

**WOBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL REMOTE MEETING  
4.8.20**

A Remote Special Meeting of the Woburn School Committee was held on April 8, 2020, beginning at 7:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Ms. Chisholm-Present, Ms. Cormier-Present, Mr. Kisiel-Present, Mr. Lipsett-Present, Mr. Mulrenan-Present, Dr. Wells-Present, Chairperson Crowley-Present

Dr. Crowley began by thanking the School Committee, City Council and Mayor Galvin for their support of the Woburn Public Schools. As Superintendent for the 2 plus years, we have been able to add new positions through our organization to help all of our students. Now, more than ever, we are seeing a great return on this investment. Dr. Crowley shared a couple of brief updates regarding our school system. Since we left school on Friday, March 13th Dr. Crowley has become increasingly proud each day to serve as Superintendent. Our teachers and staff are providing support to our students and families all over the city in so many ways that are new and inspiring. Our food service department continues to provide breakfast and lunch to our students, and while we have had to make some adjustments to keep our students fed, our staff safe, we plan to continue this practice. We will continue as scheduled this week, however, starting next week we will be providing 7 days of breakfast and lunch - but only distributing on Tuesday and Friday. We will have a grab and go only at WMHS between 11-12, but will also continue to have our school buses making stops (on Tuesday and Friday) throughout the community so that food is more readily available for our students, particularly those without transportation.

Since we left school we have also loaned out more than 800 Chromebooks to students and staff, so we can ensure our remote learning plan is provided for and accessed by all of our students. We now have teachers providing lessons from their own homes. Our school community was able to do this in a matter of days.

During our closure we have also been focusing intently on the social emotional wellness of our students. We have Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologist's providing time and care for our most vulnerable children and young adults. They are making sure they don't feel alone and that their school cares about them and most importantly, that they are safe. This too would not be possible without the investment the City of Woburn has made in its schools. The School Committee, City Council and our Mayor have all worked collaboratively to move the Woburn Public Schools forward.

Tonight's meeting only has one agenda item and it is important to many people.

Dr. Crowley turned the meeting back over to Chairperson Crowley.

**REPORTS/PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF  
DISCUSSION OF PART-TIME NON-UNION WAGES/PAYROLL IN LIGHT OF  
CITY'S DIRECTIVE AND SCHOOL CLOSURES**

Chairperson Crowley's mother is an hourly employee of the Woburn Public Schools. She turned the meeting over to Mr. Mulrenan and turned the Chair position over to him.

Ms. Crowley muted herself.

Mr. Mulrenan asked Mayor Galvin to speak to the committee.

Mayor Galvin began by saying the past couple of weeks have been uncharted and unsettled times. The city and school employees have really come together. It has been uplifting to him. Mayor Galvin is in touch with Dr. Crowley every single day and feels it is a great partnership.

Some employees are not working every day. Every single city employee is getting paid. Mayor Galvin sent a directive to all city employees and asked the Superintendent to send the same directive to school employees.

We are here to talk about part-time non-union employees. The Mayor would like to reevaluate every two weeks. We need to treat the city part-time non-union employees and school part-time non-union employees the same. Right now they are being paid thru April 11th, and we will re-evaluate in two weeks. Mayor Galvin went on to explain the Budget that we formulated in May 2019 was based on a number of premises and importantly it was the revenue that was needed to meet that budget. Tax receipts aren't going to be nearly as what they were last June; for example, hotels, excise tax. We will not receive a quarter of that. We also rely on funding from the state and right now there is a lot of uncertainty. Budget FY20 getting to the end of the year and Budget FY21 are going to have issues. It is going to be difficult for the city regarding budgetary issues. We will be working collaboratively. We always have and will always treat the part-time employees fairly. Mayor Galvin wants it to be clear that he wants to keep both sides equal.

Chairperson Mulrenan asked Dr. Crowley if he had anything to add to Mayor Galvin's comments.

