

**Pelham School Board Meeting**  
**March 20, 2024**  
**Pelham Elementary School**  
**6:30 pm**

**In Attendance:**

**School Board Members:** Troy Bressette, Chair; Rebecca Cummings; and Darlene Greenwood

**Assistant Superintendent:** Sarah Marandos

**Business Administrator:** Deb Mahoney

**Student Representative:** Mya Belanger

**Absent:** Chip McGee, Garrett Abare, and David Wilkerson

**Also in Attendance:** Doug Vincent, Moderator, and Danielle Pilato, School District Clerk

**I. Public Session:**

**A. Call to Order:**

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Marandos called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm,

**II. Oath of Office:**

Ms. Pilato swore Doug Vincent in as School District Moderator and Rebecca Cummings as School Board member.

Dr. Marandos asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Public Input @ 6:34 pm**

Public Input closed at 6:35 pm.

**IV. Opening Remarks:**

**A. Student Representative**

Ms. Belanger commented that the Student Government is hosting a hypnotist show this Friday. People can purchase presale tickets for \$10 via the PHS Student Government Instagram. She noted that tickets will be \$15 at the door, and people can sign up to be hypnotized, too. Ms. Belanger added that next week juniors are taking SATs.

**B. Assistant Superintendent**

Dr. Marandos mentioned they are now in spring, and the third trimester for PMS and PES is beginning. She noted that this Friday, Rob Surette, the artist who painted the fantastic photos on the library wall, will return for two assemblies at PES.

Dr. Marandos said the PES report cards will be available in the portal starting March 25. She added that the preschool playground is being built, the PMS Band is playing at the State House on March 27, the Winter Sports Awards are March 28, and spring sports tryouts are next week.

**V. Presentations:**

A. None

**VI. Main Issues / Policy Updates:**

**A. Reorganization**

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Marandos commented that the Board would need to nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair; Dr. Marandos opened the reorganization to motion or discussion.

55 Ms. Greenwood made a motion to make Troy Bressette the Chair of the Pelham School Board. Ms. Cummings seconded the  
56 motion. The motion passed (3-0-0)

57  
58 Dr. Marandos turned the meeting over to Chair Troy Bressette.

59  
60 Mr. Bressette made a motion to make David Wilkerson the Vice-Chair of the Pelham School Board. Ms. Greenwood  
61 seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

62  
63 Mr. Bressette mentioned that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the 2024 - 2025 School Board Meeting  
64 Calendar. He noted that this was the same calendar with no revisions from the prior two meetings at which it was  
65 presented.

66  
67 Mr. Bressette asked if any members had any questions or proposals regarding the proposed calendar. Ms. Greenwood  
68 asked about the retreat and wanted to know if it started at 5 pm.

69  
70 Mr. Bressette stated they started the retreat early last year, and Dr. Marandos said they invited the Administration last  
71 year.

72  
73 D. Greenwood made a motion to approve the calendar as written. R. Cummings seconded the motion. The motion passed  
74 (3-0-0).

75  
76 **B. Election Results**

77 Dr. Marandos provided an update on the 2024 election results, highlighting the elected School District Officials and  
78 the outcomes of the various articles.

79  
80 School Officials - Dr. Marandos commented that School Board Members Garrett Abare received **1,415** votes and  
81 Rebecca Cummings received **1,381**. District Moderator Doug Vincent received **2,179** votes.

82  
83 Article 1 – Operating Budget – She mentioned that the voters did not support the Operating Budget. The taxpayers  
84 voted **1,454** (Yes) to **1,548** (No).

85  
86 Article 2 – PEA CBA – Dr. Marandos stated that Article 2 – the voters supported PEA CBA. The taxpayers voted **2,102**  
87 (Yes) to **910** (No).

88  
89 Dr. Marandos noted that the District was excited that the PEA CBA had passed and that they would come back to the  
90 Board with updates regarding the default budget. Mr. Bressette commented that he was disappointed that the  
91 Operating Budget did not pass, but the support for the PEA contract was phenomenal. He added that the Town  
92 Meeting had over 3,000 residents come out to vote, and that was the best turnout in several years.

93  
94 **C. FY 2025 Budget Approval**

95 Business Administrator Deb Mahoney commented that the DRA requires this report. She explained that they  
96 combined the default budget and the Article 2 PEA CBA, resulting in the budget for FY 2025. The total appropriations  
97 are **\$42,435,119**.

98  
99 Ms. Mahoney said they take the totals and allocate them by school. She said the report must be uploaded within 20  
100 days before the next School Board meeting. The form was completed; only the Board members needed to sign it. The  
101 Board approved the appropriations by providing signatures.

102  
103 Ms. Greenwood asked if the Board should be prepared with ideas to cut the budget. Ms. Mahoney responded that the  
104 work would be done internally, and the information would be brought to the Board's attention. Mr. Bressette added  
105 that a lot of the work was already done in preparation for Reconsideration and the Deliberative Session.

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109 **D. Engagement Letter for FY2024 Audit**

110 Ms. Mahoney commented that they are starting to prepare for the end of the fiscal year. She noted they would like to  
111 schedule the auditors to come early in July. She requested that the Board authorize the engagement of Plodzik &  
112 Sanderson. The company provided an engagement agreement that she asked the Board to approve.

113  
114 Mr. Bressette said he had looked at the previous year's engagement letters and noted that the amount for this year's  
115 audit was a moderate increase. Ms. Mahoney pointed out that the budgeted amount for the annual audit has not  
116 increased for a few years, but the FY2026 audit will likely see a budgeted increase.

117  
118 Mr. Bressette suggested that they put an RFP out for the FY2026 audit. The Board discussed the benefits of staying  
119 with Plodzik & Sanderson because the District has used the company for several years. It was noted that this would be  
120 the third year with the same auditing team, and it never hurts to change the teams to have new people look at the  
121 District's information.

122  
123 The Board expressed satisfaction with the current audit team and approved the engagement letter.

124  
125 D. Greenwood made a motion to accept. R. Cummings seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-0-0).

126  
127 **E. Pelham Memorial School Project Update**

128 Ms. Mahoney provided an update on the Memorial School Project. The project was reported to be progressing steadily,  
129 with monthly updates provided. She noted that the renovation is in the final phase of the project. Financial details  
130 were discussed, and the information was at the bottom of the report.

131  
132 Ms. Mahoney highlighted a tight budget nearing the end of the project. She stressed that they are in year three of a  
133 two-year project, and some costs are associated with the extended project time. She noted that they have spoken to  
134 the Building Committee and would like to speak with the School Board regarding items they would like the District to  
135 consider but that the bond may not be able to support.

136  
137 Progress updates on various aspects of the project, such as window installation and mechanical work, were shared,  
138 indicating significant advancements. Mr. Bressette thanked Ms. Mahoney for bringing forward the Building  
139 Committee's recommendation.

140  
141 **F. Security Action for Education (SAFE) Grant**

142 Ms. Mahoney discussed the Security Action for Education (SAFE) Grant. The grant, aimed at enhancing safety activities  
143 for School Districts, was discussed along with the proposed upgrades to classroom door locks. She noted that this was  
144 the third round the District was part of, and they were awarded a SAFE Grant to upgrade the door locks at PES. The  
145 District was awarded **\$96,310.50**.

146  
147 Ms. Mahoney mentioned that the Grant Award Notification Agreement must be considered by the Board, approved by  
148 the Board, and signed off by the Chair.

149  
150 Mr. Bressette asked if the work had already been completed or if it was work that would be completed. Ms. Mahoney  
151 noted that it is work to be completed, and there will be an RFP to ensure that the District stays compliant. The District  
152 must apply by June and have the work completed by the following year. The intention was to do the work over the  
153 summer.

154  
155 Ms. Cummings asked if the new locks would be electronic, and Ms. Mahoney confirmed that they would be electronic.

156  
157 Ms. Mahoney thanked Facilities Director Brian Sands for his hard work.

158  
159 D. Greenwood moved to approve the SAFE Grant Agreement that is before us. R. Cummings seconded the motion. The  
160 motion passed (3-0-0).

161

162 **VII. Policy Review:**

163 The Board reviewed the policies listed below.

164 **a. First Reading:**

- 165 **i.** BIA – New Board Member Orientation
- 166 **ii.** GBGA – Staff Health
- 167 **iii.** DN – Equipment and Supply Sales and Disposal

168 **b. Second Reading:**

- 169 **i.** None

170 **VIII. Board Member Reports:**

171 **A.** Ms. Greenwood commented that on Monday, March 18, the final Master Plan document was presented to the  
172 Planning Board. The Planning Board accepted the Master Plan, and Ms. Greenwood stated that an implementation  
173 committee would be set up.

174 Mr. Bressette asked if it had been 20 years since the Master Plan was updated. Ms. Greenwood noted that it is  
175 supposed to be updated every ten years, but it could have been 20 years.

176 Ms. Cummings mentioned that she was excited to be part of the Pelham School Board.

177 **IX. Housekeeping:**

178 **A. Adoption of Minutes**

- 179 **a.** March 6, 2024 – Draft Non-Public Minutes (a)
- 180 **b.** March 6, 2024 – Draft Public Minutes
- 181 **c.** March 6, 2024 – Draft Non-Public Minutes (b)

182 The Board chose to table approving the minutes because only two of three members present for the current meeting  
183 were also present for the March 6, 2024, meeting. of a lack of a quorum to approve the minutes.

184 **B. Vendor and Payroll Manifests**

- 185 **a.** 469 \$558,557.19
- 186 **b.** AP032024 \$575,145.43
- 187 **c.** BFPMS61 \$517,473.45
- 188 **d.** PAY32024 \$ 24,603.56

189 D. Greenwood moved to approve the Vendor and Payroll Manifest as presented. R. Cummings seconded the motion, which  
190 passed (3-0-0).

191 **C. Correspondence & Information**

- 192 **a.** None

193 **D. Staffing Updates**

194 **a. Leaves**

- 195 **i.** None

196 **b. Resignations:**

- 197 **i.** Madison Mondejar PES Special Education Teacher
- 198 **ii.** Lauren Boulter PHS Special Education Case Manager
- 199 **iii.** Philip Fazioli PHS Math Teacher
- 200 **iv.** Teghan Foskitt PHS Special Education Teacher
- 201 **v.** Brandon Hannon PHS Chemistry Teacher
- 202 **vi.** Shannon Larson PHS Science Teacher

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**c. Retirements:**

- i. None

**d. Nominations:**

- i. None

222 T. Bressette made a motion to accept the resignations as proposed. D. Greenwood seconded the motion. The motion  
223 passed (3-0-0).

224

225 Ms. Greenwood expressed her concern regarding the number of PHS Teachers who submitted their resignations. Dr.  
226 Marandos commented that this is the time of year when staff make employment decisions. She pointed out that they  
227 had their list of resignations this week, and at the next meeting, they will have their list of nominations.

228

229 **X. Future Agenda Planning:**

- A. No Future Agenda Planning

231

232 **XI. Future Meetings:**

- 233 A. 04/03/2024 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library
- 234 B. 04/17/2024 – 6:30 pm School Board Meeting @ PES Library

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236 **XII. Adjournment:**

237 D. Greenwood moved to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 7:02 pm. R. Cummings seconded the motion, which passed  
238 (3-0-0).

239

240 Respectfully Submitted,

241 Matthew Sullivan

242 School Board Recording Secretary