
238 that the District has a draft of the Suicide Prevention and Response Plan, and the District is still working on
239 finalizing the plan. Dr. McGee said that he would look into recrafting the language of the Policy. The Board agreed
240 to table Policy JLDDB and bring the Policy back to the Policy Committee.

241

242 a. Policy JLDDB – Suicide Prevention and Response (New Policy)

243

244 b. Policy AC – Non-Discrimination (Revised Policy)

245

246 c. Policy GBA – Equal Opportunity Employment (Policy for Rescission)

247

248 d. Policy ACE – Procedural Safeguards (Revised Policy)

249

250 e. Policy AD – Philosophy of the School District (New Policy)

251

252 f. Policy ADD/EBB – Safe Schools (New Policy)

253

254 g. Policy IHBA – Programs for Pupils with Disabilities (Revised Policy)

255

256 Mr. Bressette motioned to approve Policies AC, GBA, ACE, AD, ADD/EBB, and IHBA. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the
257 motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)

258

259 **5. Old Business**

260 a. **Board Member Reports:**

261 i. Ms. Ryan – Ms. Ryan and Ms. Mahoney attended the Budget Committee meeting, and the Warrant

262 Articles were approved unanimously.

263 ii. Ms. Greenwood – Ms. Greenwood mentioned that the PCM Committee met, and the Committee is
264 looking into projects that teachers might want to run.
265

266 **6. Housekeeping:**

267 a. **Adoption of Meeting Minutes:**

- 268 i. November 18, 2020 - Public Meeting Minutes
269 ii. November 21, 2020 – Emergency School Board Meeting Minutes
270

271 Ms. Ryan made a motion to approve the Public School Board Meeting Minutes of November 18, as written. Mr.
272 Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0-1) (Mr. Wilkerson abstained).
273

274 Ms. Ryan made a motion to approve the Public School Board Meeting Minutes of November 21, as written. Mr.
275 Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)

276

277 b. **Vendor and Payroll Manifests:**

- 278 i. 112 \$546,444.57
279 ii. PAY112P \$262,793.65
280 iii. 112M \$369.95
281 iv. PAY112P \$91.16
282 v. AP120220 \$484,467.56
283

284 Ms. Ryan made a motion to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifests, as written. Mr. Bressette seconded the
285 motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).
286

287 c. **Correspondence & Information:**

288 The School Board discussed the Enrollment Report for December 2020. Dr. McGee pointed out that the report now
289 shows the attendance change from September and November. Ms. Ryan suggested that the 9/1 column should be
290 changed to 10/1. She mentioned that some students might not have come back as of 9/1. Dr. McGee liked the
291 suggestion and will make the change for the next meeting.
292

293 Ms. Larson asked about the 'Prior School/Town with Notes' that were part of the Monthly Enrollment report. Dr.
294 McGee mentioned how if one parent of a student lives in Pelham, the student may attend the Pelham School
295 District. The child no longer has to live in Pelham to attend the Pelham School District.
296

297 d. **Staffing Updates:**

298 i. **Nominations:**

- 299 i. Brent Clanin - PHS - Director of Guidance
300 ii. Sara McNiff - PES - Long Term Sub Grade 3
301 iii. Lee Despres - District - Interim Director of Technology
302

303 Dr. McGee commented that he is very excited to have filled the two Administrative positions. He noted that PHS
304 has been looking for a Director of Guidance. The PHS Administrative Team and the Guidance Team went through a
305 search process and identified Brent Clanin as a candidate. Mr. Clanin works for Masonic High School and is
306 currently under contract with the Masonic School System. Dr. McGee and the Superintendent for the Masonic
307 School District are working on a start date for Mr. Clanin.
308

309 Dr. McGee noted that the other Administrative position is for an interim Director of Technology. The position is
310 being filled because of a medical leave. Dr. McGee said that the Pelham School District was very lucky to find Lee
311 Despres.
312

313 Dr. McGee mentioned that Sara McNiff is being nominated for the position of Long Term Sub.
314

315 Ms. Ryan motioned to approve Brent Clanin for Pelham High School as the Director of Guidance, Sara McNiff at
316 Pelham Elementary School as a Long Term Sub, and Lee Despres at the District Level as Interim Director of
317 Technology. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).

318

319 **7. Future Meetings:**

320 a. 12/7/2020 – 6:00 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

321 b. 12/16/2020 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

322 c. 1/6/2021 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

323

324 **8. Non-Public:**

325 No Non-Public Session

326

327 **9. Adjourn Meeting:**

328 Ms. Ryan made a motion to adjourn the public session at 8:00 pm. Mr. Bressette seconded the motion. The motion
329 passed (5-0-0).

330

331

332 Submitted by Matthew Sullivan