

MEETING MINUTES

Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Virtual Meeting
September 18, 2020

Called to Order at 9:00 a.m. with Robyn Provost Carlson, Gloria Cronin Fisher, and Brian De Vriese and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, in attendance.

Other Attendees: See attendance sheet.

School Remote Learning Centers: Brian, who was calling in from the school building, asked that people be allowed to access the internet from inside the building. He said families were sitting outside in the rain so their children could be in remote classrooms. *A motion was made by Brian De Vriese and seconded by Gloria Cronin Fisher to allow school families to access the internet from inside the building.* Gloria expressed uncertainty because waiver and release forms had not been signed yet.

Public Comment:

Bob Gruen remarked that he would like the public comment time at every Select Board meeting. Susan Gruen said that she is happy that the voters were unanimously in support of the Mohawk operating assessment the previous evening. She also stated that she has concerns with remote learning space, food insecurity and student engagement.

Barbara Rode remarked that she had the same concerns as Susan and asked that everyone work together as student needs continue to change.

Educational Internet Access Hubs: Robyn issued a ‘thank you’ to everyone who has helped to make the hub space organized and compliant with DESE guidelines and COVID protocols and precautions. This included visits and input from Superintendent Stanton, Principal Rodriguez, Attorney Mark Reich, Fire Chief Anzuoni, and many community people.

The Fire Chief had called Robyn last night after completing an inspection of the Community Hall and stated that there are several violations in the Community Hall, and he will not allow the building to reopen. Brian gave a recap of the September 17th walk-through of both buildings with the Superintendent and the Principal. The Superintendent voiced concerns about air exchange in the Hall when the windows and doors could not be opened in cold weather even though there could only be four, possibly five, pods in that space. The set-up in the school building, with older students in pods in the cafeteria area, a sign-in table at the entrance and distanced pods in the gym for families with elementary-age students, met the MTRDS standards. Brian stated that Jamrog HVAC was presently inspecting the ventilation system at the school building.

It was noted that Hilma can make copies of both the parental waiver forms and the volunteer waiver forms and get them to 18 Jacobs Road for the families who are presently there. *On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the waiver and release forms as recommended by Town Counsel.*

Questions were raised about payment of the cost of the HVAC inspection and necessary repairs. Discussion ensued that there were several options that needed to be researched including possible assistance from MTRSD and the CARES Act funds.

Following the previous discussion, *On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to amend the original motion to allow the former elementary school building to continue to be open unless the pending results of Jamrog finds significant fault with the air exchange system and that, if the trouble is in the gym, then the families be moved to other areas of the building.*

Returning to the original motion that was since amended, *the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the amended motion to open the former school building for educational internet access purposes and allow the building to continue to be open in accordance with the MTRSD school calendar unless it was found necessary to close.*

Photography Waiver: Hilma will obtain a waiver form to have parents sign to allow their children to be photographed.

Ventilation: Brian spoke with Jamrog technicians who said that the system had failed and that some belts need to be replaced and other repairs were needed. He said the Board vote can stand and he would speak with the school district personnel. If the building can be occupied by district standards, then it can continue to be used. If not, then the building will need to be closed.

On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator