

**Portland Board of Education
BOE Regular Meeting
Portland High School
January 5, 2021**

The Portland Board of Education held a Regular Meeting in the Portland High School Studio Room on Tuesday, January 5, 2021. Board Members in attendance via ZOOM: Chair Sharon Peters, Meg Scata, Laurel Steinhauser, Tim Lavoy, Chris Darby, David Murphy, and Lauren Christensen. Also in attendance were Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Charles Britton, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, Eric Martin, Assistant to the Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs, Stephanie Fragola, Administrators, Student Representatives, Shawn Laverty and Justin Renk, and members of the public.

Call to Order

Chairmen S. Peters called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Agenda

Motion: Moved by M. Scata to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by L. Steinhauser. Chair S. Peters moved to amend the motion as follows: Move Item V. Audience of Citizens to Item VII. Communications and Updates, under Superintendent's Report as Item 2.

Motion: Moved by M. Scata, seconded by T. Lavoy to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda for Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes December 1, 2020 and December 10, 2020 Special Meeting. Moved by L. Steinhauser, seconded by M. Scata. Discussion followed.

Motion: To amend the motion and split the Consent Agenda in two separate items for approval. Moved by L. Steinhauser, seconded by T. Lavoy. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To approve the minutes from the December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting. Moved by L. Steinhauser, seconded by T. Lavoy. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To approve the minutes from the December 10, 2020 Special Meeting. Moved by M. Scata, seconded by S. Peters. In favor: S. Peters, M. Scata, C. Darby, D. Murphy, L. Steinhauser, L. Christensen. Abstain: T. Lavoy. The motion passed.

Student Representative's Report

S. Laverty wished the Board a Happy New Year and that the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony will be held Thursday, January 7, 2020. Shawn also mentioned that a majority of the teachers have moved from Google to Zoom. J. Renk also wished the Board a Happy New Year and mentioned that the door decorating contest became a door decorating activity by the student senate for Winter Spirit Week.

Communications and Updates

Communications

Dr. Britton shared a notice to Superintendents from the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Cardona, dated December 17, 2020. This article discussed new quarantine guidance. Discussion followed. Dr. Britton also shared with the Board many letters from parents and community members, in favor of reopening schools.

Superintendent's Report

School Reopening Update

The Portland Board of Education discussed the prospect of returning to in-person learning next week.

T. Lavoy stated that he would support the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Motion: To recommend to the full Board to support the Superintendents' Reopening Recommendation for full reopening of Pre-K to Grade 6 on January 11, 2021 and hybrid for grades 7-12 until January 25, 2021. Moved by T. Lavoy, seconded by D. Murphy. Discussion followed with many concerns. Members took into account that the COVID data is from December, concerns about the number of infections rising and reopening too soon resulting in return to hybrid or total remote learning. Contact tracing at present levels is exhausting for our nurses and administrators, lack of

information about vaccine availability, changes to the quarantine period and confusion about testing were also noted. The heightened anxiety of adult staff and absences also were noted within the teaching staff.

The vote was called: In favor of the motion: T. Lavoy and D. Murphy

Opposed: S. Peters, M. Scata, C. Darby, L. Christensen, L. Steinhauser

The motion failed.

The Board will have an Emergency Meeting of the Reopening Committee on Wednesday, January 6, 2021 and convene a Special Board of Education Meeting on January 7, 2021 to discuss reopening of schools.

Audience of Citizens

Several members of the audience expressed their opinion of reopening schools.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology Report

E. Martin provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Technology Device Replenishment Program and the financial explanation. The presentation outlined leasing vs. purchasing options to become a "One to One District." Discussion followed.

New Business

Superintendent's Proposed FY 2022 Budget

Dr. Britton and S. Fragola presented to the Board the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for fiscal year 2022. This outlined in detail each category and how the departments came to the figures presented. Discussion followed and will continue at the January 12 and 14, 2021 budget meetings.

Preliminary 2021-2022 Budget Timetable

The tentative and preliminary 2021-2022 budget timetable was presented to the Board, as given by the Town of Portland Finance Department.

Old Business

No report

Committee Reports

Curriculum- L. Christensen spoke about the 12/15/20 meeting.

Policy- M. Scata stated they will meet the end of January.

Personnel- S. Peters stated there will be an Executive Session tonight to discuss a personnel matter.

Buildings and Grounds- D. Murphy spoke about the sightlines and the solar program being approved at Brownstone.

Conservation and Renewable Task Force- L. Steinhauser reported the same information about the solar program at Brownstone.

Liaison- CREC – M. Scata reported an upcoming meeting Selectmen- D. Murphy mentioned budget workshops, solar panels and shooting range, more info to come Task Force of Solidarity- T. Lavoy mentioned an upcoming meeting January 12, 2021.

Audience of Citizens

No Report

Board of Education Member Comments

No Comments

Executive Session – for the purpose of personnel matter

Motion to move to Executive Session at 10:18 pm and invite Dr. Britton, Superintendent of Schools as invited guest.

Moved by M. Scata, seconded by T. Lavoy, seconded by M. Scata. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion followed and no action recommended. **Motion** to return to Regular Session at 10:30 pm: Moved by T. Lavoy, seconded by L. Christensen passed unanimously.

Adjourn Moved by M. Scata, seconded by L. Christensen to adjourn at 10:31 pm. The motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Bakos, Board Recording Clerk

Draft minutes until approved at the next Board of Education Regular Meeting