

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035
Minutes December 17, 2018 HA Cafe**

5:30 PM

Hadley Public Schools – We are guided by the mission to provide a safe and supportive environment that fosters cooperation, critical thinking, creativity, and integrity; and educating students to contribute positively to a global society.

Call to Order/Members Present

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by motion of Shannon and second by Phifer and vote of 4-0-0. Members present: Klesch, Fasihuddin, Phifer, Shannon. Brugger absent.

Additions to the Agenda

McKenzie informed the chair that she wanted to speak to the committee about a potential Town HR manager position and an open house specifically for recruitment of students at Hopkins. Klesch agreed to add the items to the agenda.

Record of Votes

- Approval of AP warrants submitted in November 2018- Shannon moves; Fasihuddin seconds. Vote: 2-0-1.
- Approval of November 19 , 2018 Minutes- Shannon moves; Fasihuddin seconds. Vote: 3-0-0.
- Approval of warrants submitted in November 2018- Fasihuddin moves; Shannon seconds. Vote: 3-0-0.

Recognition of Edward Hopkins Foundation and Helping Hearts (5:32 pm)

McKenzie informed the committee that the Edward Hopkins foundation graciously funded all of the teacher requests and project requests for both Hadley Elementary and Hopkins and the Helping Hearts has been extremely generous in funding. She said that donations were in the area of \$30,000. McKenzie also mentioned the other groups that provide so generously to the Hadley Public Schools, namely, the board of Trustees with their annual gift for Hopkins transportation expenses and scholarships, the PTO, who is donating a good share of the money raised at the Subaru “Share the Love” event to the Athletic Fields Project. McKenzie also mentioned the Mothers’ Club who funds the school communication/ alert system.

River Valley Counseling Services (5:35 pm)

McKenzie explained the outside counseling services that could be provided at Hopkins Academy through River Valley Counseling Services. The purpose of the program is to provide parents an option of private additional counseling services with ease and convenience. She mentioned that the idea was proposed and recommended by Chelsea Dann, Hopkins School Adjustment Counselor, who had worked with River Valley previously. McKenzie said that referrals would be made to parents through Ms. Dann and it would be parental option to use the River Valley Services. McKenzie clarified for Klesch that HPS role

was to provide referrals, facilitate the process, and provide a space for the counseling services for Hopkins students only.

TriBoard Meeting and FY 20 Budget Parameters and Timeline (5:40 pm)

The Town would like to see a draft preliminary budget by January 29th. McKenzie commented that she had provided the committee with some preliminary figures and that if she had to make a prediction about the budget for FY 20, she would project an increase in expenses just shy of \$200,000 or 2.38 %. She informed the committee members that they were looking at level services and funding for personnel, fuel, and contracted services. Materials, supplies and equipment would be level funded and estimations would have to be made for transportation services. She added that increases projected in the bargaining units, with the exception of the bus contract are known. Using the available data, she and the business manager are estimating costs of operation based on level funding of existing budgets. The Committee was provided with a summary sheet of Preliminary FY20 Budget assumptions, available data and variables. McKenzie mentioned some of the known changes to next year's budget, such as two Unit A retirements, and unknowns, such as the cost of replacements of the retirements, the effect of the discontinuance of the school health grant, and the possible new health grant awards appropriations. She mentioned that the new health grant was not designed to support nursing services at the school level as the previous grant had allowed. The superintendent also updated the committee on current information regarding changes in out-of-district tuition costs, but underscored that there are several unknowns for the upcoming year that could significantly affect the budget. These include circuit breaker reimbursement and school choice estimates. McKenzie said the Town will be provided with best estimates of projected changes in operating budget, and change in local contributions.

McKenzie reported on her meeting with the Finance Committee. She said that the FinCom was seeking a better understanding of the schools' needs. The finance committee posed two questions: Has the school department considered consolidating the Food Services meal preparation to one site? Has the school department considered athletic participation fees? McKenzie provided some informal feedback on the athletic fee issue. She said if the school committee was interested in pursuing either of these avenues for more information, she would facilitate that. She wanted them to be aware of the Finance Committee's inquiries. School Committee members discussed the athletic fee issue. Klesch expressed concern that it may be a financial barrier to participation. Fasihuddin added that even if scholarships based on financial ability to pay may be made available, some parents would not apply. McKenzie reiterated that she was only bringing the issue up as part of her responsibility to inform and it was up to the school committee if they wished to pursue it. Shannon asked if there were other extracurricular activities, such as the ski Club and the Equestrian Club where the participants paid the entire costs associated with the activity. Klesch inquired if the athletic revolving account contributed to costs, such as busses/transportation. Desjardins responded that the athletic revolving account funds were normally used for the betterment of the athletic program, not to support its operations. There were no requests to pursue the athletic fee issue at this time.

A brief discussion was held regarding the consolidation of food preparation to one location. Desjardins provided an analysis of the savings versus the additional expenses and said it could actually cost up to \$10,000 more to consolidate. Fasihuddin mentioned the use of outside vendors for food service. Klesch said it was appreciated that the Finance Committee offered thoughts, ideas and suggestions for the school Committee's consideration.

