

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BRISTOL COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Bristol County Agricultural High School – Student Commons-2nd floor

Center Street, Dighton

A Public Meeting of the Bristol County Advisory Board commenced at 6:02 P.M. on Thursday, January 20, 2022 at the Student Commons, Bristol County Agricultural High School, 100 Center Street Dighton. Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held both in-person and via Zoom conference.

Notice of this meeting was issued to all members of the Advisory Board, posted on the County website, in the County Courthouses, published in the Taunton Daily Gazette and sent to the City and Town Halls in Bristol County.

Roll call was taken by Maria V. Gomes, County Administrator, and thirteen out of twenty communities were present for a total of 69.57 percent of the votes out of a total of 100.00.

City or Town	Representative	Vote
Dartmouth	John Haran	yes
Dighton	Ken Pacheco	yes
Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	yes
Fairhaven	Stasia Powers	yes
Fall River	Paul Coogan	yes
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	yes
No. Attleborough	Michael Borg	yes
Norton	Michael Toole	yes
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	yes
Rehoboth	Frederick E. Vadnais, Jr.	yes
Somerset	Kathleen Souza	yes
Taunton	Shaunna O'Connell	yes
Westport	Richard W. Brewer	yes

Chairman Joseph Pacheco opened the meeting and asked all to stand to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Pacheco introduced the current Executive Board members of the Bristol County Advisory Board, County Commissioners, School Department Administration and County Treasurer.

A motion was made by Selectman Jess Aptowitz of Mansfield, second by Selectman Richard Brewer of Westport to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2021 Annual Meeting.

On the motion, Roll Call:

City or Town	Representative	Vote
Dartmouth	John Haran	yes
Dighton	Ken Pacheco	yes

Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	yes
Fairhaven	Stasia Powers	yes
Fall River	Paul Coogan	yes
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	yes
No. Attleborough	Michael Borg	yes
Norton	Michael Toole	yes
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	yes
Rehoboth	Frederick E. Vadnais, Jr.	yes
Somerset	Kathleen Souza	yes
Taunton	Shaunna O'Connell	yes
Westport	Richard W. Brewer	yes

Unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Dartmouth Selectman John Haran, second by Westport Selectman Richard Brewer to approve the contract between the Bristol County Agricultural High School Board of Trustees and the Bristol County Agricultural High School Support Staff (M.T.A./N.E.A) as follows effective July 1, 2021:

Fiscal Year 2022 – 1.5%

Fiscal Year 2023 – 2%

Fiscal Year 2024 – 2%

On the motion, Roll Call:

City or Town	Representative	Vote
Dartmouth	John Haran	yes
Dighton	Ken Pacheco	yes
Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	yes
Fairhaven	Stasia Powers	yes
Fall River	Paul Coogan	yes
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	yes
No. Attleborough	Michael Borg	yes
Norton	Michael Toole	yes
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	yes
Rehoboth	Frederick E. Vadnais, Jr.	yes
Somerset	Kathleen Souza	yes
Taunton	Shaunna O'Connell	yes
Westport	Richard W. Brewer	yes

Unanimously approved

Chairman Pacheco asked ARPA Director and County Treasurer Saunders to speak about the County's update on the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The Portal is up and running. To date, there have been three applications and one has been approved. He stated that at the end of December the Government issued the Final

Rule on the guidelines for ARPA. Those guidelines are currently being reviewed. Applications are going through the review process.

Commissioner Kitchen mentioned that the County is currently working to develop a new website.

Mayor O'Connell from Taunton asked if there was a document that outlines the approval process.

Chris Saunders explained that all communities have been allowed access to submit applications through the Portal. So an application is submitted, it would be reviewed by Jane Gonsalves, CLA, Mintz Levin and then if it goes through all the steps and if in order it will be submitted to the County Commissioners for approval.

Mayor O'Connell indicated that she understood and stated that Jane Gonsalves has been a pleasure to work with.

Mr. Saunders stated that the rules are continually changing with no guarantee that there will not be more changes. If applications comply with the rules, they will be promptly processed, subject to the Commissioner's approval.

The turnaround on the approved applications for COVID testing kits must be voted on by the Commissioners. Nothing has been paid out to date.

Mayor O'Connell asked what the reason was for the County distributing funds in 25% over two or four years. Mr. Saunders stated that the plan is consistent with what is being done in Plymouth and Norfolk County. Only half the money has been received by the County and the rules are changing. He noted that it is harder to receive money back after it is out of the County's hands. Ultimately the County is on the hook for the funds. Grant agreements have been issued to each applicant.

Mr. Brewer from Westport asked once the town's application is approved, when the town can expect the money. Mr. Saunders explained that once the application is voted on by the Commissioners for final approval, a Warrant is issued for payment within the week.

Mr. Borg from North Attleboro asked about the revenue loss and the recent change in the final rule. North Attleboro received 3.3 million and 5.2 million from Bristol County based on per capita. That's lower than the standard allowance that's allowable. Will we be able to claim all of that for our portion of the Bristol County funds?

Mr. Saunders stated that there was a meeting today on the ten (10) million dollar allocation. He has no answer for them tonight. The County only has a ten million dollar deduction to allocate amongst the communities. The rules have only just recently been received and the County is awaiting clarification. There will be an update, once clarified.

Fall River Mayor Paul Coogan asked, if the County has ten million dollar cap on for lost revenue, does that mean that a community will get their percentage of that? Mr. Saunders stated that that is a policy decision as to how the ten million dollar amount will be allocated. If the State has all this money, what is the allotment of the State to the cities and towns? It will be up to the Commissioner's as to how they want to allocate the ten million.

There were no unanticipated items.

No public comment.

A motion was made by Dartmouth Selectman Haran, second by Fall River Mayor Coogan to adjourn at 6:25 pm.

On the motion, Roll Call:

City or Town	Representative	Vote
Dartmouth	John Haran	yes
Dighton	Ken Pacheco	yes
Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	yes
Fairhaven	Stasia Powers	yes
Fall River	Paul Coogan	yes
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	yes
No. Attleborough	Michael Borg	yes
Norton	Michael Toole	yes
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	yes
Rehoboth	Frederick E. Vadnais, Jr.	yes
Somerset	absent	
Taunton	Shaunna O'Connell	yes
Westport	Richard W. Brewer	yes

Motion carries.