



WHITTIER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A regular meeting of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee was held remotely on **Wednesday, July 8, 2020** via ZOOM Teleconferencing per Governor Baker's Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20.

Members Present: Charlie LaBella Ron Fitzgerald Tony LeSage
Richard Early Lisa O'Connor JoAnn Testaverde
Brett Murphy Johanna True
Dave Irving Garry James

Members Absent: Paul Tucker, Chip O'Connor, Ben Fichera, Scott Wood

Others Present: Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
Chris Laganas, Principal
Kara Kosmes, Business Manager

Mr. Murphy stated that the meeting was being recorded and held remotely via ZOOM Teleconferencing. Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 20, the public was not allowed to physically access the meeting. However, Public Comment was made available via email in advance of the meeting start time and/or prior to Public Comment. The meeting was available for the public to view live via: <https://www.youtube.com/c/WhittierTechHighSchool> Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:38 P.M. Mr. Murphy began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Murphy took attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Murphy asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for June 10, 2020 as presented.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Dr. Testaverde, seconded by Ms. L. O'Connor to approve the Minutes of Executive Session for June 10, 2020 as presented. Approved by roll call vote - 1 Abstained (T. LeSage)

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business posted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

There was no student representative report.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of instructors for remote learning curriculum planning and PD, instructors for the MCAS enrichment virtual summer program, instructors for the summer 2020 attendance school, and an instructor for the online academic summer school 2020 program . She also reported on the resignations of a Moderate Special Needs instructor and an Automotive Technology instructor for retirement purposes.

Budget Update

Ms. Lynch reported that eight (8) communities have passed the Whittier budget so there is a budget. She stated that they do not know the amount of Chapter 70 funds yet and may not hear until the end of September.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the science MCAS has been cancelled for grades 10, 11, and 12 during the 2020-2021 school year. Grade 9 will take it in the spring 2021. Grade 11 will take the MCAS they missed sometime this fall and as of now grade 10 will take it in the spring of 2021. However, this is all subject to change.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. She reported that guidance for reopening the schools in the fall has been provided from DESE. The Administration is reviewing it and coming up with various plans for reopening in the fall. Ms. Lynch reported that three (3) task force committees have been established and have been meeting twice a week. They will bring forth recommendations. Ms. Lynch provided an update on the set up of classrooms and that she is trying to bring teachers that were RIF'd back as positions open. Ms. Lynch reported that teachers have been providing professional development

on computer training to staff this week. There have been approximately 20-30 educators on each professional development session. Ms. Lynch reported that there is a summer book club that Carolyn Gayler-Romero, the school psychologist organized for staff. Ms. Lynch thanked Ms. Romero for organizing this club. Ms. Lynch went over the phases to bring students and staff back to school in the fall. She stated that she does not recommend bringing 1500 people back into the building all at once. She would like to do it in phases with the goal of having everyone back by the end of September. Although this is all subject to change. Ms. True asked if there is a solid number for the freshman class. Ms. Lynch stated that there are 345 incoming freshman students. There was discussion on opening the school in the fall.

Ms. Lynch reported that the School Committee members were provided with a copy of the Initial Compliance Certification from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). This Certification must be completed by all eligible applicants who have submitted a Statement of Interest to the MSBA and have been invited into the Eligibility Period.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to accept the MSBA Initial Compliance Certificate as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Chris Laganas, the Principal provided a principal update. He stated that the graduation video is available to view on Whittier's YouTube channel. On Thursday and Friday, June 18th and 19th, Whittier held a materials pickup and drop off from 9 am - 12 pm for the rest of the student body. During this time, students returned library books, equipment, and paid any outstanding lunch balances. iPads were not collected this summer. The last day of school/remote instruction for students was on Monday, June 22nd. Mr. Laganas thanked everyone for being great partners in the remote learning experience. On behalf of all the Administration, he stated they are proud of the students, parents and staff and wished everyone a happy and safe summer. Mr. Laganas reported that during the summer, staff will continue to move forward with remote learning and curriculum professional development virtual meetings. Carolyn Romero, the school psychologist held an open discussion forum for Whittier staff members which focused on the current protests and the impact it may have on Whittier students, especially students of color. Students may need to talk about their experience of racism and/or what they are watching on the news. The discussion focused on how to have these conversations as they arise and how to best support the students. These

discussion forums will continue. Virtual meetings with Administrators are taking place twice a week during the summer.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager provided a request for approval of a FY20 budget transfer. She reported that the transfer will balance several accounts that will not be further expended in FY20.

By motion of Mr. LeSage, seconded by Mr. James to authorize the line item transfers in the amount of \$567,027.00 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Kosmes provided a Net Metering Agreement in the School Committee packets for approval to enter into a net metering agreement with Haverhill AD 1, LLC. The Agreement will authorize Whittier to purchase approximately 3,200,000 kWh of electricity credits from them each year for a period of twenty (20) years. She stated that Haverhill AD 1, LLC is located on Boston Road in Haverhill. The project is constructed and is expected to begin generating electricity savings by the fall. The net metering agreement is expected to result in electricity savings to Whittier of approximately \$100,000 per year, and approximately \$2,000,000 in total over the 20 year life of the contract. There are no up front costs as the owner of the project is responsible for all expenses associated with the installation and upkeep of the meters. Whittier's financial obligation is limited to the payment of the reduced kWh rate for every energy credit earned on Whittier's bill. The meters installed on the project feed directly to Whittier's utility account and the credits will appear on Whittier's monthly invoices. Whittier then pays Haverhill AD 1, LLC for each energy credit earned. There are few net metering agreements available in Whittier's electricity grid. An affirmative vote by the School Committee would allow Whittier to take advantage of this opportunity to save on annual electricity costs. Mr. LaBella asked if the Agreement had been sent to the Attorney for review. Ms. Kosmes stated it was not because the City of Haverhill is using them and has had this reviewed by legal counsel. Mr. Early stated laws have changed around this and it should be reviewed. Ms. Lynch stated that it will be reviewed by Long & DiPietro and brought back to the Committee in August. Mr. Murphy asked if there is a deadline to submit to the Company. Ms. Kosmes stated she is not aware of a deadline but if they sell out it will not be available to Whittier, Mr. Early stated that he thought this was solar but since it is not he doesn't see much of a risk. He will be abstaining from any vote though. Mr. Irving recommended that the Committee vote on it now pending the

response from the Attorney so that it doesn't have to be brought back to the Committee in August.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. LaBella to authorize Whittier to enter into a net metering agreement with Haverhill AD 1, LLC to purchase approximately 3,200,000 kWh of electricity credits from them each year for a period of twenty (20) years as presented pending the Attorney's response in the affirmative. Approved by roll call vote - 1 Abstained (R. Early)

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for August. Mr. Murphy asked for a vote for a delegate and alternate delegate for the MASC/MASS Joint Conference. Ms. Lynch stated that she believes this conference has been cancelled. Mr. Murphy stated that the Committee will vote on it at another time if the conference goes forward.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee has not met. They will meet on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met. They will meet in September.

The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met. They will meet on Wednesday, August 12, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.

The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee has not met. They will meet when Chapter 70 funds are in place.

The Policy Subcommittee has not met. However, there are policies in the packet for a second and final reading.

Mr. Irving stated that the following policies were provided in the School Committee packet for a second and final reading: IJOA, JFABD, JFABE, JFABF, JHD and JRD

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to approve policies IJOA, JFABD, JFABE, JFABF, JHD and JRD for a second and final reading as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

MEETING DATES

The Regular School Committee meeting is August 12, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business posted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session posted.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to adjourn at 7:30 PM.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary