



**Finance and Operations Subcommittee  
Memorial Building - Executive Conference Room  
150 Concord Street, Framingham  
February 4, 2020 4:30 p.m.**

**Open Meeting Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Geoffrey Epstein, Beverly Hugo, Adam Freudberg, Tiffanie Maskell\*

**ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Lincoln Lynch, Executive Director of Finance and Operations

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Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. and noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Transportation

Mr. Epstein noted that in terms of Durham's current performance for the last three weeks, it showed having the complete amount of drivers needed, and confirmed that this also meant that there were no late buses. Mr. Freudberg asked about sending an updated letter from the City Solicitor, on behalf of the School Committee, to Durham as an update to the December letter regarding a Breach of Contract.

\*Tiffanie Maskell joined the meeting

Discussion on how communication with Durham has improved, the document from Durham regarding incentives they are working for for their drivers, and that a bid for transportation from other companies can be made in the future if things do not continue to improve regarding uncovered buses and late arrivals. Ms. Hugo said that a lot of drivers have said the reason for quitting is due to student behaviors and asked for an update on the survey that was supposed to be sent out. Mr. Lynch said that Dr. Tremblay is putting together a survey for the drivers, and wants Durham to be on board with it, so working with them, since they employ the drivers. Discussion on bus monitors and how they are employed by Durham and paid for by the District, as well as have added an additional monitor on a Stapleton bus this year, and budgeted for two additional monitors for next year. Mr. Epstein asked how the process of matching up bus numbers to Bus Identification Number (BIN) is going, to be able to get more accurate data. Mr. Lynch said that they have to pull the dashboard off to get the BIN number, and they did so last week. Discussion about how this data has been requested since back in December 2018, and even told by Durham that this was an easy fix, but it took months, which also pushed back the

GPS system for parents to be able to track busses. Mr. Epstein asked for data showing that if a certain bus is late how many classes in a school that it affects typically as an example to show how disruptive this can be. Mr. Lynch said that the app for busses has been delayed due to the EDULOG system having trouble pulling information from Durham, and the Transportation Department is making sure it is accurate before rolling it out to parents. He said, after a question arose, that the original timeline for the app was for December, pushed back to January 3rd and he is now asking for March 3rd, where it will first be rolled out for Brophy Elementary and then for all the other schools. Discussion on the decision for the City Solicitor's letter to Durham will be voted on by the full committee tomorrow.

#### FY20 Budget

Mr. Freudberg said that he, as the Chair, goes over the School Committee budget monthly with the School Committee's Executive Assistant. He said that there is still \$4,200 left in the Professional Development line, and he thinks that the committee should hold another training, but it will still leave money left in that line, approximately \$2,000.

He said that the Executive Assistant is looking to expand her job description to include subcommittee meetings and minutes to her role, which would require additional money, and is willing to start immediately. This would not require her to attend every subcommittee meeting, but would be available to help with the minutes if the subcommittee chair asked her to, by listening to the recording if not present. He added that Mr. Epstein has offered to do an analysis on an estimate of what this additional cost may be with the Human Resources Department. Overall, it is expected that this will result in a cost savings, versus having to contract out for a vendor to support subcommittee minutes, as other public bodies have done. Estimates on a vendor option had been received from the City Clerk, which helped influence this more efficient, and cheaper option to expand the job duties of a current employee. He added that this can be discussed at a future meeting when the full School Committee's FY21 budget is discussed.

Mr. Epstein asked for the monthly budget reporting to be as accurate as possible. There was discussion about the Circuit Breaker reserves and carrying over every year to help with the operating budget, and putting the projected reserve carryover into the narrative for the next fiscal year. Mr. Lynch noted that they are working on checking on all purchase orders that are open and seeing if they can be closed in order to have better projections. Discussion about how salaries are projected out, and how many upcoming retirees there will be should be known in the near future.

#### FY21 Budget

Mr. Lynch said they are starting to ask for the narratives for each department to include a description of the department as well as two other paragraphs that are being asked this year, regarding how they spent their FY20 Budget and what they are planning for with their FY21 Budget. Mr. Epstein spoke about having a FAQ regarding the budget to be available to the public in the future. Discussion about how the FY21 Budget Book is planned to be made available on March 13th prior to the annual Public Hearing on the budget on March 18th, with a joint Finance Subcommittee meeting to be held on March 10th with the City Council, and a possible FTA Forum on the budget on March 4th. Mr. Epstein noted that he is looking into

working on design specifications to the budget book, including looking at how the City designs theirs as well. Discussion on how to frame the Chapter 70 funds, especially with the Student Opportunity Act, and how those funds are designated to be used by the schools. Mr. Freudberg noted that the Senate President Karen Spilka would like to have a joint meeting with the School Committee and City Council to discuss the Student Opportunity Act on March 17th. Mr. Epstein suggested that the budget book has a section on how the Chapter 70 money is managed.

#### Student Activity Account Audit

Mr. Lynch said that solicitations were sent out and quotes are due by the end of the day on Friday. He said that there are three vendors that are submitting quotes, and the audit will include everything from the DESE guidelines, with an explanation if the answer is no. He added that the audits are due March 31st.

#### Central Office Lease Status

Mr. Freudberg said that the one year lease proposal has not been accepted by Perini, and some City Council members have taken the position that it is their right to counter any proposals for the Central Office lease. He added that purchasing the building is for the City Council to look into, and it's the School Committee's role on the lease, which hasn't always been properly followed by the Mayor's Office. He added that the lease process and especially the cost per square foot aspects did not start including the School Committee nor the district's Procurement Officer, despite multiple attempts on the committee and district's part to do so. Discussion on the difficulties faced regarding the lease process, and how the process needs to be followed in the future. Discussion about which lease would take precedence if a one year extension has already been put into place and there is discussion now of a five year lease. Mr. Freudberg asked, on behalf of a City Councilor, why the original RFP listed that the City will rate as highly advantageous to buildings within one mile of the McCarthy Elementary School and Framingham High School. Mr. Lynch said that it is due to the technology epicenters being in those locations, which allows the district to run fiber to buildings within a mile. Discussion occurred on who will speak at the City Council Finance Subcommittee during public comment tomorrow where they will be discussing the Perini lease.

Mr. Epstein asked if there are concerns for the current budget due to not having the same level of the carryover of revolving accounts such as we had in the past. Mr. Lynch said that this is within the budget book, and added that permit money is coming in every year to the Building and Grounds revolving account which can help offset the budget. He added that there may be issues with the athletic revolving account as there are no longer fees, and are now going to be cutting gate receipts, which means the funds in that account will eventually go away. When asked to expand on the gate receipts, he said that FPS has made the decision that students no longer need to pay for athletic admission to games, which will increase the access for students to attend. He said that they are looking at fine arts, etc., in the future but it is hard to differentiate the funds.

#### Approval of Minutes

**Motion:** To approve the December 10, 2019 and December 18, 2019 Finance and Operations Subcommittee meeting minutes.

**Moved:** Ms. Maskell **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo

**Vote:** 4-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Freudberg, Epstein, Maskell)

Adjournment

**Motion:** To adjourn.

**Moved:** Ms. Maskell                   **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo   **Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Draft Letter to Durham from City Solicitor

Durham Daily Driver Attendance Report

*These minutes were approved by the Finance and Operations Subcommittee on July 22, 2020.*

*These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on August 19, 2020.*