

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION  
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Monday, August 24, 2020  
Online Meeting

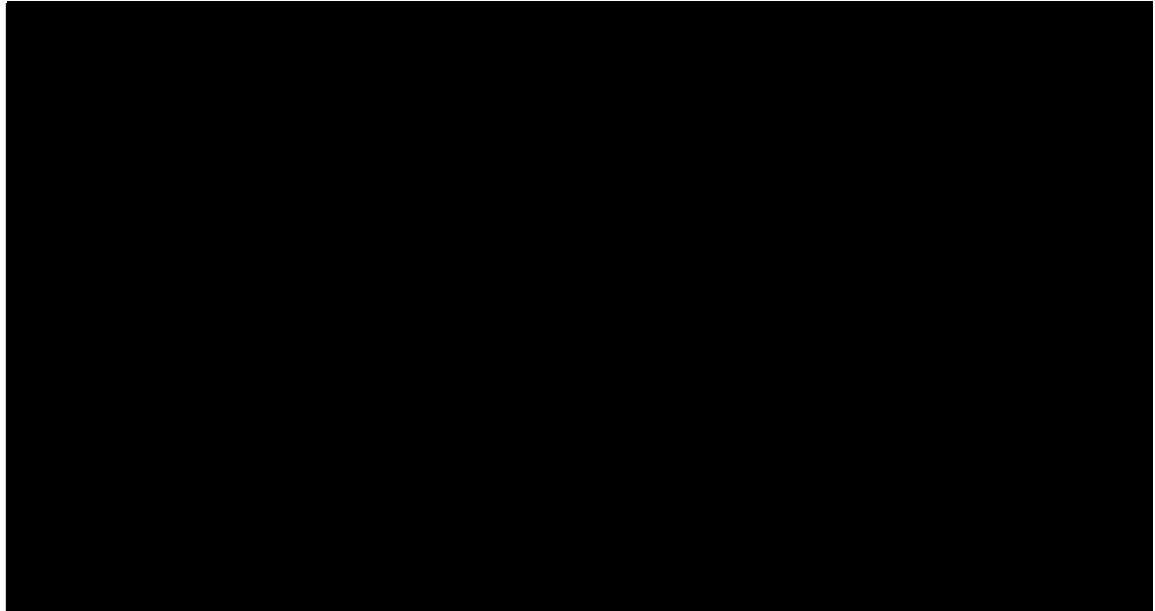
Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

**Roll Call**

The following attendance was taken:

Mayor Christenson	Present
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. Froio	Present
Mr. Gray	Present
Mr. Iovino	Present
Ms. Luong	Present
Mr. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	Present
Mr. Weldai	Present
Superintendent Oteri	Present
Attorney Greenspan	Present
Business Manager Mertz	Present
Human Resource Manager Ashley Pierre	Present
Clerk	Present

**1. Collective Bargaining - Unit A, Unit B, Unit C, SEIU 888 Cafeteria Workers and Secretaries**



The district will be hiring the services of a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) contractor to do a study of the air quality amongst other things in the school buildings. Attorney Greenspan said that this is very important in order to have the teaching staff back in the schools. In response to Mr. Iovino, Attorney Greenspan said that the buildings need not be occupied in order for the contractor to do the study as the study will be based on a number of levels from

no occupancy to full occupancy. Business Manager, Ms. Toni Mertz said that there is a grant to cover the cost and that the grant would most likely be awarded to the district. In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Oteri said that the study might take about a week or more. In response to Ms. Spadafora's question about cost estimates, Ms. Mertz said that the district is awaiting approval for a grant for all HVAC related work amounting to about \$100,000 - \$150,000 and that a portion of this grant can be used for the study.

As for cafeteria workers, Ms. Mertz said that once school starts, all cafeteria employees need to be paid. Ms. Mertz said that since cafeteria has a revolving account, it is difficult to keep everyone on salary when there is no work and no income from student lunches. Ms. Mertz recommended that 74 cafeteria employees and 14 table washers who are all part-time and without benefits be laid off. Ms. Mertz also recommended that 6 cafeteria helpers be furloughed whereby they will receive no paycheck but will receive health insurance. Ms. Mertz added that about 20 cafeteria employees will continue to be employed through the year. When questioned, Human Resource Director, Ms. Ashley Pierre commented that she supports the recommendation. Ms. Spadafora also supported the recommendation. Mayor Christenson said that notice of this decision should be communicated to all those affected as tactfully and humanely as possible.

