

**Pelham School Board Meeting
November 3, 2021
Pelham Elementary School
6:30 pm**

In Attendance:

School Board Members: Megan Larson, Chair; Troy Bressette, Vice-Chair; Thomas Gellar; Darlene Greenwood; and David Wilkerson

Superintendent: Chip McGee

Assistant Superintendent: Sarah Marandos

Business Administrator: Deb Mahoney

Student Representative: Lily Chafe

1. Call to Order:

Chair Megan Larson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and requested that everyone stand for The Pledge of Allegiance.

a. Public Input @ 6:31 pm:

No one was present for Public Input

Public Input closed at 6:32 pm.

b. Opening Remarks:

Student Representative:

Lily Chafe commented that the following things occurred in the Pelham School District:

- i. November 1 – The Spanish Honor Society held a fundraiser at Chunky’s where they played the movie ‘Coco’ in honor of ‘The Day of the Dead.’
- ii. November 2 – Teacher Workshop - No School for Students
- iii. November 4 – First day of Quarter Two.
- iv. November 5 – Informational meeting after school for anyone interested in joining the gymnastics program.
- v. November 6 – PHS Craft Fair
- vi. November 8 – Pathways Fair during Advisory
- vii. November 8 - 16 – Sock Drive held by the Psychology Club, each sock brought in will earn a Spirit Point for the class.
- viii. November 11 – Veterans’ Day - No School
- ix. November 16 – Fall Sports Awards Night
- x. November 18 – Parent Voice Meeting and Induction Ceremony for the Honor Societies
- xi. November 24 - 26 – Thanksgiving Break – No School

Ms. Chafe stated that the Pelham VFW has reached out for help. They have asked students to make holiday cards for the Troops, and the cards must be brought into the Counseling Department by Monday, November 15. She added that community service hours could be earned by writing a holiday card.

Superintendent:

Superintendent Chip McGee commented that students did not have school yesterday, but the teachers had a Workshop Day. The District addressed the subject of attending to social-emotional impacts and did a suicide prevention training for all the staff.

51 The District also had a trainer come in and discuss the ‘Innovator’s Compass.’ The topic was about how to get
52 unstuck when the original ideas came from technology. Dr. McGee mentioned that the topic was able to be
53 used in different areas.

54
55 By the middle of the afternoon, Pelham teachers were providing professional development to other Pelham
56 teachers. Dr. McGee finds that teachers providing teachers with professional development is the highest
57 quality way of sharing all the knowledge that is already in-house.

58
59 Dr. McGee mentioned that construction trucks are ramping up. He noted that more trucks and more materials
60 are coming in and out of PMS. He noted that people could see the outline of the new gym and Unified Arts
61 space. Dr. McGee commented that, in the coming weeks, the natural gas line coming from the school to the
62 SAU and Preschool Building is going to be disrupted by the foundation construction. The SAU and Preschool
63 Building will switch to propane and move back to natural gas when the new natural gas line is in place.

64
65 Dr. McGee commented on the PHS Showcase. He stated that the Showcase is an opportunity for prospective
66 eighth-graders to learn about PHS. He noted that the Showcase allows PHS students and staff to showoff
67 the school. Dr. McGee added that was one of his best days in the Pelham School District. Several parents
68 reached out to Dr. McGee and stated they were very excited to have their students attend PHS next school
69 year.

70
71 **2. Presentations:**

72 a. No Presentation

73
74 Chair Megan Larson commented that she received a request to change the order of the agenda. Ms. Larson
75 stated that she wanted to make the Pelham Memorial School Building Project first. She requested a motion.

76
77 Mr. Bressette made a motion to amend the agenda to have the Memorial School Renovation presentation first.
78 Mr. Gellar seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)

79
80 **3. Main Issues / Policy Updates:**

81 a. **Pelham Memorial School Building Project**

82 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that he appreciated the change in the agenda because it would allow
83 Principal Maghakian to go home a little sooner.

84
85 Dr. McGee provided an update on the Pelham Memorial School Building Project. He stated that the District
86 faces some challenges regarding the project and presented the School Board with a new presentation of the
87 Memorial School Renovation.

88
89 Dr. McGee reviewed the Phases and requested that the School Board look at Phase 7. Phase 7 is currently
90 planned to start in September 2023 and end in December 2023. He noted that he is not happy having to
91 inform the Board that price escalation, supply chain challenges, and struggles with the architecture firm are
92 causing the project to take four months longer to complete.

93
94 Dr. McGee said that the District is already four months behind, three months into a project. He stated that the
95 issues started with bar joists and added that a bar joist is a structural component used to frame floors or roofs.
96 In the last four months, the lead time on bar joists has gone from six to eight weeks to a full year.

