



Northbridge Public Schools

Northbridge School Committee

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Erin Donahue, Chairperson, Edonahue@nps.org
Kathryn Atchue, Allan Richards, Jill Leonard

Northbridge Public Schools School Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 7, 2022 6:00PM

Northbridge High School Media Center

I. Call to Order - Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen (6:00)

II. Attendance

School Committee

Erin Donahue	Present
Kathryn Atchue	Present
Allan Richards	Present
Jill Leonard	Present

Also in attendance was Director of Business and Finance Melissa Walker

Board of Selectmen

Charles Ampagoomian, Jr.	Present
Brian Paulhus	Present
Thomas Melia	Present

III. Statement of Audio and Video Recording

IV. Introductions/Interviews of Candidates for one (1) School Committee Vacancies

Candidate, Heather Alden introduced herself and answered questions from both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen. The following questions were included in her interview.

Jill Leonard: What life or work experience do you have that would benefit you as a School Committee Member?

Heather Alden advised that she took a business from negative to positive cash flow and kept it running up until the pandemic. She works at DCF and also took time to get a Master's Degree in social work.

Kathryn Atchue: What is the purpose of School Committee?

Heather Alden answered that it serves as a bridge between communities and schools and that it allows kids and families to have a voice and be heard.

Allan Richards: What do you think you will bring to the table?

Heather Alden advised that pediatrics is her passion and has been for the past 15 plus years. She has also been a member of the Northbridge community for many years and has loved being involved. She wants to continue to build the connection the community.

Brian Paulhus: Is there a particular issue that would motivate you to want to join?

Heather Alden stated that she looked over the budget and saw that SEL and mental health is a huge focus, as well as the policies and procedures the district is working towards. This is a passion of hers.

Thomas Melia: Being a School Committee member in charge of overseeing all systems, with everything going on in the country, what is you feeling about the use of School Resource officers?

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Heather Alden advised she supports the use of School Resource officers, however, it is not the final line of defense but rather a start. They are trained in things a teacher wouldn't be able to do and she feels they work to help keep the kids safe. She has a preschooler getting ready to graduate and a 7th grader, so she is very much impacted by everything going on.

Charles Ampagoomian: Over the past year, various committees and unions are pushing the criteria of CRT and gender identity. How do you feel about those?

Heather stated that she is an inclusive person and masters in social work for a reason, meaning she embraces the diversity of a child and that they should feel valued no matter how they identify. She feels that CRT is blown out of proportion and is not taught the way it is amplified in the media. She feels it is valuable and important to truly learn what happened in the country, but at age appropriate levels.

V. Motions to Appoint

Charles Ampagoomian opened it up for nominations upon completion of Heather Alden's interview.

School Committee

A motion was made by Erin Donahue to nominate Heather Alden to become a member of School Committee The motion was seconded by Melia.

Erin Donahue Yes

Kathryn Atchue Yes

Allan Richards Yes

Jill Leonard Yes

4 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

Board of Selectmen

Charles Ampagoomian, Jr. Yes

Brian Paulhus Yes

Thomas Melia Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

VI. Swear-In

A. Linda Zwiyen

Linda Zwiyen swore Heather Alden in as a School Committee member.

VII. Adjournment

Board of Selectmen

A motion was made by Charles Ampagoomian to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting. The motion was seconded by Brian Paulhus and Thomas Melia.

Charles Ampagoomian Yes

Thomas Melia Yes

Brian Paulhus Yes

3 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

School Committee

A motion was made by Erin Donahue to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Kathryn Atchue.

Erin Donahue Yes

Kathryn Atchue Yes

Allan Richards Yes

Jill Leonard Yes

4 members having voted in the affirmative

0 members having voted in the negative

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Note: The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Also, the timeframe for each topic is a general guideline and may not be strictly adhered to.