Radar Data (5:55 pm)

McKenzie explained that this is public data and provided “Questions to consider when Reviewing RADAR Reports” as well as some of the highlights of the data. McKenzie elaborated on the graphs she had provided from the RADAR report. These reports allow for comparison of district spending with similar demographic districts, illustrates trends over a five year period, and helps understand staffing levels, per pupil spending, etc. McKenzie provided specific details in regard to the report and answered any questions committee members had. Highlighted areas of discussion were benchmarks for In District Pupil Expenditures and Staff FTEs per 100 students. McKenzie explained the nuances and underlying drivers of the data provided. Klesch asked about specific spending in categories. McKenzie explained that in smaller schools with lower enrollment, the per pupil expenditure goes up. McKenzie said she could provide specifics in the district end of year report.

McKenzie reviewed the special education report and mentioned that Hadley was below the state average in enrollment and placement. She reviewed that section of the report specifically as to out of district placements, what type of students we are serving, and special education staffing levels. She pointed out that the spike in special education paraprofessionals was due to efforts to service out-of district placements within district. McKenzie said she was not sure of exactly what data would be included in the new district report card, but this is the source of all the data submitted to the DOE.

Additional Agenda Item- HR Director (6:10 pm)

McKenzie informed the Committee that the town was looking into an HR Director position for recruitment, retention, professional development, discipline, and dismissal. Since the schools have an attorney on retainer who advises on all of these issues, the school department does not need support in these areas. McKenzie did say that if they are interested in our taking back some of the things they do for us, such as benefits management, we would be happy to have that conversation. As far as the cost sharing for the position could affect school spending and budget and may not be as financially beneficial as it may appear. McKenzie said she is informing the committee as the subject may be introduced to them at a meeting. She added that the Town may be in need of such a position but she and Desjardins are not recommending the school share the costs or duties of the position.

The second non-agenda item that McKenzie addressed is the ongoing conversations of area superintendents are having around sustainability of small districts with declining enrollments. She said that these types of decisions would ultimately be up to elected officials. McKenzie assured the committee that the Student/ family recruitment Open House was still being planned and will take place.

CPA Requests (6:15 pm)

Phifer thanked the PTO for their offer to contribute to the athletic fields project. He provided an informal fundraising report, stating that there was a considerable amount raised but a deficit remains to cover the first phase of the project. He also reported that the Town was seeking a resolution to the property dispute that affects the project plans. Phifer recommends the Committee submit another proposal to the CPA for funding to address the existing deficit for Phase 1 of the project for the spring town warrant.

At the conclusion of his report, Phifer exits meeting for another commitment.

Capital Plan (6:20 pm)

Desjardins presented the committee with the updated Capital Plan.

Athletic Fields

He stated that Phase 1 of the athletic field project should realistically be in Year 3 (2019-2020) and recommended moving Phase 2 to a later year in the future as opposed to year 4 due to realistic funding and planning issues.

Girls Locker Room Remodel

Desjardins addressed the item of Hopkins Girls Locker Room and noted that the estimate was outdated and it would take some time to have the blueprints reviewed and obtain an accurate estimate. He asked the committee if they wanted to consider a new projected Capital Plan completion date. Klesh mentioned that the remodel of the locker room should be done in the summer to be least disruptive. The committee expressed the desire to have the project done in the summer of 2019 as planned. Desjardins said he would have to get new estimates before putting the project out to bid.

School Bus replacement

The next item on the Capital Plan discussed was the school bus replacement. Desjardins said he was looking at options as the current Bus Services contract is due to expire.

Technology Upgrade

Desjardins said he would check with the Technology Director to see what was, if anything, was still needed as the schools have received a lot of support from the trustees. Fasihuddin inquired about the \$69,000 figure in tech upgrades. Desjardins said it was to replace chrome books, printers, and video projectors.

Financial Reports (6:25 pm)

Expense Report

Desjardins said he had reclassified some expenses to grants and some balances will reflect that movement. He said he will continue with that practice since many of the grants were awarded late this year. Monies cannot be transferred until the grants are actually awarded. He referred the committee to the tuition accounts and negative balances as an example of monies to be transferred at a later date from circuit breaker and 240 grant. He added that what looks like a shortfall is not an actual shortfall. Desjardins reported that everything was in order as far as the budget expenditures and revenues are concerned.

Grant Report

Desjardins further explained the procedures for transferring grant money to expense accounts and that everything was in order.

Revolving Account

The Town has not yet posted all monies for the revolving accounts but the Food Services account is still short on cash register receipts.

School Committee Reports (6:35 pm)

Policy Subcommittee- Date to be set for January or February

Finance Triboard- Committee reviewed previously

Capital and Fields- Committee review earlier in meeting

CES- Fashiuddin said she forwarded a letter to committee members written by the Executive Director addressing the Charter School expansion on behalf of the districts. She said she also forwarded several professional development opportunities. She urged everyone to visit the topic of trauma informed instruction and poverty, mentioning that NPR had a great presentation about the Berkshires, which is applicable to all children in all geographical areas and helps with the understanding of the whole child. McKenzie said that the district agrees with the importance of knowledge in this area and said that there had been some related professional development of Hadley staff recently.

Action Items (6:40 pm)

Motions were made, carried and voted as reflected in “Record of Votes” recorded on page 1 of these minutes.

Next Meeting

Discussion was held regarding the tentative date for the next School Committee Meeting.

Klesh inquired if the committee was going into executive session. McKenzie responded they were not.

Adjournment (6:45 pm)

With no further business at hand, Fasihuddin made motion to adjourn, Shannon seconded and the vote carried 3-0-0.