

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Tuesday, April 12, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Participants from the School Committee: Chair Shannon Scully, Vice-Chair, Susan McCready, Tracey Spruce, Paul Murphy, and Lauren Conoscenti.

I. Regular Meeting

Call to Order

Chairperson Scully called to order the meeting at 7:04 PM. The Regular School Committee Meeting will be broadcast by Andover TV and on Comcast Channel 99, Verizon Channel 43 or streamed: www.andovertv.org. ***Public Participation via email:*** scremote@andoverma.us or **through live video comment with advanced WebEx registration.**

II. Regular Meeting

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence.

A. New Business

On March 25, the School Committee was presented with two excellent candidates for Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Magda Parvey and Dr. Stephen Zadravec.

1. Summary of Timeline (Jess Porter, HR Director)

Human Resources Director, Jess Porter provided a review of the search process for the Superintendent Search that began in October 2020. Members of the Andover Community submitted a great deal of feedback. Tonight, the School Committee will deliberate and hopefully come to a decision. Shannon Scully thanked the Andover Community including School Administrators and staff and everyone who has engaged in this process, especially the Screening Committee and their Chair, Ann McNamee. It has been a thorough process. Shannon also thanked Ray & Associates for their help in this important process. Thank you to the School Committee for the extraordinary amount of time they have spent throughout this process.

2. Superintendent Selection

The appointment of the Superintendent will require three votes that would nullify any other votes. Shannon presented an option to the committee that would call for a revote, after the vote for Superintendent, aif the Committee as a whole would like to have a unanimous vote that would demonstrate that they can go through a genuine process and have an opportunity to have unanimous and full support of the School Committee. Shannon suggested that in the first round, the members of the School Coommittee keep the discussion on who they would like their candidate to be. All members of the School Committee thanked everyone who participated in this process.

Remarks from the School Committee:

Lauren Conoscenti: We are in an envious position to have two candiates who could lead our schools, both candidates are exceptional. Lauren believes Dr. Parvey would be the person to

lead our District. Throughout every interaction, Dr. Parvey spoke about partnership and teamwork and asked insightful questions and was interested in the answers. She portrayed a layer of trust and will to do what is necessary to heal the school community. She feels it is important to have parents at the table. When parents trust in the school community, we can do bold things. A superintendent willing to have those conversations with parents is critically important as we build trust and move past the pandemic. Trust is a critical prerequisite.

Tracey Spruce: Each candidate brings different strengths to the table and Andover would be fortunate to have either one. Tracey spoke with folks outside of Andover and with parents and principals who gave great feedback. Tracey thinks Dr. Parvey would be the best candidate to lead our district. Looking back at the profile of characteristics, one of the qualities was about listening. Dr. Parvey talked a lot about listening to ideas from those in school administration and the community. Dr. Parvey brought up working with the Warrior Way and how she would bring that into her leadership and reaching out to parents/families who don't always participate. Dr. Parvey is a listener before making a decision. Dr. Parvey gave us specific ideas on how to attract and support diverse staff and talked about two ideas on retraining and obtaining staff. Tracey feels Dr. Parvey could lead this process in a productive way having a student centered philosophy in all of her conversations. Dr. Parvey embraces social and emotional learning and is well suited to lead this effort. She talked a lot about supporting teachers and staff. Tracey liked hearing about shadowing students to learn of their experiences. We need this kind of leadership more than ever.

Paul Murphy: Paul was able to be part of the Screening Committee for the Interim Superintendent and also for the permanent superintendent position and in that time he thought a lot about the responsibility of the job. The big goal is to inspire, model, and lead in making the tough decisions on how we get there. The idea of this is hard work but we can do this and be inspired. This job also has to be a model for the kids, the process, and everything in between, and have empathy for teachers and staff who do hard work everyday. How do we match the talents and life stage of our candidates with the talent and life stage of Andover. Andover does a lot, but we have a long way to go and we don't want to go backwards. In terms of match and candidates, Dr. Parvey meets that need. Her past performance, her words, her empathy, and how she has led over the past years and still has the ability to patch into what it means to be a teacher and has the strength and desire of what it means to be a leader. There is great value of someone coming from many different districts and many different states and is powerful for us. Her life experience as a woman of color will help us to serve a great number of students going forward. Paul supports Dr. Parvey.

Susan McCready: Susan also agrees that this open and public process is necessary and valuable but is also stressful for our candidates. She thanked both candidates for applying and learning about us and Massachusetts. Both candidates bring many talents. Susan also shares that Dr. Parvey, at this time, is the best fit for Andover. To her, some of the things that stand out are that she is a life-long learner, her sense of humility to fail and her willingness to learn. Her comment about learning is about failure is something we should be modeling very strongly in education. It is important to see someone who has lived that. She respects what Andover has and her commitment to move us forward is critical. Effective leaders listen and learn from the people who have been there and doing very good things. Dr. Parvey is

confident, honest and direct in her conversation and in her comments. Susan appreciated how she communicated in the various pieces of the interview and how she communicated with the School Committee and others. Susan loved that she talked about writing and that the scores and rankings will come along. To give our kids a true love of learning and confidence without all of the stress that we are feeling right now. She loved that Dr. Parvey could laugh and express levity with difficult situations. Susan thinks this is an opportunity to have that fresh lens in a different approach. She supports Dr. Parvey.

Shannon Scully: Shannon also agrees that Dr. Parvey would be the person to lead Andover as the Superintendent of Schools. Her in-person conversations promoting a culture of civility and respect even when we don't agree came through in a number of conversations and interviews; trust is important and trust is earned but can be lost easily. Shannon also said that reaching consensus doesn't mean we always agree, she appreciates that Dr. Parvey talked a lot about people being open about their concerns. She liked the perspective that bargaining is a give and take, and it is all about the kids. Recruiting is not just being the ability to get people to come to the district but to stay, and her comments about coaching made a lot of sense. Shannon liked the philosophy and that Dr. Parvey talked about it being a healthy balance and her idea of embracing failure and what can come from a productive struggle. We had two excellent candidates, but Shannon's top choice is Dr. Parvey.

B. Public Input - none

C. Deliberation and Vote

I. Clarification on number of affirmative votes required

Unless there is any objection by members of the Committee, the Chair will clarify that the appointment of superintendent will require three affirmative votes cast for any candidate. That would constitute a majority of the committee and nullifies the impact of any abstentions.

Paul Murphy moved that Dr. Magda Parvey be appointed as Superintendent of Schools subject to the successful negotiation of a contract of employment mutually agreeable to the candidate and to the School Committee and signed by both parties or their designees.

Motion seconded by Lauren Conoscenti.

Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y.

Motion passes 5-0.

D. Adjournment

At 8:47 PM Susan McCready moved that the Andover and Shannon. Motion passes: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary