

# South Hadley Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Minutes

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January 4, 2024

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV1 or SHCTV1.com

**I. Call to Order:** At 6:00pm noticing a quorum, Chair, Eric Friesner called to order the remote South Hadley School Committee meeting, a Zoom Meeting accessible via SHCTV15 and SHCTV.com

**In Attendance:** Eric Friesner, Chairperson; Danielle Cooke, Vice Chairperson; Lawrence Dixon, Member (arrived at 6:33 p.m.); Daniel Vieu, Member; & Mark McLaughlin, Interim Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools; Jennifer Voyik, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations for South Hadley Public Schools & Tobias Smith, Student Representative.

**Guests:** Amy Foley, SHEA President.

**Absent:** Lynda Pickbourn-Smith, Member.

**II. Public Comment:** None.

**III. SHEA Report:** presented Amy Foley, SHEA President, "Happy New Year. Thank you. Tonight, I'm going to start with the SHEA shoutouts. At Mosier, the second-grade team hosted a holiday's traditions stroll in the cafeteria on the Wednesday before break. Students completed projects at home with their families to share some of their favorite holiday traditions, and how they celebrate the winter season. The projects were on display for the school to see. Great job a second-grade team. At Plains, I'd like to recognize educator Sam Sabbs. Before break, she and her first-grade class bred goodwill and cheer to the school with a fun seasonal card featuring wacky Wednesday photos and academic highlights. Thank you, Sam. And finally, at the Michael E. Smith Middle School, I'd like to recognize Stefani Holmes for the tireless work and dedication she puts towards the drama program, who just had another successful weekend of shows as they put on a Christmas Carol. I cannot wait to see what they have in store for us this March with their performance of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Now for the update, as you're probably aware, sicknesses are everywhere. Before the break and now this week we're seeing an uptick in absences for students and staff. The challenge of extended absences when teachers are out is making sure our students continue to receive meaningful instruction as we continue to experience a sub shortage. When students are out for extended times, the challenge is to catch them up in their learning for the time that they are away from the classroom. Students and staff are most successful in these situations when there is effective communication between schools and families. This communication will be essential over the next couple of weeks, as we now know, to expect an increase in sickness. Working together, we will be able to make sure our students don't miss a beat when absences are involved. In the New Year, SHEA looks to continue to move forward as we enter negotiations for our administrative assistance in Unit D. In the last round of negotiations, this unit settled 3-year contract months before the rest of the units ended up settling 4-year agreements. We look forward to negotiating a one-year contract for next year in the upcoming months, so that Unit D will be back on track with the other 3 units who will begin to negotiate a 3-year contract next year. Finally, SHEA looks forward to continuing to work on the JLMC next week to revise job descriptions for our support staff in Unit E. As we have seen our students with special needs

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population expand over the last 10 years, it is important to look at these job descriptions so that we can meet the ever-changing needs of our students. I know we've discussed the work of the JLMC quite a bit but one thing I've really enjoyed is that as we work on the different issues that our members of our 4 different units face, we've been able to rotate different members into positions on the JLMC. SHEA's permanent four members of the JLMC have been Nicole Pagnoni from Plains, Pam Soderbaum from Mosier School, Erin Johnson from the Middle School, and Robert Stackow representing the High School. Currently we've added Unit E members, Karen Geraghty from the High School, from Plains School, Chris Glenn, and Cheryl Holmes, and finally, Athena Fleury, a BCBA, who works at multiple schools. As we rotate members on to the JLMC we've been able to have experts on both sides of the table, who then effectively communicate to develop conditions that best serve our students. Other than the members I have already mentioned I think we have had 6 or 7 other members who have rotated through the JLMC team this year to work on different issues. The benefits of this that I've seen are the relationships that we continue to make with the District Administration and the School Committee. I want to thank all the members of the JLMC. Members and district members alike for their commitment to this process."

#### IV. Routine Items

##### A. Approval of Warrants

<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
January 4, 2024	Biweekly Payroll	\$840,489.90

**(VOTE)** Vice Chair Cooke made a motion to approve the following warrant, it is warrant dated January 4, 2024, it is a biweekly payroll in the amount of \$840,489.90.

Dan View seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke - Aye; View - Aye & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passes unanimously, 3-0.

