



**School Committee  
Meeting Book**

**October 2, 2019  
7:00 pm**

**Town Hall -100 Maple Avenue  
Selectmen's Meeting Room**



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**October 2, 2019 7:00pm  
Town Hall—Selectmen's Meeting Room  
100 Maple Avenue**

**Items**

**Suggested time allotments**

(Note: The meeting will open at 6:30pm and immediately adjourn to executive session; when executive session is complete, the meeting will be recessed until 7:00pm)

Executive Session 6:30 – 7:00

- A. For the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association – Unit B
- B. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes

I. Public Participation

7:00-7:10

II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

III. Superintendent's Report

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

- A. Superintendent's Awards: Student Recognition

7:10 – 7:30

V. Curriculum

- A. Civics Education: Report

7:30 – 7:55

VI. Policy

VII. Finance & Operations

- A. Guiding Principles for Redistricting Process: Recommendation, Discussion, & Potential Vote

7:55 – 8:25

- B. Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Calendar: Recommendation & Potential Vote

8:25 – 8:35

VIII. Old Business

IX. New Business

- A. Effective Communication With Constituents: Discussion

8:35 – 8:50

X. Approval of Minutes

8:50 – 8:55

XI. Executive Session (if necessary to continue; same topics as above)

8:55 – 9:15

XII. Adjournment

9:15

**Next regular meeting: October 16, 2019**



## SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

**ITEM NO: I Public Participation**

MEETING DATE: 10/2/19

**SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:**

Will the School Committee hear thoughts and ideas from the public regarding the operations and the programs of the school system?

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Copies of the policy and procedure for Public Participation are available to the public at each School Committee meeting.

**ITEM NO: II. Chairperson's Report/Members' Reports**

**SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:**

Will the School Committee hear a report from the Chairperson of the School Committee and other members of the School Committee who may wish to comment on school affairs?

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Chairperson and members of the Shrewsbury School Committee to comment on school affairs that are of interest to the community.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

School Committee Members  
Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson  
Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson  
Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary  
Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Committee Member  
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Committee Member

**ITEM NO: III. Superintendent's Report**

**SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:**

Will the School Committee hear a report from Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools?

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This agenda item allows the Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to comment informally on the programs and activities of the school system.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

**ACTION RECOMMENDED FOR ITEMS I, II, & III:**

That the School Committee accept the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.



## SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:** MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**  
**A. Superintendent's Awards: Student Recognition**

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents requests that each superintendent, on its behalf, recognize outstanding members of the senior class in each district's high school. Due to the size of the graduating class (500+), Dr. Sawyer is allowed to present the award to three students this year. Dr. Sawyer has selected Stefanie Del Rosario, Hannah Huang, and Lanna Wang as this year's recipients due to their outstanding academic performance.

The New England School Development Council gives superintendents in affiliated districts the opportunity to present New England School Development Council Awards for Academic Growth and Student Leadership in Learning to deserving high school seniors. Due to the size of the district, Dr. Sawyer is allowed to present the award to two students. Based upon the recommendation of Ms. Maureen Monopoli, the SHS assistant principal who is the grade administrator for the Class of 2020, along with Mr. Todd Bazydlo, principal of SHS, Dr. Sawyer has chosen Sophia Millan and Thomas (TJ) Morgera as this year's recipients.

Dr. Sawyer will provide highlights of each student's achievements, recognize each student, and ask each to make a brief statement.

### ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the presentation and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

### STAFF & STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Students:

Stefanie Del Rosario

Hannah Huang

Lanna Wang

Sophia Millan

Thomas (TJ) Morgera



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**  
**A. Civics Education: Report**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In 2017, in anticipation of the proposed changes in the Civics Education standards by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), curriculum leaders began planning for implementation of the new History and Social Science standards. Jennifer DiFrancesca, Director of the Social Science Department at SHS, partnered with Middle Level Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator Robert Dunn to identify and collaborate with pilot teachers for the purpose of examining the district's practices and aligning the curriculum in light of the new standards.

Ms. Clouter, Ms. DiFrancesca, & Mr. Dunn will present information regarding the integration of civics into our social sciences/social studies curriculum and instructional program.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee hear the report and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Ms. Jennifer DiFrancesca, Director of Social Sciences, SHS

Mr. Robert Dunn, Middle Level Curriculum Coordinator, Social Studies



## *Instructional Spotlight: Civics Education, a new focus in the Massachusetts Social Science & History Standards*

Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent  
for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

### *Overview*

The passage of the Ed Reform Act in 1993 resulted in the development of grade level standards and launched a statewide campaign to raise academic expectations for all students in the Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, the initial *Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework* was approved, with a revised framework following in 2003. Both documents reflect the belief that an understanding of the foundations of democracy is a critical component of public education. Indeed, this principle was first articulated in the passage of the law:

The standards shall provide for instruction in at least the major principles of the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Federalist Papers. They shall be designed to inculcate respect for the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of the Commonwealth and for the contributions made by diverse cultural, ethnic and racial groups to the life of the Commonwealth. The standards may provide for instruction in the fundamentals of the history of the Commonwealth as well as the history of working people and the labor movement in the United States. ... The board may also include in the standards...an awareness of global education and geography.<sup>1</sup>

That vision holds true today- and is strengthened by the most recent revisions to the Frameworks. In 2017 the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) gathered a group of educators to review the 2003 standards and to recommend changes. The following year the Department released the [2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework](#) together with a document articulating [Guiding Principles for Effective History and Social Science Education](#). These documents continue to shape our implementation of the new curriculum within the district, specifically as it applied to our approach to Civics education.

### *District Efforts to Date*

In 2017, concurrent with the work happening at the state level, our curriculum leaders noted several key changes in the new History and Social Science Frameworks, namely:

- at the Elementary level, a stronger foundation in history and government builds on existing standards on the American Revolution and early Republic.

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<sup>1</sup> [Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, Section 1D.](#)

- At the Middle level, a new civics course occurs in grade 8 was introduced to provide students with the knowledge of principles and structures of United States government and to lay the foundation for the study of history and social science in high school.
- Some standards have been edited or added to present recent historical scholarship and collections of online primary sources have been expanded, and
- Throughout the grades, an emphasis on Social Science practices encourages educators to structure learning experiences so that students may apply their learning, and, in this way, become engaged citizens.

I am gratified to report that from the start our approach to this curriculum initiative was collaborative. Mrs. Jennifer DiFrancesca, Director of Social Sciences at Shrewsbury High, teamed with Mr. Robert Dunn, Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator for Grades 5-8 to determine how best to bring classroom teachers into the conversation. In turn, Mr. Dunn partnered with Instructional Coaches/Curriculum Coordinators at the Elementary level to further their own learning. Embracing the new standards means shifting content across levels- primarily in Grade 8 and up. For that reason, our work has begun with a primary focus on the upper grades. The goal is to implement gradually, and with fidelity. In many ways, this work (in History and Social Science) mirrors our approach to adopting the 2016 Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum standards. The similarities are most apparent in a shared focus on Social Science practices.

### *Different Content, Similar Approach*

As stated in the accompanying documents,

The primary purpose of a history and social science education is to prepare students to have the knowledge and skills to become thoughtful and active participants in a democratic society and a complex world. “Government of the people, by the people, for the people” is not just a historical phrase from Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” but an ideal that must be renewed and reinvigorated by each succeeding generation. The future of democracy depends on our students’ development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will enable them to embrace democracy’s potential, while recognizing its challenges and inherent dilemmas.<sup>2</sup>

This vision is depicted well in Social Science practices.

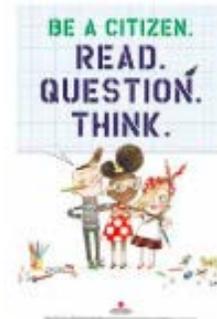
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<sup>2</sup> Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework, 2018

# MA FRAMEWORKS → SKILLS & CONTENT

## Standards of Practice

1. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and disposition.
2. Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.
3. Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.
4. Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.
5. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.
6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.
7. Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.



The goal of this instructional spotlight is to familiarize you with these practices and how they feature in the implementation of the new curriculum.

