

**NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH, MA**

**APRIL 7, 2021**

**6:00 P.M. REORGANIZATIONAL/REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETING**

The North Attleborough School Committee held a virtual reorganizational meeting on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Superintendent Holcomb called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

***Attendance Roll Call:***

***School Committee:***

Tasha Buzzell - Present	John Costello - Present
Joseph Flaherty - Present	Ethan Hamilton - Present
Kathryn Hobbs - Present	James McKenna - Absent
Sarah Stone - Present	Town Council President Keith Lapointe - Present

***Central Administration:***

Superintendent Scott Holcomb - Present	Assistant Superintendent Michelle McKeon - Present
Business Administrator David Flynn - Present	Interim Dir. of Facilities and Grounds - Christopher George - Present
Technology Director - Gideon Gaudette - Present	District School Nurse Leader Melissa Badger - Present
Director of Student Services - Meg Camire - Present	Assistant Director of Student Services - Jessica Davis - Present

***Student Representatives:***

Shruti Srinivasan - Present	Brody Rosenberg - Absent
Dylan Desrosiers - Absent	Joseph Perriello - Absent
Grace Noreck - Absent	

Superintendent Holcomb announced the meeting was being held remotely due to the Executive Order of Governor Baker on March 12, 2020 and read the order into record.

The Pledge of Allegiance led by Shruti Srinivasan followed.

Superintendent Holcomb proceeded to Action Items and explained the election of School Committee Chairman through March 2022. Mr. Holcomb asked for recommendations for chairman. Sarah Stone recommended Ethan Hamilton as Chair.

Superintendent Holcomb called for a motion to elect Ethan Hamilton as Chairman of the School Committee through March 2022, so moved by Sarah Stone, seconded by Tasha Buzzell. Discussion ensued. So voted by roll call:

**Roll Call Vote:**

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Abstain
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	Sarah Stone - Yes

Motion passed unanimously 5-0-1

Superintendent Holcomb congratulated Ethan Hamilton as the next Chairman of the School Committee and turned the meeting over to him. Chairman Hamilton called for recommendations for the Secretary of the School Committee through March 2022. Sarah Stone recommended Kathryn Hobbs as Secretary. Chairman Hamilton called for a motion to elect Kathryn Hobbs as Secretary to School Committee through March 2022, so moved by Sarah Stone, seconded by Ethan Hamilton. Discussion ensued. So voted by roll call:

**Roll Call Vote:**

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Yes
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motion passed unanimously 6-0-0

Chairman Hamilton announced that concluded the reorganizational portion of the meeting and called for a motion to adjourn, so moved by Kathryn Hobbs and seconded by John Costello. So voted by roll call vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes

John Costello - Yes

Joseph Flaherty - Yes

Ethan Hamilton - Yes

Kathryn Hobbs - Yes

Sarah Stone - Yes

Motion passed unanimously 6-0-0

Reorganization meeting adjourned and the regular meeting came to order at 6:13 p.m.

Chairman Hamilton noted that James McKenna joined the meeting at 6:14 p.m. Chairman McKenna updated Mr. McKenna on the reorganizational meeting portion that was concluded and thanked him on behalf of the committee for the 3 years he served as Chairman.

### ***Presentations***

Chairman Hamilton moved to the first item on the agenda and called on the High School representatives for their report.

Brody Rosenberg reported on the upcoming stress management week being held the week before April vacation as well as being the 1st week back in person for 5 days. Brody reported on programs that were planned were socially distanced craft projects, outdoor games, yoga, and a speaker would be coming in to talk about mental health and managing stress. Brody stated the goal of stress management week was to provide the students with help in learning how to deal with the stress they experience. Shruti Srinivasan reported on senior activities. Shruti explained that experience has proven when guidelines are created and met, events can be very successful. Shruti stated that meetings were taking place on how year end events could take place and keep everyone safe. Proms have been scheduled for May 14th and 15th for seniors. Movie night on a big outdoor screen has been planned for May 28th.