##### B. Approval of 12/21/23 Minutes

**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept those minutes.

Dan View so moved.

Vice Chair Cooke seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke - Aye; View - Aye & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passes unanimously, 3-0.

#### V. Reports of Standing Committees

##### A. Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

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- B. Report of Student Representative:** Presented by Tobias Smith –  
**SHHS:** Midterms 1/16/24-1/19/24 and will be half days, if students want to grab a lunch before they leave for the day, they will have to sign up for that.  
Tutoring for the ELA MCAS takes place every Monday in room 517.  
Tutoring for the Science MCAS will take place on Thursdays in room 310.  
SHHS is bringing back *Students for a Day*, which is an opportunity for teachers to shadow a student for the day.  
**MESMS:** First Annual Snowball Dance, 1/5/2024  
Robotics Class is working hard learning about gears.  
Family Consumer Science classes made a delicious sauce before break.  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math classes wrapped up lessons on profits & graphing skills.  
Advisory classes completed the name projects where students wrote what their name meant in 100 words or less and those are hanging in the halls.
- C. Report of Interim Superintendent:** Dr. McLaughlin spoke about an email that went out informing SHPS Families of a date when Covid tests will be distributed. This will take place as a drive-up event on January 10<sup>th</sup> 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. at SHHS. This may be the first of a few. He thanked Mary Walsh, Director of Health Services, for coordinating this and assisting the District through some tough times and helping us stay safe and healthy.
- D. Report of the Chair and School Committee:** Chair Friesner reminded the community that papers are still available for all Town elected offices through 1/11/24 and due back on 1/16/2024. Vice Chair Cooke shared that the Human Rights Commission is still looking for another person to join. If anyone listening is interested in joining, please contact Tay Silveira via email at [tayshcod@gmail.com](mailto:tayshcod@gmail.com).
- E. Appreciations:** Mark McLaughlin – Article in The Reminder discussing a visit from a nutcracker who greeted and bid farewells to all four schools the day before holiday break began, 12/22/2023 & Tobias Smith for participating and lending a student’s voice and collecting the information to inform the community of things that are going on in the schools. Chair Friesner – Tobias Smith.
- VI. December 2024 SHHS Band Disney/Universal Trip Proposal:** Some discussion took place regarding fundraising and sponsorship of a student. Jenn Voyik stated donations can be sent in with a letter attached stating how you would like the money to be used.  
**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the proposed 2024 Music Trip.  
Dan Vieu so moved.  
Vice Chair Cook seconded.  
Cooke – Aye; Vieu – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.  
This motion passed unanimously, 3-0.
- VII. Second Reading: Therapy Dog Policy:** Dr. McLaughlin provided revisions based on discussion from the last meeting on 12/21/23, the suggestions were to the District to update the pronouns and more specific language added to the handler regarding the

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execution of duties.

**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the South Hadley Therapy Dog Policy as presented tonight.

Dan Vieu so moved.

Vice Chair Cooke seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke – Aye; Vieu – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

**VIII. Policy Update I: Universal Free School Meals:** Jenn Voyik stated that with the passing of The universal free meals the District needs to review and update their policies. She read the Revision.

**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the updated Universal Free School Meals Policy.

Vice Chair Cooke so moved.

Dan Vieu seconded.

No further discussion.

Cooke – Aye; Vieu – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

**Policy Update II: School Nutrition Program Charge:** Jenn Voyik read the policy.

**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to accept the update to the School Nutrition Policy as presented, with the amendment suggested by Danielle Cooke.

Dan Vieu so moved.

Vice Chair Cooke seconded.

Cooke – Aye; Dixon – Aye; Vieu – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

**IX. Discussion of Participation in Holyoke's St. Patrick's Parade:** The Committee discussed marching in the parade. They may participate.

**X. Information only:** None.

**XI. Unfinished Business:** None.

**XII. New Business:** None.

**(VOTE)** Chair Friesner entertained a motion to adjourn.

Dan Vieu so moved.

Vice Chair seconded.

Cooke – Aye; Dixon – Aye; Vieu – Aye; & Friesner – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Submitted by Kiesha Keit, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

Approved by the School Committee on January 18, 2024.