97
98 The supply chain challenges required that the District adjust, and the District changed to steel for most of the
99 school. He noted that because of financial reasons, they needed to keep the bar joists in the gymnasium. Dr.
100 McGee stated that there is a cascade effect because the gymnasium will not be completed on time. He
101 provided examples of the old gymnasium becoming the new cafeteria, but that cannot happen until the new
102 gymnasium is completed. The old cafeteria will become the new library, but that cannot happen until the new
103 cafeteria is completed.

104 Dr. McGee mentioned that the Building Committee had been apprised of the issue, the Project Management
105 Team has been working hard to make sure no more delays occur, and that the School Board stays updated as
106 needed.

- 107
108 i. Phase 1 – (Complete) Phase 1 consisted of mobilizing, site-enabling, and relocation of modular.
109 ii. Phase 2 – Phase 2 consists of site-work (partial bus loop development, underground utilities, and septic
110 fields).
111 a. The bus loop pavement is underway.
112 b. The septic fields have been loamed and seeded.
113 c. The office trailer is in place.
114 iii. Phase 3 – Site Work, additional foundations & structures, and site utilities
115 iv. Phase 4 – Additions, the commencement of phased interior renovations
116 v. Phase 5 – Interior renovations & exterior improvements
117 vi. Phase 6 – Phased interior renovation of existing one-story space and renovation of the gym
118 vii. Phase 7 – Delivery of new gym and final phase of the existing classroom wing
119

120 Dr. McGee mentioned that the School District is facing significant challenges regarding the supply chain. Dr.
121 McGee noted that he talked to the School Board about bar joists; the lead time on bar joists is over one year.
122 The Project Management Team is working overtime on some value engineering ways of getting the same
123 product.

124
125 Vice-Chair Troy Bressette mentioned that he appreciated Dr. McGee answering why they are three months
126 into the project and already four months behind. Mr. Bressette asked Dr. McGee to provide methods or
127 initiatives to prevent a similar situation, such as tonight, three months down the road? Dr. McGee stated that
128 this is a collaborative process between Bonnette, Page & Stone, Trident, Pelham School District, and Harriman
129 Architects. He noted that they had given the responsibility for routine checking on deadlines to BP&S. The
130 second change is to make sure documentation is complete. This allows the District to get bids out to
131 companies who are interested in subcontracting work. Trident has taken over this responsibility. The third
132 change, which is not complete, is that the Building Committee discussed meeting more frequently.
133

134 Mr. Gellar asked if this issue would affect the budget? Dr. McGee stated that price escalation and the supply
135 chain challenge could affect the budget. Dr. McGee commented that he would ask that representatives from
136 Trident, Harriman, and BPS attend the next School Board meeting and speak to Board regarding the issues if
137 the Board would like. Dr. McGee noted that the District has a contract to renovate a school building for
138 \$31,980,000 that will be a Pelham Middle School and a Full Middle School. He added that Trident knows that
139 the contract has to be met. The Board agreed that they would like to meet with the representatives from BPS,
140 Harriman, and Trident.
141

142 The School Board thanked Principal Stacy Maghakian for attending the meeting.
143

144 b. **March 2022 Warrant**

145 The first session of the Annual Meeting is the Deliberative Session. The Deliberative Session will be at
146 Sherburne Hall on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 7:00 pm. The second session of the Annual Meeting is the
147 Official Ballot Voting. The Voting will occur in the PHS gymnasium on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, from 7 am
148 through 8 pm. Ms. Mahoney reviewed the three Warrant Articles.
149

150 **Warrant Article One – School Board Election**

151 To elect by ballot the following School District Officers:

152 School Board Member 3-Year Term

153 School Board Member 3-Year Term
154
155
156

157 **Warrant Article Two – Operating Budget**

158 Business Administrator Deb Mahoney stated that there is no change since she read the Warrant Article. Ms.
159 Mahoney noted that she had not had the opportunity to enter the Default Budget numbers and go through
160 the process on the DRA website.

161
162 Warrant Articles Two reads, 'Shall the Pelham School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget,
163 not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the
164 amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session of the
165 annual school district meeting, for the purposes set forth herein, totaling thirty-nine million, nine hundred
166 forty-three thousand, four hundred fifteen dollars (\$39,943,415)?

167
168 Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be thirty-eight million, nine hundred ninety-five
169 thousand, seven hundred thirty-four dollars, (\$38,995,734), which is the same as last year, with certain
170 adjustments required by the previous action of the Pelham School District or by law; or the Pelham School
171 Board may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised
172 operating budget only. (Majority vote required).'