Joseph Perriello recognized the football win over Stoughton. Joe stated it was the first game parents were able to attend and everyone adhered to the protocols. The football team secured the Hockomock Title with their win. Chairman Hamilton asked the students how they were handling quarantine requirements. Shruti explained that she had not had to quarantine but she knew of people who had. Reactions have been that it is irritating to have to quarantine but better than having to stay fully remote. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Hamilton called on Assistant Superintendent Michelle McKeon for an update on student learning. Mrs. McKeon reported that elementary students experienced their first in person Wednesday today and it was successful. Mrs. McKeon explained that the tremendous amount of work that was done ahead of time has made the 5 days in person transition so successful. Mrs. McKeon explained high school and middle school students would transition next week. She reminded the committee that students who were full remote learners are still allowed to remain in the remote setting. Mrs. McKeon reported the Commissioner released new recommendations for MCAS on April 1st. Testing would be postponed until later in spring to allow more to complete. The test was being shortened for Gr. 3-8. Competency determination was modified for the class of 2021 by allowing students to take and pass a class approved through DESE. DESE is also providing accountability relief for all schools across the state. They are focusing the testing on identifying gaps in student learning. Mrs. McKeon reported on updates from DESE and Commissioner Riley regarding guidance about graduation, proms and end of year events across the board. School principals, teachers and students have been working together to plan for end of year activities working within the guidelines provided by the state. Mrs. McKeon went on to discuss School Choice for the 2021-2022 School year. Mrs. McKeon recommended continuing what we started last year by offering 10 seats in Grade 9 and 8 seats in Grade 10. Discussion ensued. James McKenna made the motion to approve North Attleborough to participate in School Choice with 10 seats at Grade 9 and 8 seats at Grade 10, seconded by Kathryn Hobbs. Discussion ensued. Chairman Hamilton called for a friendly amendment to expand school choice to 5 seats at Grade 12 and 5 seats at Grade 11. Joseph Flaherty seconded the amendment. Discussion ensued. So voted by roll call:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes

John Costello - Yes

Joseph Flaherty - Yes

Ethan Hamilton - Yes

Kathryn Hobbs - Yes

James McKenna - Yes

Sarah Stone - Yes

Motion passed unanimously 7-0-0

Chairman Hamilton called on Buildings and Grounds Director Chris George for his update. Mr. George highlighted work that continues or has been completed in the following areas:

- District lighting
- Compressor replacement at Martin School

- Martin School replacement of hot water heater/boiler
- Bullpen at DiNardo Field
- Dugouts at DiNardo field
- Work completed in cafeterias to provide spacing for lunches at 6 feet apart and Board of Health approval of work
- Custodial cleaning protocols
- Indoor air quality and RMF recommendations. Mr. George stated it is in the Town's hands on how we proceed.
- Community School roof project will go to the Municipal Building Committee for review. Bids are due tomorrow by 4 pm. Gale Engineering will review and then make their recommendations.

Discussion ensued.

### ***School Committee Members Community Announcements***

Tasha Buzzell thanked everyone and stated she was happy to be here for her 1st meeting. Chairman Hamilton thanked Mr. McKenna for the 3 years spent as Chairman of the Committee and thanked Carol Wagner and Kevin O'Donnell for their 9 years of service on the Committee. James McKenna welcomed Tasha Buzzell and Joe Flaherty to the Committee. John Costello welcomed the new members and congratulated everyone who won the elections yesterday. Kathryn Hobbs stated the NAHS Music Department was running a Floataway 5K and you can register online at the NA Music Department webpage. Joseph Flaherty thanked everyone for the welcome and stated he was happy to be here. Keith Lapointe congratulated everyone who was elected and congratulated the Elections Commission for a job well done. He also stated the NAHS Baseball team was doing a Mother's Day Flower sale.

