

Hermon School Committee
Minutes – Regular Meeting
Monday, October 5, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.
Hermon High School Room 167

Providing Leadership to Enhance the Aspirations of our Children

**** Due to Governor Mills' declaration of emergency, this meeting will be closed to public attendance. The public may join the meeting virtually by using the following link:**
meet.google.com/nda-oxsn-ofw

Present

Ted Harris, Chair
Kristen Shorey
Debbie CoWallis

Virtual

Debora Farnham, Vice Chair
Scott Hatch
Deborah Langille
Mackenzie Stepp, Student Representative

Absent: Madison Despault, Student Representative

Staff (attending virtually and in person): Cindy Badger, Stephanie Biberstein, Jim Chasse, Melissa Davis, Kathryn Goodman, Micah Grant, Alan Owen, Jenny Perry, Jamie Rennebu, Brian Walsh, and Jody White.

Guests: Adam Goodspeed (virtual)

Item I: Mr. Harris, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Item II: Agenda Adjustments: None

Item III: Approval of Minutes

Mrs. CoWallis motioned, seconded by Mrs. Shorey, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 14th, and the special meeting of September 24, 2020, as presented.

Unanimous (6)

Item IV: Proclamations and Presentation

A. Public Comments: None

B. Donations

a. Donation from Discount Towing & Road Service

b. Donation from Seaboard Federal Credit Union

C. Revision Energy Presentation

Kurt Penney, Revision Energy gave a presentation on solar energy farms and net energy billing credits.

Item V: Personnel

A. Resignation

a. Dale McGuire, Bus Driver / Maintenance / Custodian

B. Co / Extra-curricular positions * *New this year*

Hermon High School Co-curricular

HHS Book Club **Kara Schwartz**

HHS Hawks for Change **Lillian Barry**

Hermon Middle School Co-curricular

Staff Facilitators (5-8) **James Fratini**

Hermon High School – AthleticsJV Girls Soccer **Chloe Raymond**Volunteer Boys Varsity Soccer **Mathew Allen***Volunteer HMS Field Hockey **Tiffany Howard ***Volunteer Football **Troy Bennett**Volunteer Football **Josh Daigle ***

Item VI: Old Business

A. Excused Absence of School Committee Member/s: None

B. Job Description - Second Reading

a. Assistant Director of Information Services/Hermon.net

Mrs. Shorey motioned, seconded by Mrs. CoWallis, to approve the 2nd reading of the Assistant Director of Information Services/Hermon.net job description, as presented.

Unanimous (6)

Mr. Chasse welcomed Alan Owen back to the Hermon School Department.

b. Policy - Second Reading

BED Hermon School Committee Rules

Mrs. CoWallis motioned, seconded by Mrs. Farnham, to approve Policy BED Hermon School Committee Rules, as presented.

Unanimous (6)

c. 2020-21 School Committee Goals

1. Fully support a rigorous, relevant, innovative, and comprehensive learning environment where all students have an opportunity to achieve excellence in academics, extra-curricular activities, athletics, and The Guiding Principles.
2. Prioritize and review district policies that support academic achievement, safety, and a positive educational experience for all students.
3. Promote positive and trusting relationships with all stakeholders through honesty and transparency, where people come first.
4. Cultivate and leverage community involvement with the Hermon School Department
5. Commit to individual goals to enhance effective boardsmanship.

Mrs. Shorey motioned, seconded by Mrs. CoWallis, to approve the second reading of the 2020-21 School Committee Goals, as presented.

Unanimous (6)

d. Approval of truck purchase

Mr. Harris motioned, seconded by Mrs. Shorey, to approve the purchase of a truck, annual financing payment approved as part of the 2020-21 budget.

Voting for (5): Mr. Harris, Mrs. Farnham, Mr. Hatch, Ms. Langille and Mrs. Shorey

Abstaining (1): Mrs. CoWallis

Item VII: New Business

A. Policies - First Reading

a. AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

b. ACAAA Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students

- c. ACAA-R Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures
- d. ACAB Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees
- e. ACAB-R Employee Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures

Mr. Harris motioned, seconded by Mrs. Shorey, to approve the first readings of Policies AC, ACAA, ACAA-R, ACAB, and ACAB-R, as presented.