173
174 Ms. Mahoney asked for the School Board to vote to approve Warrant Article Two.

175
176 Mr. Gellar motioned to approve Article Two, the Warrant Article for the March 2022 Election Day. Mr. Bressette
177 seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)

178
179 **Warrant Article Three – Solar**

180 Warrant Articles Two reads, 'Shall the Pelham School District vote to authorize the School Board to enter into
181 a long-term lease of School District property for the purpose of installing solar panels at no cost to the District
182 but resulting in savings on the District's energy costs, all on such terms and conditions as the School Board
183 determine are in the best interest of the District? (Majority vote required).'

184
185 Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the modification to the Warrant Article was made as a result of the request
186 from the School Board, and the modification was provided to the District by legal counsel.

187
188 Mr. Wilkerson and Mr. Bressette thanked Ms. Mahoney for adjusting the Warrant Article, and they also
189 thanked legal counsel for their efforts.

190
191 Mr. Gellar asked what was happening with the addition of the phrase, 'at no cost to District'? Ms. Mahoney
192 commented that the phrase 'entering into a long-term lease for the purpose of installing solar panels at no
193 cost to District.' Ms. Mahoney stated that she asked legal counsel in the preparation of moving forward in the
194 solar consideration. Legal counsel informed her that the cost of the long-term lease would be zero, and there
195 will be no cost to the District to enter into the lease. She noted that the language was accurate, but there will
196 be costs evaluating whether the District should or should not move forward with the lease. She added that
197 there would also be a cost from legal counsel to review the agreement. The long-term lease, by itself, will have
198 no additional costs associated with it.

199
200 Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the phrase 'resulting in savings on the District's energy costs' was one of the
201 three criteria that there will be savings for the District to proceed. Mr. Gellar stated that he was concerned
202 that the language in Warrant Article was a promise that the School Board might not keep in the future. Dr.
203 McGee commented that the School Board could not put forward a Warrant Article with a cost because the
204 Warrant Article reads, 'at no cost to the District.'

205
206 Ms. Larson asked if the Board agreed that the word 'determine' in the Warrant Article should end with an 's'?
207 The Board agreed that the word should be 'determines.'

208
209

210 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve Article Three on solar, as amended. Mr. Wilkerson seconded the motion.
211 The motion passed (5-0-0)
212

213 c. **Pandemic Response:**

214 i. **Key Takeaways Regarding the Pandemic**

215 Superintendent Chip McGee mentioned that his key takeaway was that there were no significant changes. He
216 noted that he was just going to highlight a few things.
217

218 Dr. McGee commented that staff and students had been administered 849 tests as of November 3.
219

220 Dr. McGee noted that as of October 25, the eighth-grade upstairs team upstairs found a cluster and will
221 require masks until November 8. The weekly community-wide announcements regarding Covid-19 will now
222 occur on Thursdays. The level of community transmission remains 'Substantial,' and the level of school impact
223 is now 'Medium.'
224

225 ii. **Hillsborough County**

226 The Covid-19 PCR test positivity as a 7-day average was 6.1% (Moderate) on October 20 and was 7.2%
227 (Moderate) on November 3. The number of new infections per 100,000 population for the prior 14 days was
228 430 (Substantial) on October 20 and was 428 (Substantial) on November 3.
229

230 iii. **Town of Pelham**

231 The Covid-19 PCR test positivity as a 7-day average was 2.6% (Minimal) on October 20 and was 3.3% (Minimal)
232 on November 3. The number of new infections per 100,000 population for the prior 14 days was 431
233 (Substantial) on October 20 and was 311 (Substantial) on November 3. 311 equates to 44 people in Pelham
234 with new positive cases of Covid-19.
235

236 iv. **Level of School Impact**

237 Dr. McGee mentioned that the transmission within schools on November 3 was 'Medium.' The Pelham School
238 District has excluded two students from PES; two students and a staff member from PMS; and two students
239 from PHS; and two students from PHS. Dr. McGee noted that the District identified one cluster at the PMS in
240 the eighth-grade upstairs team.
241

242 He noted that the level of student absenteeism was 5.4% (Low) on October 20 and 5.7% (Low) on November
243 3. 5.7% The staff capacity on October 20 was considered 'Normal' and was considered 'Normal' on November
244 3. The 5.7% equates to 95 students absent out of 1,679 students.
245

246 v. **Transmission Within Schools**

247 Dr. McGee commented that the grid recommends that the District remain using 'Masks and Distancing.' The
248 current rule is that anyone within three feet of another individual for more than an incidental amount of time
249 must wear a mask. Otherwise, masks are recommended but not required.
250