### ***Action Items***

Chairman Hamilton called for a motion to approve the bills dated March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2, 2021, so moved by James McKenna, seconded by Kathryn Hobbs. Discussion ensued. So voted by roll call vote:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Abstain
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	James McKenna - Yes
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motioned passed 6-0-1

Chairman Hamilton called for a motion to approve the minutes dated March 1, and March 9, 2021, so moved by James McKenna, seconded by Kathryn Hobbs. So voted by roll call vote:

Tasha Buzzell - Abstain	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Abstain	Ethan Hamilton - Yes
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	James McKenna - Yes
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motioned passed 5-0-2

### ***Issues Requiring Votes***

James McKenna made a motion to vote to designate and authorize member Sarah Stone to sign all Vendor Bills on behalf of the Committee, seconded by Ethan Hamilton. So voted by roll call vote:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Yes
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	James McKenna - Yes
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motioned passed unanimously 7-0-0

### ***Discussion Items***

Chairman Hamilton called on School Nurse Leader Melissa Badger for a town and school COVID report. Mrs. Badger reported on the COVID-19 infection rates for the town and the schools over the past few weeks. Mr. Holcomb added our first week back the system saw a spike in the number of students and staff infected from one week to the next (around 40% increase in the # infected). The increase in the number infected in our schools, mirrored the larger community of North Attleborough's increase which was 39% reducing in the last 2 weeks. Discussion ensued

Chairman Hamilton called on Business Manager, David Flynn, for a report on the ESSER III funds the district is slated to receive. Mr. Flynn stated approximately \$3.5M - \$4.5M will come our way through this grant over 2 years. Stipulations of the grant funds are that 20% of the funds need to be spent on learning loss this year and the balance of 80% can be spent as we see fit. Mr. Holcomb stated the school budget request to the town will become public on Monday, April 12th and he is expecting a reduction from the level funding amount requested. Mr. Holcomb stated the release of ESSER funds will be utilized to fill any shortfall from our original requested budget. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Hamilton stated at the last meeting the committee was made aware of discrepancies on the town audit related to the school department. Superintendent Holcomb recommended hiring an independent third party firm to evaluate the controls in accounts receivable/payable along with payroll. Mr. Hamilton asked for an update on the process. Mr. Holcomb and Mr. Flynn reported on actions taken to hire a firm that would be able to perform a process control based audit. Mr. Flynn spoke to representatives from Hague Sahady & Company, an accounting firm located in Fall River, who assured him it would not cost more than \$10K for them to perform the audit. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Hamilton stated the Superintendent search was a huge priority and wanted to begin the process. Superintendent Holcomb reported that Human Resource Director Catherine Calicchia contacted MASC and NESDEC to get an idea of the services they offer to aid in the hiring of a new Superintendent. Mr. Hamilton suggested a subcommittee be created for the process of conducting the search. Tasha Buzzell made a motion to create a subcommittee for the purpose of acting as a search committee with the authority to select an outside search firm for the position of Superintendent with members including Ethan Hamilton, Tasha Buzzell and Kathryn Hobbs, seconded by James McKenna. Discussion ensued. So voted by roll call:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Yes
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	James McKenna - Yes
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motioned passed unanimously 7-0-0

Chairman Hamilton suggested a hybrid approach to future school committee meetings so those members wanting to meet in person could do so and still have the opportunity to remote into the meeting. Discussion ensued. Chairman Hamilton stated the details and location of the next month's meeting would be discussed between himself and Mr. Holcomb and information would be shared with the Committee as soon as it was available.

Chairman Hamilton called on Mr. McKenna to discuss the history town stipends and the Board of Assessors request that town departments support them in their request to reinstate stipends. Keith Lapointe read from the Charter regarding stipends - Article 9, Section 91, Item B2. Discussion ensued.

### ***Chairman's Report***

Chairman Hamilton stated he would send subcommittee assignments via email and asked members to reach out if they had preferences on what committees they wanted to serve on. Mr. Hamilton stated if any member of the committee or public wanted a topic added to the agenda, please submit requests to Mary Chagnon or Ethan Hamilton.

### ***Executive Session***

Chairman Hamilton called for a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with union and non union Personnel which may have a detrimental effect if held in open session and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; so moved by James McKenna and seconded by Kathryn Hobbs. Sp voted by roll call vote:

Tasha Buzzell - Yes	John Costello - Yes
Joseph Flaherty - Yes	Ethan Hamilton - Yes
Kathryn Hobbs - Yes	James McKenna - Yes
Sarah Stone - Yes	

Motioned passed unanimously 7-0-0

Mr. Hamilton stated they would not be returning after the executive session. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Mary Chagnon*