

Carlisle School Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Present Via Zoom – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, David Model, Sara Wilson, Shannon Lavery.

Present Via Zoom – School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent; Matt Mehler, Middle School Principal; Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Susan Pray, Business Manager; Rob Fortado, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Present Via Zoom – Finance Committee: Victor Liang - Chair, Melissa McMorrow, Scott Triola, Jim Darr, James Catacchio, Lynne Lipinsky, Aaron D’Elia.

Note: Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, the public was not allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. Members of the Public were able to access this meeting via live stream at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85377174635?pwd=eWY0QklZNllrKzIvK0tPZktubmEyUT09>

Meeting ID: 853 7717 4635

Password: 495434

I. Call to Order

Chair Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Information/Discussion Items

- A. Budget Discussion. The committees continued the dialog about the School budgets for FY20 and FY21. FinCom asked for thoughts on prepaying for FY21. Mr. O’Shea stated that the School is currently looking at an approximate \$445,000 savings in FY20. Mr. O’Shea then voiced some fiscal needs for FY21. A fire panel needs to be installed in the School to meet code at the cost of about \$30,000; the School would like to fund it from FY20 long term capital. The School also has the ability to prepay \$250,000 in Out of District payments. From the FY20 budget, the School projects to have over \$200,000 to return to the Town. Mr. O’Shea was asked to prepare a level funding budget for FY21, which would mean an approximate \$340,000 reduction in the previously proposed FY21 budget. This reduction would mean significant cuts at the school. Mr. Liang asked if there would be a summer program for (general ed) students; Mr. O’Shea answered that it was unlikely that the School would be allowed to bring a significant number of students to school in the summer. Currently, the School is looking to make more robust packets for general education students and is not looking at funding a program beyond the traditional summer program for students with identified services on their IEPs. It was clarified that summer program funding comes out of the FY21 budget because it takes place after July 1. Mr. Triola asked about the unknowns. Mr. O’Shea answered that transportation, specifically working with Bedford Charter, is a big unknown. Other

unknowns are costs to prepare for the Special Education summer program including acquiring the related necessary supplies for students and faculty. A recent unexpected expenditure was repairing a security item in Spalding for approximately \$2,000. Mr. O'Shea said that the School needs to know what budget they are working with because class sizes have to be created and supports have to be put in place. Per the Teachers' Contract, the School needs to alert faculty by mid-June if there is going to be a reduction in force (RIF). He added that the Department of Education will dictate what classes look like in the back to school model for the fall and he feels the School can keep FTEs intact. But other programming may be diminished. Ms. McMorrow asked what else Mr. O'Shea learned from the State about school reopening. Mr. O'Shea answered that we may be able to provide an in-person summer school which would be great for the students. For the fall, the commissioner said the State will provide directives about class sizes, transportation, health protocols, curriculum, and how often kids come to school (for example, every other day or week). The State will hold districts to these directives as they are looking to have consistency. Mr. O'Shea said the state will communicate these directives in mid-June. He added that the Back to School Task Force will continue to meet and work, but a lot of the decisions will be made by the State. Mr. D'Elia asked when is the latest FinCom could amend the School budget. Mr. O'Shea answered that our full time educators will be in place and we will look to establish class sizes in June, but we could course correct in August if we received additional funding. He added that the key component is retaining the full time educators because the School has to notify people if there will be a RIF. Ms. McMorrow recapped that the School wants to program for the 2020-2021 school year and had asked to prepay. Mr. Model stated that the Board of Selectmen voted to have Town Meeting in June, and agreed with Mr. Darr that having a budget gives us clarity. Whether a budget is voted or not, we will look at the budget again in September. Jim Darr stated he is comfortable with prepayment and with having some money turned back to the town. Sara Wilson, brought up the fire panel and the need to repair it because without it, School would not be in compliance and could not open. Mr. O'Shea clarified that the problem is the signal system in the Robbins building and the Grant building; when they upgraded it, they should have updated the flashers and alarms but they didn't. Mr. Fortado added that there are areas throughout the campus that don't have fire alert devices. Mr. Triola said the preference would be to deal with long term caps in the fall; as the Town has increased the reserve fund if an item is critical to the operation of the school. Mr. De'Elia asked for transparency on the type of cuts that will occur at the School; his concern is if there can only be 200 people at Town Meeting, and it can't be articulated what a level funding budget would look like, people would be upset. Mr. Triola summarized that lacking the ability to prepay, the School is looking at major cuts. With the ability to prepay, the School can maintain services, continue to tighten belts in strategic areas and respond to changes. Mr. O'Shea agreed that if the School has the flexibility to prepay, the School can make the budget work. It was noted that some contingencies will be reduced as well. Mr. Model asked what the School Committee needs to do to prepare for Town Meeting? Mr. Liang said the communications have to start before Town Meeting, and asked the School to put the points together because it would help to contain the discussion at Town Meeting. It was felt that the impact of zero percent budget should be communicated so everyone understands the implications of such a reduction. We don't know what the budget will

look like, this budget is a starting point, and we will revisit the budget in the fall. There are still unknowns. The School will move forward with prepayment. Mr. Model felt that the fire panel should be repaired for \$30,000 with FY20 funds. Jim Darr supports paying for it now as well. Mr. Model suggested more future joint meetings. Mr. Liang summarized that he is hearing FinCom support of prepay and for repairing the fire panel. He acknowledged that the School is trying to live within its means. There will be another budget review in September. Ms. Lear stated she is grateful for the discussion and the solution. Mr. Model asked if the BOS decision on Town Meeting is final. Kim Kane answered that the decision is to have Town Meeting, but if it doesn't take place due to rain, the School will move forward with a 1/12 budget. There is legislation pending that hasn't been approved that a Town Meeting quorum can be reduced to 10 percent.; it is now 150 for a quorum.

III. Adjourn Meeting

Ms. Lavery made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Anderson".

Nancy Anderson
Assistant to the Superintendent