Unanimous (6)

Mr. Harris requested that any questions or suggested updates be sent prior to the next meeting.

Item VIII: Reports

A. Superintendent

Superintendent Chasse in addition to his written report, mentioned having the reopening committee get together again to look at getting students back for 4 days a week. This will be a little more challenging at the elementary level. The first round of the COVID Relief Funds were for the laptops, PPE, filters, etc. There were also funds made available for childcare for economic disadvantaged for essential workers and for the Y Academy Day Program. We have had 55 responses from those who would qualify to have their childcare costs covered from September 17th through December 30th. We have to apply for another round of relief funds that have to be COVID related. We can get more technology, such as the large interactive boards in case we go remote again. We could replace the HVAC units for the Patricia A. Duran School in the 50's & 60's wing, if we could purchase the products by the end of December, which we cannot. He has contacted Jared Golden's office to see if they can get that spread out. In the superintendent's Zoom meetings, they are told to brace for subsidy curtailments in the next couple of years.

Adam Goodspeed, attending virtually, mentioned in the chat box that there had been several comments on social media concerning this school year and how it is going so far. He asked if there would be a follow up chat at some point soon to allow parents to chime in with questions and concerns. If so, could you do them in segregated groups to make it easier to address? Mr. Harris responded that he hoped if there were serious questions or concerns, that those be brought to an administrator first.

Finishing up, Superintendent Chasse gave a shout out to Carmel Electric for being very helpful when there was a power outage at the high school. Hermon Track Committee is looking at a November date to get together to review the Plymouth Engineering Plan. The audit is on the way in November. The preliminary review of the enrollment revenue stream, we don't appear to be down significantly. He is still suggesting to the State that we be allowed to count the home school families that we are reaching out to and providing materials to.

B. Principals

In addition to his written report, Mr. Walsh noted that Rick Sinclair has done a fantastic job with Senior Nights. They were done at each of the first home events. He also has been able to find a new platform to broadcast the JV contests which is clear and in real time. The varsity games are broadcast on WHOU. Another shoutout is to the University of Maine at Orono, they were able to utilize 10 of their 100 hours students coordinated by Heather Haskell for support for our remote learners. The yearbooks shipped on

Sunday. They sold out last year and they will get them in the hands of the students by the end of the week. We will not be hosting the PSATs this year because they would have to lose an academic day for the entire school to accommodate them which did not make sense. They have requested to host the SATs through the College Board which was denied. His parent council met in September and are scheduled to meet on October 28th. One of the items on that agenda is the hybrid update which is an ongoing item to update parents in that regard.

Referring to his written report, Mr. Grant mentioned that they do not have the 7th & 8th grade numbers for testing. That testing would be wrapping up the next day. He was really excited about the math scores in 6th graders, 42% of students meet or exceed for their grade level. He is cautiously optimistic that March – June didn't hinder them as bad as he was bracing for. Mr. Grant has parent council every month and he encourages all parents to reach out to him if they have already reached out to a teacher and got a response that is unclear. All parents have access to him within reasonable business hours.

In addition to her written report, Mrs. Perry announced the 4th graders were selected to take NAEP testing this year in addition to their other testing. Mrs. Perry welcomes families to reach out to her if they have any questions or concerns on a regular basis, especially now with everything that is going on. Their PTA meetings are held in a Zoom format at 6:00 pm on the second Tuesday of every month. She, along with Assistant Principal Goodman, have an open format for at the PTA meetings for parent questions.

- C. Finance Report
- D. Curriculum/Assessment Report
- E. Guidance & Social Work Report
- F. Nurses Reports
- G. Transportation
- H. Other

Mrs. Farnham inquired about the home school numbers. Mrs. Davis, Curriculum Coordinator, stated there were just over 60 students registered for homeschooling. We were able to contact 30 families. They are still trying to contact the remaining families. The committee is working with 30 of the families to pull standards, curricular and other items for their home school portfolio, due at the end of the year. They have also offered to review those portfolios at the end of the year before they return to school or are promoted to the next grade level.

