

Harvard Public Schools

On-line Meeting

School Committee Meeting

March 23, 2020

6:15 PM

Zoom Meeting Link; <https://zoom.us/j/690907453>

1. Call to Order and Read the Vision Statement (6:15)
2. HEAC PPA Proposal; Vote (6:17)
3. Coronavirus Readiness and Learning Plan Update (6:50)
4. Superintendent Update (7:10)
5. Field Trip/Grant Approval; Vote (7:20)
6. Continuing Pay of Hourly Employees; Vote (7:25)
7. Continuing Pay of Bus Contract; Vote (7:40)
8. School Building Update (8:00)
9. Agenda Items (8:05)
10. Approval of Meeting Minutes (8:10)
11. Liaison/Sub-committee Reports (8:15)
12. School Committee Commentary (8:25)

Materials: PPA Presentation, Grants, Field Trip Approvals, Superintendent Report, Minutes

Vision Statement: The Harvard Public Schools Community, dedicated to educational excellence, guides all students to realize their highest potential by balancing academic achievement with personal well-being in the pursuit of individual dreams. The students engage in learning how to access and apply knowledge, think critically and creatively, and communicate effectively. They develop the confidence and ability to understand diverse perspectives, collaborate, and contribute to their local, national, and global communities.

Solect Energy PPA

23 March 2020

Terms

Power Purchase Agreement

- **solar array located on roof of new Hildreth School**
- **array built and owned by Solect Energy**
- **contract terms set by PowerOptions**
- **no cost to the town**
- **predicted generation: 290,000 kWh/yr**
- **provides ~69% of Hildreth electricity**
- **20 year term; fixed price**
- **power purchase price (paid to Solect): \$0.110/kWh (24% savings)**
- **projected total savings over 20 years: \$353,000**

Due Diligence

Interviewed 4 recent customers of Solect

- **Lunenburg Public Schools**
- **North Middlesex Regional Schools**
- **Phillips Andover Academy**
- **North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters
(Boston, Worcester)**

Comments

- **Generally positive references**
- **Solect easy to work with**
- **However, roof leaks at Lunenburg and North Middlesex; no problems at other installations**
- **Solect made good, paid for roof repairs**

What are the benefits?

Reduce electricity bill

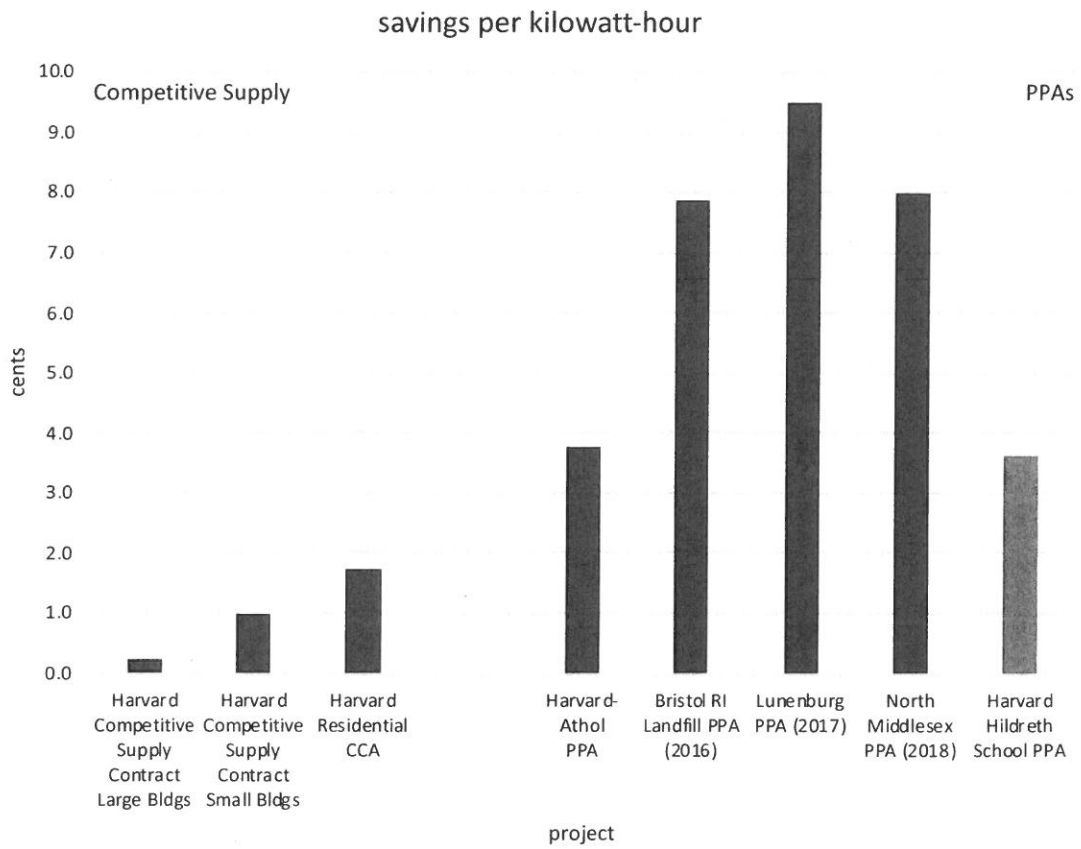
- **Lower kWh electricity charges**
- **Lower demand charges (demand is up to 20% of bill)**

Known fixed price for 20 years

Less fuel used by generator in power outage?

Reduce the school's carbon footprint

Is This a Good Deal?



Why No RFP?

We can piggyback on the PowerOptions procurement

- **MA General Law Chapter 164 Section 137**

PowerOptions conducted RFQ and selected Solect Energy

- **RFQ distributed to 26 solar developers**
- **Design and Pricing exercises**
- **Responses from 6 developers**
- **Review Committee**
 - **PowerOptions staff (4)**
 - **PowerOptions Advisory Council (2)**
 - **Outside Legal Counsel (1)**
 - **Industry Expert Consultant (1)**
- **Top two respondents interviewed**
- **Solect selected for price, depth of experience, financing**

We get the same terms as Solect bid to PowerOptions

Why Now?

- **PPA rates getting less favorable as Federal Tax Credit goes down**
- **Queue for Interconnect to Grid is growing**
- **State Incentives decrease with each block**
- **State incentives favor smaller systems (< 250 kW) right now**
- **Helps avoid increase in operating expenses for new school**
- **Coronavirus: fall in business confidence may reduce investors' interest in PPAs**

Summary

Pros

- Established company
- Good to outstanding references
- Lots of school projects
- Unique in not requiring standard procurement
- Competitive price

Cons

- Risk of roof leaks

Steps to Town Approval

✓ Harvard Energy Advisory Committee

School District Counsel?

School District Insurance?

Superintendent of Schools

School Committee

Town Counsel

Select Board

- **Letter of Intent, PPA Contract, Lease, PILOT**

State Board of Education (Lease)

Move that during the period starting March 16, 2020 to April 6, 2020 inclusive or to such later date as the Governor of Massachusetts may determine for the continued closure of all public schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the Superintendent may determine for the continued closure of the Harvard Public Schools, whichever date is later, due to COVID-19 in the 2019-2020 school year, hereinafter referred to as the "Closure Period," the Harvard School Committee, subject to appropriation, shall pay the regular wages for work days during the Closure Period to each employee of the Harvard Public Schools, excluding day substitutes, provided that each such employee to be paid performs work that may be requested or required by the employee's supervisor during the work days to be paid in the Closure Period. Nothing in this motion limits any rights that any employee may have to take vacation, sick, or personal leave during the Closure Period.



*News from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley & the
MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

On the Desktop - March 20, 2020

School District Payments to Hourly Employees

Dear Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Assistant Superintendents, and School Business Officials,

In response to questions I have received from school superintendents, I am strongly recommending that school districts pay their hourly employees during the current emergency school closure. Like all of us, these employees need to follow public health directives and take care of themselves and their families. While they do so, school districts could ask them to continue their learning by reading educational articles, books, taking an online class or performing other tasks that could be a benefit to the school districts.

For the benefit of the students we serve, I believe it will be important for school districts to maintain continuity of operations during the period of school closures. Districts must be able to quickly resume providing services to students as soon as schools re-open. In order for school districts to accomplish that, they will need to have an available, ready work force, including hourly employees.

School districts have already budgeted these costs, and I urge school superintendents to coordinate your efforts on this issue with your municipal officials, human resource officers, and school business managers.

I expect to be able to provide a recommendation regarding payments to contractors in the near future.

Thank you for all that you are doing to manage and lead during this state of emergency.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

School Committee Minutes
Upper Town Hall
Monday, March 9, 2020

Members attending: John Ruark, Sharlene Cronin, SusanMary Redinger, Suzanne Allen, Shannon Molloy, Maureen Babcock, Linda Dwight and Aziz Aghayev.

John Ruark called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Maureen Babcock read the Vision Statement.

Public Commentary: None

Student Update: Taylor Caroom gave the following report:

The Business Professionals of America conference was held over the weekend and went well. There were over 40 students who attended. Great feedback was received by all who attended. There is a Middle School dance being held this Friday for students in grades 6-8. The Science Fair was held this past Friday with great participation. The Middle School Science Fair will be held next week.

The Chair asked for approval to switch the order of the agenda with Item 6 to be followed by Item 4 and 5.

Innovation Lab

Ms. Beth Graham presented to the Committee how students and teachers use the Innovation Lab. Ms. Graham developed a Hyper dock/slides that were introduced to teachers during the January PD day. The slide decks are meant to be self-paced training materials for teacher to use to explore some of our STEAM innovation lab tools and brainstorm ideas for integrating them into their classroom curriculum. Second and third grade students demonstrated to School Committee members how they use Little Bits, Keva Planks, and Turning Tumble.

Field Trip/Grant Approval

The following grants from the PTO were presented for approval:

Life in the Colonies (Music and Dance) - \$500

Staff Development: Break Out Boxes - \$1,209

Suzanne Allen made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to approve the grant as presented.

VOTE 5/0

Dr. Dwight explained that the Washington DC trip is scheduled for March 18th through the 23rd. There was discussion about options regarding the trip due to the Coronavirus. The options are traveling as planned, rescheduling to another time or cancelling the trip. The tour company would be willing to reschedule the trip at no cost with a School Committee vote. SusanMary

Redinger and Maureen Babcock polled parents in the ninth grade to see how parents felt and explained the responses they received. Most parents wanted the trip to continue. Principal, Scott Hoffman felt that erring on the side of caution and rescheduling the trip until fall would be a good option. Due to the seriousness of the risk in sending students the Committee felt that the option to postpone the trip to another date was the best option.

Suzanne Allen made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to direct Dr. Dwight to draft a letter to EF Tours indicating that the School Committee has directed the trip to be postponed.
VOTE 5/0

The Committee discussed the upcoming Model UN overnight trip and decided to leave the decision up to the administration as to whether to continue that trip for this coming weekend.

Club Approvals; Vote

Scott Hoffman presented for approval three new club applications.

Project 351 Club – the club provides opportunity for students and teachers to actively participate in Project 351's three main statewide services: the Cradles to Crayons clothing drive, the September 11th Tribute Service, and the Loaves and Fishes food drive.

M3C/Math Modeling Challenge Team – the club prepares for and competes in the Mathworks Math Modelling Challenge competition.

Bromfield Glee Club – the club promotes joy in the musically gifted students of the Bromfield community. It allows diversity in the Bromfield Music Department. The club unifies students who share similar interests in music and performance.

Sharlene Cronin made a motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to approve all of the clubs as presented.

VOTE 5/0

Coronavirus Readiness Update

Dr. Dwight reviewed the steps being taken regarding the Coronavirus. There is a planning meeting being held with the Board of Health to plan for a community presentation and panel discussion on Thursday, March 12th. In addition, the school is working with parents to self-quarantine if they have traveled to an effected area. The names of students and staff who are self-quarantined are confidential.

Superintendent Update

See attached.

Goals Discussion; Vote

Sharlene Cronin presented an updated version of a potential additional joint goal/s that would encompass "Fields" and "Title IX" and look at each specifically. The vision of the Fields goal is to have high quality athletic fields that are adequately maintained and meeting the needs of our students and families. The vision of the Title IX goal is to have documented evidence of being Title IX compliant. The Committee discussed changes to scope and dates of completion. The

Committee proposed that the Title IX measure be changed to creating a plan to hire a consultant on how to tackle the Title IX review with a completion date of June 30, 2020.

John Rurak made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to amend the joint goals to add Fields as presented and modified and to add Title IX as presented and modified.
VOTE 5/0

School Building Update

Susan Mary Redinger reported that the school building project is on budget and about three weeks behind schedule. The next School Building Committee meeting is Thursday. The meeting will start with a tour of the building. All members are invited to be at the trailer at 3:30 if interested in taking the tour. The tour will last for approximately 30 minutes.

