

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Select Board
Tuesday, May 25, 2021
Remote Online Meeting (Zoom 831 3382 4295)
Called to Order at 6:22 p.m.**



Video Recording: [Custus VOD Widget](#)

Select Board Members	Present	Staff Members	Present
Laurie Bent - Chair	Yes	Leon A. Gaumond, Jr., Town Manager	Yes
Harvey Boshart	Yes	Kara Fleming, Asst. to the Town Manager	Yes
Christopher Houston	Yes	Lisa Yanakakis, Assistant Town Manager	Yes
School Committee Members			
Anita Raman	Yes		
Kenneth Newberg	Yes		
Alyson Muzila	Yes		
Attia Linnard	Yes		

Chair Ms. Bent called the remote meeting to order and read the following: *Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Weston will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. We will strive to provide access to such meetings via a link to call in, or other similar option. In the event we are unable to accommodate the same, despite best efforts, we will post recorded sessions of the meeting as soon as possible following the same. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings.*

Chair Raman called the meeting of the School Committee to order and introduced the members of the School Committee.

Interview of Candidates to Fill Vacancy on the School Committee

Ms. Bent explained that the two boards were meeting jointly to interview candidates for the vacancy on the School Committee left by the resignation of Rachel Stewart. There are three candidates for the open position who gave brief introductions of their backgrounds.

Danielle Black: She feels the experience she brings to the Committee will be helpful for the next year. Her knowledge of union negotiations will be critical in the next year and as a former member of the Committee this knowledge will be invaluable. She understands how the School Committee works.

Tricia Liu: Has lived in Weston for 12 years and has a son in the High School. She has extensive background in STEM as well as business management and was a director of a \$30 billion company. She wants to help our children take advantage of new technology and robotics. She has been a volunteer for various school councils and in community outreach. She attends many School Committee meetings and knows how the schools work.

Francis Parker: Has 50 years of experience of teaching at higher education and at Boston College. Has worked for the Town of Hull in various town departments. He lives at Campion Center and only wants to serve for this one year appointment. He respects teachers and parents. He would offer assistance in the curriculum and works in

different languages. He has experience working with the Bermuda Government and as a result has background in negotiations. He also has experience working with diverse populations.

Chair Raman thanked the applicants for stepping forward and volunteering. She mentioned that the remaining members of the Committee only have 3 years of combined experience. She feels that experience doing the job as a School Committee member. She expressed concerns about the budget cycle and the upcoming union negotiations. She feels Ms. Black would fit the needs of the Committee as a result.

Ms. Muzila thanked the applicants for volunteering. She asked the candidates about transparency and communication. Ms. Black spoke about good two-way dialogue and using technology to make the job easier. Mr. Parker mentioned various church and civic groups to help with diverse outreach. Ms. Liu said we need to listen first and then respond. She highlighted various means of communication including when grades are posted.

Mr. Newberg said he spoke to all three candidates and feels that all three candidates bring good aspects to the job. He reiterated the needs of the School Committee which includes practical experience in union negotiations. He feels Ms. Black fills our needs right now. Ms. Liu spoke to her knowledge of budgeting and would offer much to that effort. Mr. Parker taught budgeting for 30 years at Boston College and feels he also has good theoretical experience.

Ms. Linnard said she would like to see more urgency when it comes to improvements in the schools. She wants to see a sense of urgency in their actions on the School Committee. She asked if cutting the current school budget would be a top two priority for the upcoming year. Mr. Parker said he thought it would be his top priority. Ms. Liu also said she would be looking closely at enrollment and if the data warranted, then she feels the answer is yes. Ms. Black said no. Ms. Linnard asked about previous elected office attempts in Weston. Mr. Parker has elected office experience in Hull but not in Weston. Ms. Black has run for School Committee 4 times, winning three and losing in her last attempt. Ms. Liu ran for School Committee three times and lost all three times.

Ms. Muzila acknowledged the Committee's need for both experience and transparency of message. The Schools are focused on the 5 year strategic plan and we need lots of good ideas.

Mr. Houston thanked the three applicants and feels that experience in negotiations and budgeting is of primary importance. He appreciates that Ms. Black has stepped forward at this time.

Mr. Boshart has spoken to present and past School Committee members and there appears to be a gap of experience on the current Committee with institutional knowledge.

Ms. Bent asked if the candidates planned to run for reelection at the end of the one year term. Mr. Parker acknowledged he was legally blind and 81 years old and will not run for reelection. Ms. Black announced she will not plan on running for reelection. Ms. Liu plans to run to reelection if appointed. Ms. Bent echoed the comment that experience is needed on the School Committee.

Ms. Muzila acknowledged that experience is very important but also pointed out the need to make it easier for new people to be welcomed into service to the Town as is transition within an organization.

Ms. Bent asked for any public comments. John McKenzie thanked the three candidates for stepping forward. He asked the candidates if they are interested in making virtual meetings the norm after the pandemic. Mr. Parker was agreeable. Ms. Liu would be open to some meetings in person and others virtually. Ms. Black is in favor of the hybrid model of both in-person as well as virtual. Mary Ellen Sikes asked about the hiring/firing of the School Superintendent and how much it cost to buy out the contract. She directed this question to Ms. Black and what she learned from that experience. Ms. Black said that it is important that the skill set for professional jobs needs to match the personnel.

MOTION: Ms. Raman moved to appoint Danielle Black to fill the vacancy on the School Committee left by Rachel Stewart to fill the remainder of the term until the conclusion of the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Houston. **Roll call vote:** Ms. Raman, Mr. Newberg, Ms. Muzila, Ms. Linnard all voted in the affirmative on behalf of the School Committee and Mr. Boshart, Mr. Houston and Ms. Bent all voted in the affirmative on behalf of the Select Board. **Approved unanimously.**

Ms. Bent announced that the Grant of Location public hearing scheduled for later tonight has been postponed to June 8, 2021 at a time to be determined.

Mr. Houston offered further comment to both Boards regarding rumors in the Town. He encouraged people to be more skeptical about Town rumors and mentioned recent rumors about Ms. Stewart's resignation from the School Committee. He strongly opposed the rumor that he and a School Committee member forced her to resign. Ms. Liu asked a procedural question about the vote needed for the School Committee selection which Ms. Bent clarified.

Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Raman moved to adjourn this joint meeting at 7:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Newberg. **Roll call vote:** Ms. Raman, Mr. Newberg, Ms. Muzila, Ms. Linnard all voted in the affirmative on behalf of the School Committee and Mr. Boshart, Mr. Houston and Ms. Bent all voted in the affirmative on behalf of the Select Board. **Approved unanimously.**

HARVEY BOSHART
Clerk