251 vi. **The Big Seven**

252 The District will continue to follow the big seven mitigation steps:

- 253 a. Masks
- 254 b. Distancing
- 255 c. Hand Sanitation
- 256 d. Screening
- 257 e. Ventilation
- 258 f. Vaccines
- 259 g. PCR Testing
- 260

261 Mr. Gellar asked Dr. McGee if all the recovered students were back in school, or have any recovered students
262 not returned? Dr. McGee stated that students who currently have tested positive have not been able to return

263 to school. He noted that six students have tested positive for Covid-19; two are from PHS, two are from PMS,
264 and two are from PES. He added that there is one staff member from PMS who has tested positive.
265

266 Dr. McGee mentioned that the information does not include asymptomatic students. These include students
267 who have been sent home with a cold or a fever, but the District has not received a positive or negative test
268 result. He added that these students are tracked in the attendance numbers.
269

270 Mr. Wilkerson asked how the pandemic impacts the PLC, planning, and teachers' efforts to carry out their
271 responsibilities other than the actual delivery of instruction? Dr. McGee commented that the pandemic is
272 stressing all the processes because the District has lost staff members for a period of time if they or a family
273 member tested positive for Covid-19. He noted that at the same time, the staff had shown a remarkable
274 amount of resilience.
275

276 Mr. Wilkerson asked how the District is taking care of meals? Dr. McGee mentioned that the District has the
277 students sit in the cafeteria and eat their lunch. Because the students need to take off their masks to eat, the
278 District has a tighter seating chart. He noted that PES has lunch by class and an empty table in between. In
279 PMS, the students eat their lunch by advisory, and in PHS, the students are allowed to pick where they want to
280 eat, but they have to remain at the table.
281

282 Mr. Wilkerson asked how many people supervise the students while they eat their lunch? Dr. Marandos
283 mentioned that four people monitor the students.
284

285 Ms. Greenwood commented that she knew the PMS cluster started upstairs, then went downstairs, and she
286 wanted to know if the upstairs eighth-grade was the same class that previously had the cluster? Dr. McGee
287 stated that the District identified a cluster in the eighth-grade downstairs class, and that ended. The District
288 then identified a cluster in the eighth-grade upstairs class, and the students had to wear masks for 14 days
289 since the last student with Covid-19 was in that cohort. He added that they were two separate clusters, and
290 the transmission might have been at school.
291

292 Mr. Bressette mentioned that news came out today that provides the District with another mitigation tool to
293 put in its toolbox soon. He asked if the District had done any work to set up a vaccination clinic for students
294 ages 5 – 11? Dr. McGee thanked Mr. Bressette for the question and acknowledged that the information just
295 came out today, so the District has not been able to do any affirmative work since this morning regarding a
296 vaccination clinic.
297

298 Dr. McGee commented that the District has run two vaccination clinics already and is currently running a
299 weekly testing clinic. He noted that it is the District's intent on taking advantage of the news, and they will
300 look to see which vendor they will use based on the convenience and organization of the District's end.
301

302 d. **Easement:**

303 Business Administrator Deb Mahoney mentioned that the District received a request from Liberty Utilities to
304 grant an easement for underground equipment installed on the Memorial School property. The agreement
305 grants Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. the right to install, own, operate, and properly maintain
306 equipment on private property in order to provide electrical service in conjunction with the renovation
307 project.
308

309 Ms. Mahoney provided the Board members with a copy of the easement and stated that the Board would be
310 noting Warrant Article 2 from the March 2021 vote. The Warrant Article authorized the School Board "to take
311 any and all action necessary in connection therewith or to pass any other vote relative thereto, including but
312 not limited to, the acquisition or conveyance of interests and real property necessary to complete the
313 project."
314

315 Mr. Bressette commented that the only reason the Board needs to entertain the easement is needing access
316 to utilities with the renovated Memorial School. Ms. Mahoney said that he was correct. She added that the
317 easement document requires each member of the Board to sign and a Notary Public.
318

319 Mr. Wilkerson made a motion to approve the easement agreement between the Pelham School District and
320 Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp., dated today, for underground electrical services to Pelham Memorial
321 School. Mr. Bressette seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)
322

323 Ms. Mahoney mentioned that she brought her Notary documentation with her to notarize it after the
324 meeting.
325

326 e. **Policy Reviews:**

327 The School Board reviewed the policies below:
328

329 i. **First Reading:**

330 a. EEAEA – Mandatory Drug & Alcohol Testing - School Bus Drivers
331

332 b. GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal Check

333 The designee would be Assistant Superintendent Sarah Marandos. Dr. McGee mentioned that Section
334 V is a State Statute. They are crimes that disallow a person from being an employee in a School
335 District. He added that they are serious crimes. He will provide the Board with a copy of the list of
336 crimes.
337