Mrs. Farnham also asked about a referenced \$100,000 carry forward. Mr. Chasse stated that he felt that number would be higher, but that we'd know better after the auditors are here. Mr. Harris requested a list of what was spent above and beyond what we traditionally spent in our school year that would incorporate where those dollars were spent down. Jamie Rennebu, Business Manager, stated that we had not yet been reimbursed for at least half of the windows, because we did not have the town's approval, so that is part of the expenditures that is there. There was also a spend down in anticipation of the upcoming year not knowing what was going to happen and purchase the supplies in advance. Mr. Harris stated that the windows were done in April, May and June because of COVID and it was prior to when we would typically go and request funds.

Mrs. Farnham asked the building administrators the kinds of concerns that are being expressed by parents, and what the teacher's concerns are. Mrs. Perry stated that they

have worked out a lot of the kinks with their See Saw platform since they have been in school. Initially, that's what a lot of calls from parents were. Unified arts are remote right now so that families could get used to using the platform in case we need to go remote. A lot of questions and concern still are around safety and the 'what ifs' and the 'what to do's'. Some families are really struggling with the workload for the students, and then we have families in those same classrooms that feel they want more academically on the days they are home. Trying to find that balance for our families has probably been the biggest challenge in addition to childcare. Transportation has been worked out quite well. Mr. Grant stated the primary concern from his parent council is to strike a balance between the work assigned for students to do on the off day, but still moving forward in the curriculum between the different maturity levels of students. Both parents are also starting to go back to work, so it is a very challenging time for a lot of parents to support their kids. The biggest challenge is striking the balance. Mr. Walsh stated that the biggest question at his school from parents, assistant principal and athletic director is when are the students returning in earnest to school. The next big question is indoor athletics and performing arts which we do not have answers to. For students, time management for their off-day work is also an issue. The workload will be different depending on what type of classes a student is taking. From teachers and administrators, a concern is student apathy, especially freshman who are not used to a 0-100 scale and have not been in a classroom since March. He does not believe they understand what will happen at the end of the semester. The biggest concern he has right now is the teacher's sustainability. They continue to teach the classes they are teaching, provide work for off-days and provide remote. They are exhausted and students are contacting them 24/7 like they did when they were remote. Morale will be a concern the longer this goes.

Mrs. Shorey was happy with athletics and how Mr. Sinclair stepped up. She was grateful that the senior parents could be there. She also thinks overall the high school information platform is pretty good. She can check for her son every other day to see how his grades are and encourage him to email his teacher when something is missing. She also gave kudos to the high school teachers because her daughter, who is in college, because of Ms. Merrill's chemistry, she has a 90 in college chemistry.

Mr. Harris felt fortunate that our kids got to play most sports, even though not having fans there is a drawback. He does feel that we need to push out surveys on how we are doing, and on the track. He encouraged Jesse Keith, who would like to remain on the track committee, to participate as a community member. There was an emergency SPRPCE meeting to allocate funds for certain projects. They have about \$800,000 in rollover in reserves and they elected to use \$100,000 to help defray costs of doing business in the coming years. They have about 50 students right now. They are having difficulty getting staffing. They elected to spend up to \$285,000 on capital improvements on the buildings. He asked Mr. Chasse about the re-opening committee.

Mackenzie Stepp, Student Representative did not have anything to add in addition to her written report. Mr. Harris asked that she list the name out in addition to the acronyms used.

- I. Possible Future Agenda Items
 - Approval of School Emergency Plans

Item IX: Approval of Warrants

Mr. Harris moved, seconded by Mrs. Shorey to approve warrant 6 of September 18th and warrant 7 of October 2, 2020.

Voting for (5): Mr. Harris, Mrs. Farnham, Mr. Hatch, Ms. Langille and Mrs. Shorey
Abstaining (1): Mrs. CoWallis

Item X: Adjournment

Mr. Harris moved, seconded by Mrs. CoWallis to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.
Unanimous (6)

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Chasse
Superintendent of Schools

** This is an opportunity for members of the public to comment on agenda items, contribute information that may be of interest to the School Committee or ask clarifying questions. Please wait to be recognized and identify yourself before speaking. This is not the time to register complaints or promote a personal agenda. Please remember that you may **not** identify any person by name or job function.*