

CITY OF HOLYOKE  
LOCAL CONTROL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2025

TIME: 5:00PM

**PRESENT:** Mayor Joshua Garcia, Receiver Anthony Soto, Devin Sheehan, Mildred Lefebvre, Rosalee Tensely- Williams, Gladys Lebron-Martinez, Orlando Isaza, Jay Whelihan, William Collamore, Ellie Wilson, Patrick Tutwiler (Interim Commissioner), Jennifer Wu (Office of Strategic Transformation)

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

School Committee Chair Ms. Lefebvre called the meeting to order at **5:01 p.m.** and announced that pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, attendees are hereby informed that a video and audio recording is being made of the meeting and the meeting is being live-streamed on Zoom.

Roll call: Mayor Garcia-present, Mr. Sheehan-present, Ms. Lefebvre-present,

**1. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Discussion Exit Assurances**

- Ms. Lefebvre opened up the meeting by going into the questions that were submitted by the School Committee. Mr. Sheehan asked, “through the process that you took, either the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner, what engagement you had with the HTA and MTA, and specifically between the time period of probably after our meeting with Dr. Johnson and the end of March, up to the meeting that we had when you presented them was that May end of April, early May”. Interim Commissioner Tutwiler stated that, “Since the meeting that we had in late April, I have had direct conversations with the statewide leadership of MTA. Around the exit assurances, I've also met directly with the HTA President to hear concerns and answer questions about what was presented to the school committee formally at the end of April. Prior to the meeting, where we formally presented the exit assurances, I had a high level conversation with the President of HTA, not about the specifics of exit assurances, but more just sort of reflecting back on the engagement that happened as they were being developed. Ms. Wu expressed that they had 3 meetings with the Union, the HTA Leadership, the President and the Vice-President of the Local Leadership and the local MTA Rep joined. Ms. Wu went on to say that the 1st meeting they expressed that they would like to be engaged in the exit assurances, since they were part of the conversations in the beginning. Acting Commissioner Johnston reassured them that they would like to engage with them in the process and seek their feedback. He asked them to

look at the appendix and would like to hear from them regarding Appendix A. At the 3rd meeting they provided feedback on each of the provisions. In a 4th meeting, with local MTA Representative Martin Hernandez and Commissioner Johnston was got more specific language. When the Interim Commissioner Tutwiler and Ms. Wu came in person and presented the Powerpoint as all the highlighted language that was incorporated based on the meeting with the MTA Representative which provided feedback. In the final version we presented and got feedback from the School Committee in executive, until the full meeting. This was all through March. Ms. Lefebvre asked for clarity and wanted to know if they were acting on behalf of the MTA or the HTA. Ms. Wu said from their understanding it was under the HTA. The Interim Commissioner said they did receive feedback, which the HTA voiced concern about the meeting not presenting itself as a Special Meeting, which caused some frustration. They also were concerned about the word “consultation” versus “bargain”.

- Ms. Lefebvre asked a question regarding whether the Superintendent will be the one approving in regards to the calendar and the school hours. The Interim Commissioner Tutwiler explained that on the top of the document , which says very clearly that these exit assurances are carried out in consultation with the school committee. Upon exit from receivership, you restore supervisory and evaluative sort of rights with the superintendent. You can ask the superintendent to collect broad stakeholder feedback in preparation for his presentation of the school calendar or to share with the school committee his thinking around how he intends to proceed with this and get school committee feedback before he establishes the plan. This allows for partnership among the Superintendent and School Committee. Receiver/ Superintendent Soto expressed his continued collaboration with the School Committee and to get feedback from all stakeholders.

**b. District Transition Plan**

- Mr. Sheehan asked the Superintendent for an overview on what's happening in his office and the districts to transition back. Mr. Sheehan inquired about staff being trained on different things, recognizing the change in governance and reporting authority and how that will look like July 1st. Would like this brought up in the June meeting to the full School Committee. Receiver/ Superintendent Soto explained that he would like to base the traigins on the policies that are moving forward. This will have an opportunity for some of the Cabinet LEaders to view and learn from the policies and the expectation moving forward for local control from the School Committee. Mr. Sheehan emphasized the importance of the approval process and the shift in governance.

c. Meeting Minutes Approval

**Motion:** Mr. Sheehan made the motion to approve meeting minutes of [2.19.25 Local Control Subcommittee Meeting Minutes](#) and [3.24.25 Local Control Meeting Minutes](#). 2nd by Mayor Garcia

Mayor Garcia-yes, Mr. Sheehan-yes Ms. Lefebvre-yes

**Vote passed unanimously**

**Motion:** Mr. Sheehan made the motion to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Mayor Garcia

Mayor Garcia-yes, Mr. Sheehan-yes Ms. Lefebvre-yes

**Vote passed unanimously**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:37pm**