Dr. Crowley added as the Mayor indicated, they have been in touch regularly. They did talk about reviewing this every two weeks and agreed to this. The question raised by Dr. Crowley was the extension beyond April 11th. We have not crossed that bridge but it is important for the city and schools to be in sync.

Mr. Elia said of the non-union part-time employees, 41 of them are not working at all. 40 of them are lunch-monitors and 1 is a van driver. There are LTS for teachers that are out on maternity leaves, Interventionists, EL Tutors approximately 25 people, and they are working. The cost for non-union part-time employees who are not working is under \$10,000.00.

Dr. Wells asked if there is anything some of these part time people can be doing for example, food prep or distribution.

Mr. Elia said we have cafe workers who are taking care of this.

Dr. Wells said we have to be diligent and make sure the people who are getting paid are doing something. We don't know what the city is going to look up when this is over.

Ms. Chisholm feels as though this is not a great deal of money and these folks have been working with our kids every single day. We don't want them to feel we do not value them. Some of them need this money. She does not want them to become a statistic. We need to put a little thought into this. She feels we need to pay these people as they are a part of our community and work with these kids every single day.

Mr. Lipsett echoed what Ms. Chisholm just said. He said it is important to keep in mind some of these employees have kids in our school system. He asked if there have been any guidelines from DESE on this topic.

Dr. Crowley said the guidance from DESE has been to try to pay the hourly employees while we are on leave. We want to have people ready when we are able to come back.

Mr. Elia said that school business managers from other areas are paying all school employees through May 4th, and then they will reevaluate after that date.

Mr. Kisiel asked about the payroll.

Mr. Elia said it is a biweekly payroll and we are paying them through April 11th.

Mr. Kisiel asked about the May 4th deadline.

Mr. Elia said this is information he gathered from his counterparts.

Mr. Elia also said right now his marching orders are to stop payments on April 11th.

Mr. Kisiel asked Mr. Elia when he would know if he was going to continue paying them.

Mr. Elia said this will be a decision with the Mayor and School Committee

Mayor Galvin said this decision will need to be made by this Friday. He thinks it is important to treat both sides equally. We are going to be looking at all the line items in the budget.

Mr. Elia said that vacation is not a week these folks would be paid for under normal circumstances.

Chair Mulrenan asked when our payroll cycle begins.

Mr. Elia told the committee the payroll cycle begins on a Thursday and our next payroll will be April 23rd. Mr. Elia said if we go by April 11th it would be a partial payroll.

Ms. Cormier asked when it is time to make the next two week determination, what will be involved in making that decision.

The Mayor said just looking at this two weeks at a time and again he wants to treat city and school employees equally. His decision on the city side will be extending the April 11th date and this will take them through April 25th. That is how the city is going to do this. If the school wants to break this and do what they want to do, he will not be thrilled with this. The state has not indicated what is going to happen.

Dr. Wells made a motion that we follow the city guidelines as to how we treat our part time non-union employees.

Chair Mulrenan said without a second on the motion that motion can't move forward.

Ms. Chisholm made a motion to continue to pay all our employees until we get a date for permanent closure for the school year. Pay our hourly workers the same as we are paying our contracted workers until we go back or when we close for the school year.

Ms. Cormier seconded the motion.

Discussion on the motion:

Mr. Lipsett said given DESE guidance that employers continue to pay employees up until May 4th; this is a good date because as of right now this is the deadline for schools to reopen. This is two weeks for us, given the April vacation; we are on the same page as the city.

Dr. Wells asked to amend the motion with a date of May 4th.

Mr. Lipsett amended it by adding the date of May 4th.

Ms. Chisholm amended her motion by adding we continue to pay our hourly workers the same as we are paying our contracted workers up until May 4th; but if school continues to be closed we will revisit at this time.

Motion passed 6-0.

Roll Call:

Ms. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes,  
Dr. Wells-yes

Chairperson Crowley came back to say this concludes the meeting for April 8, 2020 as  
this was the only item on the agenda

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Chisholm made a motion to adjourn.  
Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jean MacLeod