### *Next Steps*

By 2020-2021, all teachers at the Middle and High School level will fully implement the new Social Science and History curriculum. This gives the Elementary team time to evaluate new resources. As we anticipate next steps, it's important to acknowledge the hard work of the pilot teachers and our curriculum leaders. As they work to develop model lessons and units, these pioneers are the caretakers of the initial vision from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. I am confident that our educators will do their part to build on it by creating engaging, rigorous and authentic learning experiences for our students.





**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VII. Finance & Operations**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**A. Guiding Principles for Redistricting Process: Recommendation,  
Discussion, & Potential Vote**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The new Major Howard W. Beal School will open for students in grades K-4 in the fall of 2021, which will require redistricting of elementary school attendance zones at Shrewsbury Public Schools. At the School Committee meeting on September 18, the Committee voted to establish an ad hoc committee on redistricting, noting that the ad hoc committee would be provided with guiding principles by the School Committee to apply when considering information, reviewing options, and making recommendations for the redistricting of elementary school attendance zone boundaries to take effect when the new Beal School opens. The enclosed memo from Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins provides their recommendation to the Committee on guiding principles for adoption and issuance to the Redistricting Committee.

If the Committee is satisfied with the recommended guiding principles, it may wish to vote at this meeting; otherwise, a vote will be requested at the Committee's next meeting. Once adopted, the guiding principles will be provided in a letter of charge to the Redistricting Committee to be issued by Ms. Fryc as Committee Chair.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the Committee discuss the recommended guiding principles. If the Committee is ready, it may vote to adopt the Recommended Guiding Principles for Redistricting School Attendance Zone Boundaries for Grades Kindergarten through Grade 4 as presented.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations



# SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545

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[schools.shrewsburyma.gov](http://schools.shrewsburyma.gov)



Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Margaret M. Belsito  
Assistant Superintendent  
Student Services

Amy B. Clouter  
Assistant Superintendent  
Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Patrick C. Collins  
Assistant Superintendent  
Finance & Operations

Jane O. Lizotte, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
Community Partnerships & Well-Being

Barbara A. Malone  
Executive Director  
Human Resources

September 26, 2019

To: School Committee

From: Joe Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools  
Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

Re: Recommended guiding principles for Redistricting Committee

At your meeting on September 18, you voted to establish an ad hoc Redistricting Committee consisting of two members of the School Committee; a parent representative from each of the five elementary schools which will become K-4 schools when the new Beal School opens in 2021 (Beal, Coolidge, Floral Street, Paton, and Spring Street Schools); two elementary principals; and the two of us. Your vote also specified “that this ad hoc committee will be provided with guiding principles by the School Committee and will apply those principles when considering information, reviewing options, and making recommendations to the School Committee for the redistricting of elementary school attendance zone boundaries for grades Kindergarten through Grade 4.”

After researching other school districts’ approaches to redistricting and considering our needs in Shrewsbury, we recommend that the School Committee consider the following guiding principles for adoption and issuance to the Redistricting Committee. We look forward to discussing these recommendations at your October 2 meeting. Once you have determined whether to adopt these recommendations or a revised version thereof, the Committee should vote to establish them so that they may be included in a letter of charge to the Redistricting Committee that would be issued by Ms. Fryc as Committee Chair.

*The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.*

**Recommended Guiding Principles for Redistricting School Attendance Zone  
Boundaries for Grades Kindergarten through Grade 4**

The Redistricting Committee will be charged with using the following guiding principles to develop multiple options for redistricting plans that will be brought forward to the School Committee for consideration. These guiding principles are not intended to be utilized in “rank order,” but rather applied holistically by the Redistricting Committee to develop the various options. As part of this process, each option will be evaluated by the Redistricting Committee regarding how strongly it reflects each of these criteria, and this perspective will be included when recommended options are presented to the School Committee.

- **Student educational needs will be met regardless of school assignment.** As all Shrewsbury Public Schools elementary schools follow the same state and district curriculum and assessment standards, employ best instructional practices, and have highly qualified educators who are hired using a rigorous district-coordinated process, students will receive a high-quality educational experience regardless of which elementary school they attend. Therefore, it is assumed that students’ educational needs will be met in any of our schools and this should *not* be a factor considered when making assignments.
- **Student population must be distributed so that each school has sufficient, appropriate, dedicated instructional spaces.** The opening of the new Beal School is intended to provide equity of student access to instructional spaces across all five elementary schools. Redistricting of attendance zones must balance enrollment across the five schools so that each school has sufficient, appropriate, dedicated space for instruction in music and art, special education services, English language instruction, etc.
- **School assignments will be determined by drawing attendance zone boundaries and should emphasize a “neighborhood school” approach by prioritizing geographic proximity of home to school for walkability and efficient transportation, while keeping geographic entities intact.**  
Attendance zones in order to maximize the ability for students to walk safely to and from school, minimize vehicle travel time to and from school, and avoid splitting clearly segmented or defined neighborhoods, subdivisions, apartment complexes, etc. A “school choice” model where students are enrolled in a

certain school by preference, lottery, so-called “buffer zones,” etc. will not be used.

- **Student demographics should be taken into account when redistricting school attendance zones.** The demographic diversity of a school’s student population should reflect the overall demographic diversity of our town to the greatest extent possible.
- **Future potential population growth should be considered when establishing attendance zones.** It is highly desirable that new school assignment boundaries remain intact for as long as possible.
- **Changes of school assignments for existing students should be minimized to the greatest extent possible within the context of the other priorities.** It is understood that many students will need to change schools when the new Beal School opens in order to achieve the redistribution of students and for balancing school populations, but the redistricting plan should avoid changing school assignments where other priorities can be achieved. However, “grandfathering” some students by allowing them to finish their elementary school experience at their current school when their address is being assigned to a different school zone will not be part of any redistricting plan, due to logistical issues that would make other principles difficult or impossible to achieve.
- **The redistricting process should work in concert with other district initiatives where possible.** Resources and efforts that will support redistricting may help achieve other district goals, such as the consideration of changing school start times, and these efforts should be coordinated wherever possible.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VII. Finance & Operations**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**B. Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Calendar: Recommendation & Potential Vote**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Mr. Collins will present a Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Calendar.

For informational purposes, we have also included the FY21 Budget Calendar from the Town Manager's office presented to the Finance Committee.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee vote to approve the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Calendar.

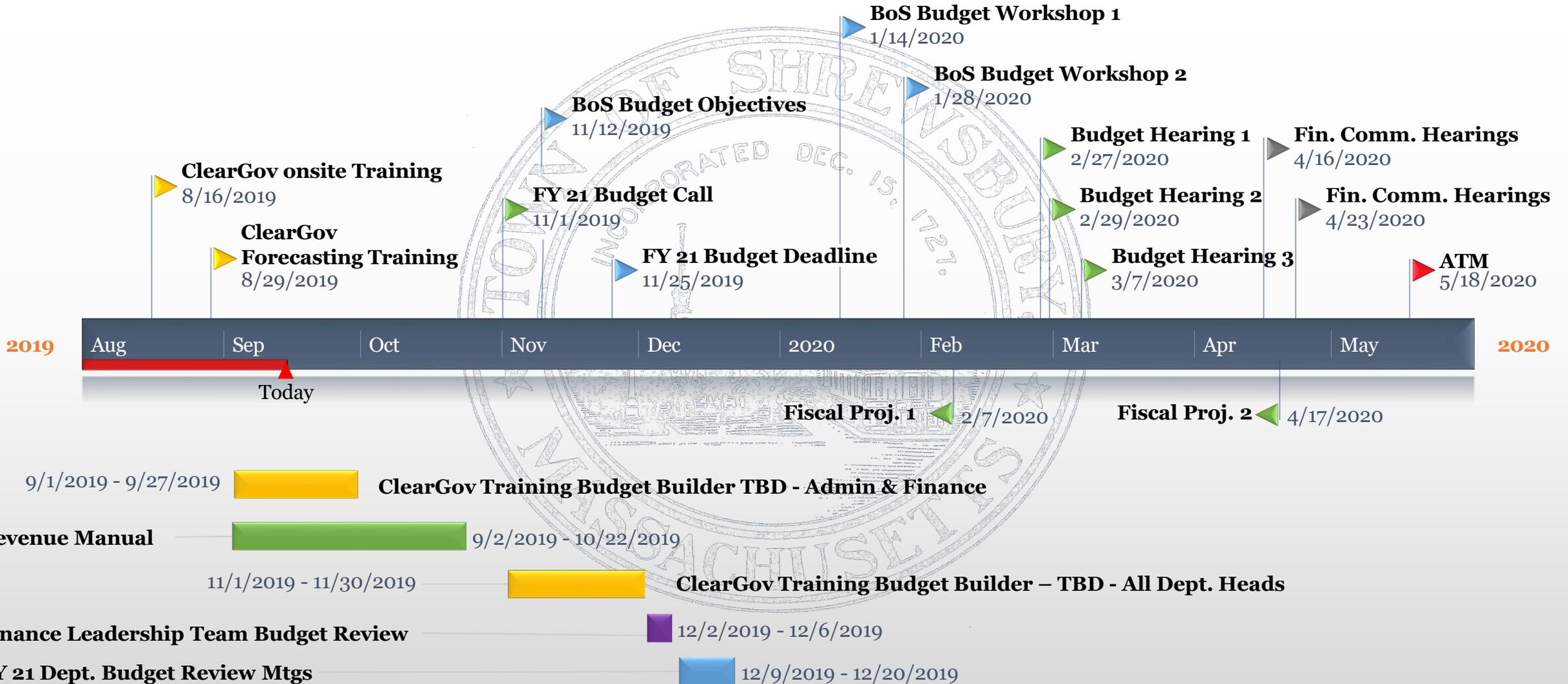
STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

**FY21 BUDGET CALENDAR-DRAFT: OCTOBER 2, 2019**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event/Action</b>
10/2/2019	Discuss and Vote Initial FY21 Budget Calendar.
October 2019	Review Budget Development Timeline with SLT, DLT, School Councils
October 2019	Administration begins development of Level-Services Budget with known/estimated cost forecasting.
10/16/2019	Discussion: School Committee FY21 Budget Priorities and Guidelines
10/30/2019	Vote School Committee Guidelines and Fiscal Policies
12/11/2019	Budget Workshop #1
1/11/2020	School Committee Budget Workshop #2
1/22/2020	Governor Baker Releases his State Budget Plan. State aid figures for Shrewsbury included.
Late January or February 2020	Presentation of Superintendent's Budget Recommendation
February 7, 2020	Town Manager Releases Initial Town-wide Budget Recommendation
2/12/2020	Special Education Budget Presentation
3/4/2020	FY21 Budget Topics include: -Curriculum & Instruction Budget Presentation -Technology Budget Presentation -Public Hearing
3/7/2020	Finance Committee Hearing [Saturday morning]
3/23/2020	Vote on full-day kindergarten, preschool tuitions and school fees
April 2020	Budget Workshop #3, if needed
4/10/2020	House Ways & Means Committee budget released. Updated state aid figures to Shrewsbury.
4/15/2020	Superintendent's Final Recommendation and School Committee Vote FY21 Budget Recommendation for Town Meeting
4/17/2020	Town Manager: Fiscal Projection #2
4/28/2020	Board of Selectmen Vote on FY21 Budget
4/30/2020	Finance Committee Public Hearing and Vote on ATM Warrant Articles and Operating Budget
5/14/2020	Pre-Town Meeting
May 18, 20, 21	Annual Town Meeting
July	State Legislature Finalizes State Budget-Final State Aid Figures Determined. Adjust budget plans as necessary.

# FY 21 Budget – Proposed Draft Timeline





**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IX. New Business**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**A. Effective Communication With Constituents: Discussion**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

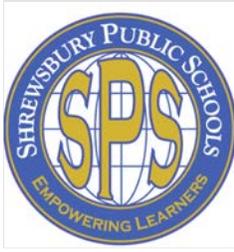
It is a goal of the School Committee and the Superintendent to continuously improve communications with constituents. To determine what communication tactics will be most effective, Dr. Sawyer will draft a series of survey items. In the enclosed memo, Dr. Sawyer discusses why effective school district communication is important, notes the findings of a national survey regarding district-level communications relative to content and distribution methods, and provides suggested content for a communications survey from Shrewsbury Public Schools.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the Committee engage in a discussion regarding effective communication with constituents and provide guidance to the Superintendent regarding the survey on district-level communication.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools



# Shrewsbury Public Schools

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Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

September 26, 2019

To: School Committee

From: Joe Sawyer

Re: Draft of Survey on District Communications

In order to advance the School Committee's goal to continuously improve communications with its constituents, as well as my goal as superintendent to do the same, I am drafting a survey to send out to the school district's stakeholders in order to receive feedback regarding what communication tactics are considered most effective.

The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) indicates that effective school district communication is important for the following reasons:

- High-performing teams and companies are characterized by open and frequent communication, collaboration and shared decision-making.
- Organizations that communicate frequently with their employees and treat them well outperform their peers....
- Good communication increases teamwork, productivity, employee morale, job satisfaction and retention.
- Good communication improves customer service.
- Good communication serves as the organizational glue as well as the oil that keeps the engine running smoothly.
- Transparent, open, and frequent communication and ongoing engagement build trust in organizations and their leaders.
- When people trust and are engaged in organizations, they are more likely to use their services, advocate on their behalf, defend them when attacked and pay their taxes or write checks to support them.

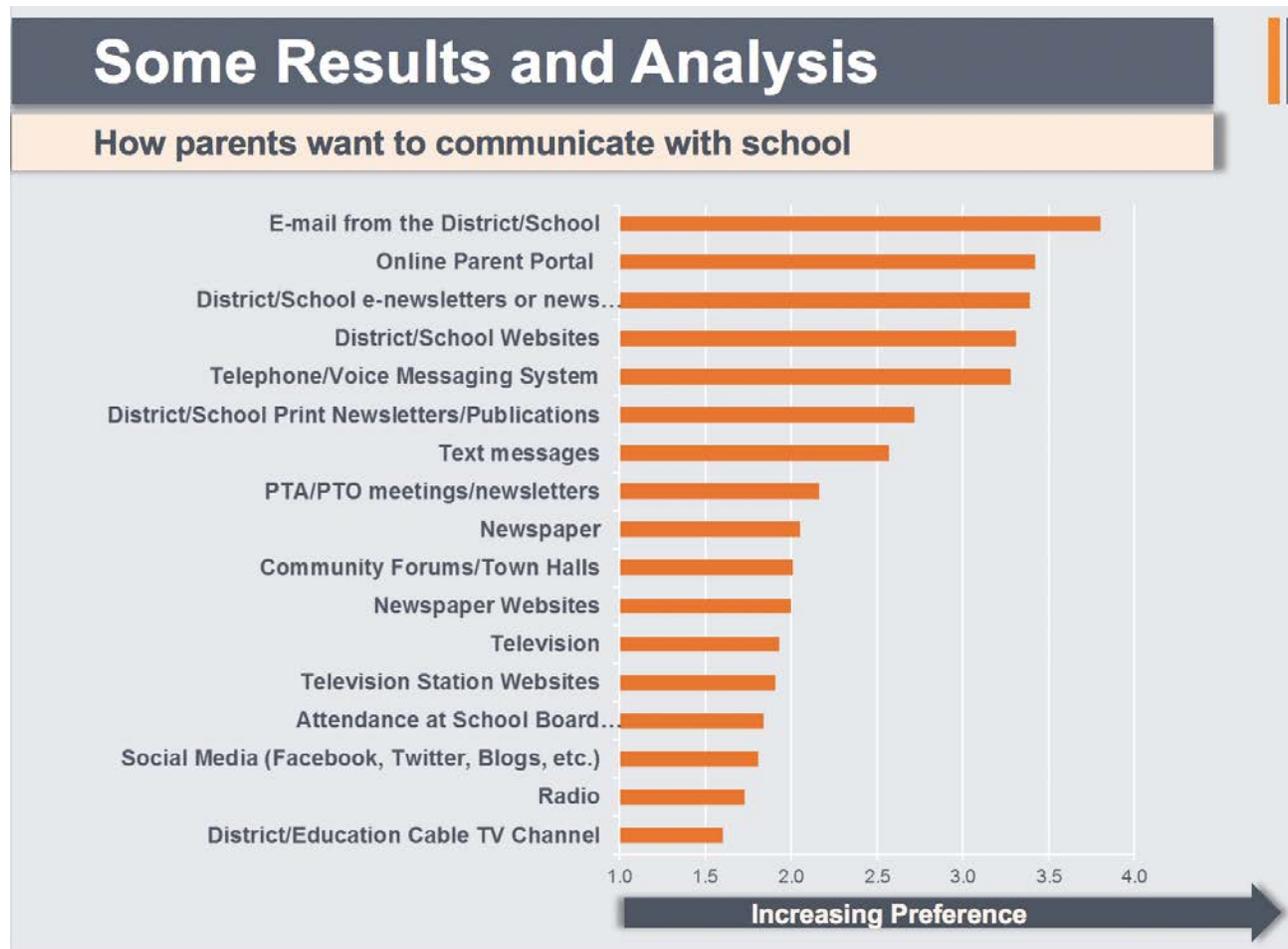
(National School Public Relations Association, 2013)

In [a national survey conducted in 2011 by NSPRA](#), the findings indicated the following regarding district-level communications:

*When it comes to content issues from school district leaders, both parents and non-parents listed the rationale/reasons for decisions made by the school district, curriculum/educational options, information on how well the school district is performing compared to other school districts, and budget and finance elections and updates in the top tier of content requests.*

This same survey gauged preferences for how constituents wished to receive communications from schools and school districts. NSPRA summarized these as follows:

*Preferred delivery methods include direct communication from teachers, principals and school district leaders in electronic/Internet based formats. In a surprise finding, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. were in the bottom tier of preferred communication vehicles. Assumptions by NSPRA leaders are that social media may be seen as “too social,” lacking in credibility for official school information or it is just too soon to make an impact for today’s parents. Traditional media such as newspapers and television also were not as preferred as direct electronic communication from teachers, principals and other school leaders.*



(National School Public Relations Association, 2011)

## Where Respondents Prefer to Get Information

10

	Parent	Non-Parent
E-mail from the district/school	3.8	3.5
District/School e-newsletters or news updates via email	3.4	3.0
District/School websites	3.3	3.4
Online parent portal (Online access to grades, attendance, assignments, etc.)	3.4	2.7
Telephone messaging system/voice-messaging system/emergency parent notification system	3.3	2.7
District/School print newsletters/publications	2.7	2.7
Text messages	2.6	2.1
Newspaper	2.1	2.7
PTA/PTO meetings/newsletters	2.2	2.1
Newspaper websites	2.0	2.5
Community forums/town halls	2.0	2.3
Television	1.9	2.6
Television station websites	1.9	2.3
Attendance at school board meetings/board minutes	1.8	2.1
Radio	1.7	2.2
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc.)	1.8	1.8
District/Education cable TV channel	1.6	2.1
Other	1.3	1.6

Respondents rated common media on a 4-point scale (1=Least preferred to 4=Most preferred) for where they prefer to get information about schools. Average scores for each group are displayed.

Electronic/Internet-based sources like email, e-newsletters, district websites, and parent portals tended to be the most preferred information sources.

(National School Public Relations Association, 2011)

I would interpret the above NSPRA findings regarding social media with caution, given that 2011 is a long time ago where it comes to the use of social media. However, [a more recent national survey](#) conducted in 2016 and reported in 2018 by Project Tomorrow (a non-profit research organization) and Blackboard (a school technology company that includes an automated communications product), had similar findings, indicating similar preferences to what NSPRA found.

*Increasingly, principals are turning to social media tools to communicate with the parents of their students, but parents' choices for communications tools are often at odds with the administrators' choices.*

However, this report suggested that the use of social media may expand as parents, especially younger ones, utilize it more in general:

*Today's younger parents are on the forefront of using social media for communications across all aspects of their lives. It is therefore important for districts to understand and appreciate how these new digital parents are leveraging these tools as they may represent the future of home-to-school communications.*

It will be important to determine SPS constituents' levels of satisfaction and communication preferences, which the recommended survey items will address.

The draft of a communications survey for our school district should follow the advice provided in [this post by Campus Suite](#), who is our district's website provider, which is to keep the survey "short and sweet" and to use simple rating scale questions and short answer responses.

With this in mind, the suggested content of the survey is as follows:

- 1) Demographics items to define constituent who is responding (e.g., parent, non-parent community member, staff member)
- 2) Survey items that ask what modes of communication do constituents utilize, and what they find effective regarding School Committee information
- 3) Survey items that ask what modes of communication do constituents utilize, and what they find effective regarding information from the Superintendent
- 4) Items that ask for their overall opinion on the effectiveness of communication from the School Committee and the Superintendent (these should be at the end, as asking overall opinions at the start of a survey result in respondents scoring subsequent questions in ways that justify their initial answer, rather than vice versa)
- 5) Ending with an opportunity to add comments

I look forward to discussing this topic and getting your feedback at your meeting on October 2.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **X. Approval of Minutes**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The minutes from the School Committee Workshop held on September 23, 2019 are enclosed. The minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on September 18, 2019 will be provided under separate cover.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the Committee accept the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on September 18, 2019, and the minutes from the School Committee Workshop held on September 23, 2019.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson

Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP**  
**September 23, 2019**  
**Class of 2002 Conference Room & Media Center**  
**Shrewsbury High School**  
**64 Holden St.**  
**Shrewsbury, Massachusetts**

**Start:** 6:25 PM

**Present:** Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson; Dr. Dale Magee, Secretary; Ms Lynsey Heffernan; Mr. Jason Palitsch. Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools; Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations; Ms. Meg Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Mr. Chris Girardi, Principal, Beal Early Childhood Center; Ms. Tiffany Ostrander, Principal, Coolidge School; Ms. Lisa McCubrey, Principal, Floral Street School; Ms. Gina Kelly, Assistant Principal, Floral Street School; Ms. Wendy Bell, Principal, Paton School; Mr. Bryan Mabie, Principal, Spring Street School; Ms. Heather Gablaski, Assistant Principal, Sherwood Middle School; Ms. Karen Gutekanst, Assistant Principal, Sherwood Middle School, Dr. Ann Jones, Principal, Oak Middle School; Mr. Scott Yonker, Assistant Principal, Oak Middle School; Ms. Anne Koertge, Assistant Principal, Oak Middle School; Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal, Shrewsbury High School; Mr. Jeffrey Lizotte, Assistant Principal, Shrewsbury High School; Ms. Maureen Monopoli, Assistant Principal, Shrewsbury High School; Mr. Gregory Nevader, Assistant Principal, Shrewsbury High School; and Mr. Gerald "PJ" O'Connell, Assistant Principal, Shrewsbury High School.

The meeting was convened in the Media Center following a dinner held in the Class of 2002 Conference Room. Attendees were broken into smaller groups.

Welcome, introduction and meeting overview by Dr. Sawyer.

Ms. Clouter outlined for the group an overview and introduction for the evening's workshop focusing on Inclusive Practice. Presentations relating to aspects of Inclusive Practice were made by Ms. Clouter, Dr. Lizotte and Ms. Belsito. The small groups were then asked to discuss aspects of the presentations and report back to the group as a whole.

The discussions were focused on sharing perspectives. No program changes were proposed. No policy changes were proposed. No votes were taken.

Meeting adjourned: 8:00 PM

Documents Referenced: Inclusive Practice Slide Presentation



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **10/2/19**

**A. For the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association – Unit B**

**B. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Executive session is warranted for these purposes.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee enter into executive session for the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association - Unit B, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes, and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Barbara A. Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources

ITEM NO: **XII. Adjournment**