In response to Mr. Froio, Ms. Mertz said that these employees can get unemployment as well as the \$400 additional unemployment benefits through the state. In response to Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Mertz said that if the school system changes to the hybrid or in-person mode and workers are recalled, it will be based on seniority. Ms. Spadafora commented that this measure will save \$900,000 in salaries to help ease the shortfall in the budget. In response to Mr. Weldai, Ms. Pierre said that everyone being laid off will receive a letter with the unemployment benefits brochure. Attorney Greenspan commented that since the money to pay the employees comes from a revolving account, the School Committee will have to subsidize if the employees remain on the payroll.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to cut 74 part-time cafeteria employee positions and 14 part-time table washer positions from the budget as well as furlough 6 cafeteria helper positions whereby they will receive no paycheck but will receive health insurance. Mr. Iovino seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES  
Mr. Froio voted YES  
Mr. Gray voted YES  
Mr. Iovino voted YES  
Ms. Luong voted YES  
Mr. McCarthy voted YES  
Ms. Spadafora voted YES  
Mr. Weldai voted YES  
Mayor Christenson voted YES  
Motion passed unanimously.

In response to the question raised about the expectation for secretaries when school starts in terms of taking attendance and paperwork, Superintendent Oteri said that the first few weeks usually entail a lot of work but beyond that, it will depend on the population of students in the building.

When questioned about the status of the Early Learning Center (ELC), Superintendent Oteri said that there are deficits as the ELC is a revolving account and a decision will need to be made. Superintendent Oteri added that it is unrealistic to expect parents to pay for their preschooler to sit in front of a computer at home for a few hours a day with a caregiver by their side. Ms. Mertz recommended that 8 teachers and 17 paraprofessionals at the ELC be reassigned to other positions within the school district. Ms. Mertz emphasized that no one from the ELC will be laid off but that about 4 - 5 new paraprofessionals who were just hired will have their offer letters rescinded so as to enable the paraprofessionals from the ELC to be reassigned. Ms. Pierre commented that the 8 teachers and 17 paraprofessionals who will be reassigned based on seniority to jobs that best matches their area of certification. Ms. Spadafora said that the ELC will still be offering an integrated remote class tuition-free. Ms. Spadafora said this is the best option. In response to Mr. Froio, Ms. Pierre said that no Unit A members will be laid off. However, Ms. Pierre added that 6 offer letters given to new teachers will be rescinded. In response to Ms. Luong, Mr. Weldai said it is difficult to gauge when students can be taught in a hybrid or in-person mode but that it is highly unlikely to happen before December or January. Mayor Christenson said that it will cost the district \$1.3 million if the teachers and paraprofessionals at the ELC are allowed to stay at the ELC when there are no funds coming in from fee-based students.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to reassign 8 teachers and 17 paraprofessionals from the ELC to other positions within the school district as well as offer an integrated remote class tuition-free for PreK. Mr. Drummey seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

In response to Ms. Luong, Ms. Mertz said that the reassigned positions are for the full school year but if more students enroll, more positions will be posted and the reassigned teachers and paraprofessionals can apply for the positions. Ms. Pierre said that the entire process was planned thoughtfully. Attorney Greenspan advised that the School Committee need not vote on this matter in the regular session.

In response to a question about building monitors, Mayor Christenson suggested that they be re-purposed to some other area where there is a need. This matter will be revisited if required.

## **2. School Attendance Officer Contract**

Superintendent Oteri informed the School Committee that Mr. John Parcellin, the School Attendance Officer has asked for a two-year contract. His previous contract expired just prior to the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Superintendent Oteri recommended that Mr. Parcellin's contract be renewed for one year with a review in the spring. Mr. Parcellin indicated his willingness to train someone else for this position.

Mr. Iovino made the motion to renew the School Attendance Officer, Mr. John Parcellin's contract for 2020-2021 with a review in May 2021. Mr. Weldai seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Oteri said that the contract will not include a salary increase.

**3. Principal's Contracts**



Mr. Iovino made the motion to restore the Principals' 3% salary increase for the 2020-2021 year.

Mr. Weldai seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

**4. Assistant Superintendent and Business Manager Contracts**

Mr. Weldai said that with the salary increases the principals just received, some of them will be making more or very close to that received by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as well as the Business Manager. Mr. Weldai continued that both Dr. Chase and Ms. Mertz have contributed a lot of effort and time to the school district

especially during the pandemic. They have also applied for grants that have brought around \$3 million for the district.

Mr. Weldai suggested a 3% salary increase for 2 years for both of them. The 3% increase for both of them for one year would total \$8,846.00. A counter suggestion was made to offer them a 4% salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2019. Mayor Christenson said that the 4% has already been accounted for in the budget.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to approve a salary increase of 4% to Dr. Kelly Chase, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as well as Ms. Toni Mertz, Business Manager, retroactive to July 1, 2019. Mr. Iovino seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adjournment**

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to adjourn Executive Session at 8:52 p.m. Mr. Drummey seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 9:00 p.m.

I certify that a notice of this meeting was filed with the Clerk of the City of Malden in the manner provided under Chapter 39, Section 23A of the General Laws.



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Shirley Dorai, Clerk