338 Mr. Wilkerson asked Dr. McGee if he must document why he took action on the Non-Section V
339 offenses regarding this Policy? Dr. McGee stated that the actual criminal background check must be
340 destroyed within 60 days. Dr. McGee added that people are only hired conditionally until the
341 background check comes back. He can terminate the conditional employment without providing a
342 reason.
343

344 Mr. Gellar asked Dr. McGee to confirm that any offenses under Section V require mandatory
345 termination of employment in the State of New Hampshire, and Non-Section V is discretionary. Dr.
346 McGee said Mr. Gellar was correct.
347

348 c. JEB – Age of Entrance

349 Dr. McGee mentioned that this Policy would allow for exceptions regarding students entering
350 Kindergarten and First-Grade. The Policy would allow for exceptions for students born in October and
351 November if the parents were interested.
352

353 Mr. Bressette commented that he appreciated the proposed revision, because of the flexibility it
354 provides.
355

356 Mr. Wilkerson asked if it was up to the State to decide at what age a student must attend school? Dr.
357 McGee said that he was correct, but that law is under a different Policy. He added that he would
358 bring a copy of the Policy to the Second Reading.
359

360 d. JLCJA – Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries & Additional Protocols for Athletics Participation

361 This Policy is a new State-wide requirement. Dr. McGee stated that this Policy would be a functional
362 annex to Policy EOP (Emergency Operating Plan).
363

364 Ms. Larson asked what the line after coordinator was? Dr. McGee stated that there should not be a
365 line after coordinator, and the word 'coordinator' should be deleted.
366
367

368 Ms. Larson asked what the different colors mean regarding the Policy? Dr. McGee stated that yellow is the
369 New Hampshire School Board Association recommendations, and green is Pelham School District language
370 added.

371
372 ii. **Second Reading:**

373 a. No Second Reading

374
375 4. **Board Member Reports:**

376 a. Ms. Greenwood stated that she is part of the Future Ready Committee and Technology Director Holly
377 Doe sent out an email informing the members of the date for the next meeting. Ms. Greenwood
378 realized that she could not attend and informed Ms. Doe. Ms. Larson mentioned that if Ms.
379 Greenwood could not attend, her alternate should attend. Ms. Greenwood will contact Mr. Wilkerson
380 with the date and time of the next Teacher Ready Meeting.

381
382 b. Ms. Larson commented that she attended the PHS Showcase briefly and thought it was a great event.
383 She was happy to see the teachers and students attending the event, but Ms. Larson had to leave
384 early to attend the Budget Committee meeting. The next Budget Committee meeting is on Thursday
385 night, and they will vote on the School District's Budget. She added that a press release was sent out
386 regarding the tax rate.

387
388 5. **Housekeeping:**

389 a. **Adoption of Minutes**

390 i. **October 20, 2021 – Draft Public Minutes**

391
392 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the Pelham School Board Minutes from October 20, 2021. Mr. Gellar
393 seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-0-1) (Ms. Greenwood abstained)

394
395 b. **Vendor and Payroll Manifests**

396 i. PAY209P \$290,913.77

397 ii. 209 \$559,977.11

398 iii. AP110321 \$634,252.98

399
400 Mr. Bressette made a motion to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifests, as presented. Mr. Wilkerson seconded
401 the motion. The motion passed (5-0-0)

402
403 c. **Correspondence & Information**

404 i. No Correspondence & Information

405
406 d. **Enrollment Report**

407 i. Dr. McGee stated that he was pleased to see three new enrollments, one returning from homeschooling
408 and one transferring into the Pelham School District.

409
410 e. **Staffing Updates**

411 i. **Leaves:**

412 a. None

413
414 ii. **Resignations:**

415 a. None

416
417 iii. **Nominations:**

418 a. None

419
420

421 **6. Future Agenda Planning:**
422 a. No Future Agenda Planning

423

424 **7. Future Meetings:**

425 a. 11/04/2021 – 7:00 pm Budget Committee Meeting @ Sherburne Hall

426 b. 11/17/2021 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

427 c. 11/18/2021 – 7:00 pm Budget Committee Meeting @ Sherburne Hall

428 d. 12/01/2021 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

429

430 **8. Adjournment:**

431 Mr. Bressette made a motion to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 7:23 pm; Mr. Wilkerson seconded the
432 motion. The motion passed (5-0-0).

433

434

435 Respectfully Submitted,

436 Matthew Sullivan

437 School Board Recording Secretary