Budget Discussion

Dr. Dwight presented the FY21 budget book that were modified and updated with changes that identify the potential budget cuts requested by the Finance Committee. Dr. Dwight would still like to vet the cuts with principals and the budget subcommittee before this comes back to the School Committee for a final vote. John Ruark shared information discussed at a recent Board of Selectman's meeting regarding school budgeting. The Selectman suggested budgeting for more retirements based on a historical average for better forecasting and a requested that mid-year changes be one-time expenses and not carried into the next level services budget.

Agenda Items

Title IX
Budget
Technology Plan
Start-time Update
Continuous Improvement Report
Fifth grade Girls Scouts
Coronavirus
SOA plan
Transportation for athletics
Policy
HTA contract
Student Opportunity Act
School Choice

Approval of Meeting Minutes

With no objection John Ruark declared the minutes of the meeting of February 24^h approved as amended.
VOTE 5/0

Liaison/Subcommittee

Shannon Molloy submitted the following signed warrants for School Committee review

Warrant #	Date	Amount
20-18	January 31, 2020	\$1,144,043.88

Shannon Molloy reported that HES School Council is reviewing parent survey results. There has been a high response rate with a lot of feedback. The School Council will process trends by reviewing the comments section of the survey at their next meeting.

Shannon Molloy reported SEPAC is bringing another program to the community called "Understanding the IEP". It will be held at the Bromfield library on March 30th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Shannon Molloy reported that the Policy Subcommittee had to cancel their last meeting. The next meeting needs to be cancelled as well. Will be looking to get on track soon.

Shannon Molloy reported that the Start Time Subcommittee met to follow up after meeting with Dee Bus Company. The Subcommittee is still looking to make a recommendation by the end of school the school year that will go into effect the following year.

Shannon Molloy reported that the Continuous Improvement Subcommittee met and considered the feedback from the full committee and picked the recommendations for focus and will bring those back at a future meeting.

SusanMary Redinger –As expressed by Suzanne Allen and Sharlene Cronin the Science Fair was amazing, engaging and the students were extraordinary and passionate. Suzanne Allen and Sharlene Cronin thanked SusanMary Redinger for coordinating the judging.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the School Council will meet Wednesday and the agenda items that they are working on are the School Improvement Plan and updates from the Subcommittees. The parent survey has gone out.

Suzanne Allen – reported that the Student Advisory meeting was well attended. Discussion was held around gender and culture. Students are enthusiastic about clubs and how they help to make kids feel like they belong.

Maureen Babcock reported that DEAC is meeting tomorrow night.

Kim Walsh, Director of Recreation is moving on to a new position, she has been a great resource and will be missed.

Sharlene Cronin – reported that as of this week Parks and Rec are closing fields. It is important that coordination be tightened up going forward. There is fields assessment software that will be will shared with this group if you have anything you would like to share or need feedback you will be able to do so on this software. The Field Subcommittee will meet again this Friday. A final report from the Field Subcommittee will be ready to be sent out before town meeting in May.

John Ruark – HEAC met last week in order to hear from a vendor who potentially can supply solar panels at HES.

John Ruark -reported that Student Advisory Council met with six students last week. Topics that were discussed were enrollment by gender, culture, feedback and being heard. It was a very productive meeting.

Public Commentary – None

School Committee Commentary –

Suzanne Allen thanked Shannon Molloy for planning the amazing Civics Cup event. Suzanne Allen left the event beaming.

Shannon Molloy – thanked everyone who came to the Civics Cup – 40 students participated. All of the liaisons were used. Great activity.

Linda Dwight reported that Bloomin Art will be held this weekend.

Linda Dwight report that the HES play – Little Mermaid will be held this weekend.

Adjourned

At 9:45 p.m., John Ruark made motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to move to convene into executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, sections 18-25 for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to, and in preparation for, collective bargaining with the Harvard Teachers' Association because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. We will not enter back into open session.

Allen (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Ruark (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Zadroga

Superintendent's Update March 23, 2020

I. Coronavirus Update

Standard II: Management and Operations, Standard IV: Professional Culture

The consistency to the current educational situation has been the changing circumstances. There have been dozens of Zoom meetings between Commissioner Riley, superintendent groups, MASS, special education specialists, lawyers and more. Sometimes the messaging changed within days; for example, on Friday, March 13th Governor Baker and Commissioner Riley recommended schools remain open and close only briefly for cleaning if someone in the school tested positive, and by Sunday, the Governor closed schools for three weeks. During the uncertainty, everyone has been collaborating and forging new pathways through unprecedented times.

Our teachers and district families have responded with understanding and flexibility (see comments below). At first, we were planning and preparing to move the curriculum forward at some reduced speed, and then the clear directive was to offer extension, review, and enrichment on prior content instead and focus on teacher/student relationships and connections. Now, with the possibility of a longer closure, the direction from DESE may change again. We are currently waiting for an update that is expected during the middle of the week.

During the week of March 16th – 20th, the leadership team, office personnel, and custodians continued to work on site while being mindful of extra cleaning, handwashing, and distancing. We met with both faculties remotely to provide consistent messaging, hear feedback, and answer questions. Throughout the week, the custodians sanitized the buildings, office personnel held pick up times for family resources, the technology staff trained teachers and organized information, and leaders supported staff with the transition.

By the end of the week, we were ready to close the offices and send everyone home to work remotely. The only person consistently on site now is Patrick Harrigan, our new facilities director. He began working for us earlier than expected due to the closure of the Lowell schools. We are fortunate to have completed the hiring process just in time and to have found such an experienced and knowledgeable leader.

The leadership team has done a remarkable job of guiding their staffs into and through this time of change. Hard times such as these reveal the strength of relationships developed over the past years, and we are fortunate to have a strong team that coordinates and collaborates daily regarding every aspect of the closure.

Teachers have also done a remarkable job balancing contact with students and families from their home offices. They began planning for this in the preceding weeks, so that the transition was smooth. We have encouraged them to develop plans that work for them and their students while providing some basic parameters such as the M-W or T-Th communication plan for Bromfield students. We are adapting and supporting staff and families as needed. An example of this includes establishing a Zoom meeting shared calendar to prevent overlapping sessions once this became an identified issue.

We will continue to coordinate all the various aspects of this changing dynamic in the weeks and months ahead.

**Superintendent's Update
March 23, 2020**

"Thank you. This is JUST what we should all be doing, and I truly applaud and appreciate the District taking this proactive measure. I cannot imagine the pressure you are feeling and really think you are doing what everyone should do." - Sima; Parent

"I have to say we're impressed overall with what Harvard is doing for its students. I can't say the same is true for other districts. You should all be commended." - Rachel; Parent

"I have STRONG, UNWAVERING faith that you will get us and the children through this, I really do.

The district and HES, in particular, are in safe, reliable hands.

I thank all three of you for giving me a peace of mind in this tough, tough time. More important, thank you for giving me the faith to know the kids will be alright. We could not have asked for more competent leaders." – a Harvard teacher

"I just want to say first and foremost that I am so proud to be part of this school district during these challenging times!!! The way everyone has worked together to help each other out brings joy to my heart. I have the pleasure of seeing our district from multiple vantage points and they are all amazing." - a Harvard teacher

II. Lunch Services Continue

Chef Paul and members of the food preparation staff have been continuing to provide meals for families in need. They have been using the Bromfield kitchen to prepare the meals, and then Chef Paul delivers them. Here is part of the e-mail that he sent to me after the first day; *Sent off our first delivery of foods today for 10 families of about 40 folks. Boxes included quarts of turkey rice soup, tricolor rotini w/ meatsauce, chicken chili & sweet potatoes, waldorf chicken salad and rolls and a box of choc. chip cookies (of course).* He goes on to say how appreciative the families were to receive such help and how he looks forward to continuing the good work until the schools reopen.

III. Field and Park Closures

Standard II: Management and Operations

The Town of Harvard closed the fields and parks as a social distancing measure. Hopefully, this time off will help to regenerate the fields. Although unexpected, the outcome will be welcomed.

Superintendent's Update
March 23, 2020

Harvard School Committee

Discussions and Votes for March 23, 2020

- HEAC PPA Proposal – HEAC is recommending moving forward with a company for providing solar panels on the new HES. Approval from school committee is required to move the process forward. David Fay from HEC and the SBC will provide an overview of the project, the company, and the process.
- Continuing Pay of Hourly Employees – The committee will discuss options and possibly vote on a plan for paying wages of hourly employees during the school closure.
- Continuing Pay of Bus Contract – Dee Bus has requested we continue payment of the bus contract fees during the school closure. The committee will discuss options for this contract, and possibly vote on an approach.