

**Lyme School District  
School Board Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, November 17, 2020  
Lyme School and Electronic Meeting Via Zoom**

approved 12/1/20 without changes

Board Members Present: Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegele, Phil Barta, Barbara Wilson. District Administrator Jeff Valence, Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell, Public: Kati Miller, Kate Cook, Sue Merrill, and other 47+ other public attendees via Zoom. Recorded by Roger Lohr

**1. Call to Order and Minutes Approval**

Chair Jonathan Voegele called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM and welcomed the attendees, with the Board in person and public via Zoom. He stated the Board is committed to end the meeting by 10:00 PM.

**2. Public Comment**

Chair Jonathan Voegele opened public comment and there were four comments that were made. A statement by Ghislaine Dematteo was made regarding a Board decision on a nonresident tuition ruling and she requested clarification on that decision. A comment was made by James Graham expressing concern about the board working together with the school district administration. A comment was made in support of the matter on the nonresident tuition and in favor of the faculty getting more time within the current school model. The final public comment by Tara McGovern requested that emails to the board be read in public and that the board submit a statement regarding the nurse resignations.

Public comment was closed by Chair Voegele at 7:25 PM.

**A motion was made and seconded (Bujarski, Barta) to read public emails to the Board during the Board meeting agenda public comment segment.**

Discussion: The Board discussed whether to include a public reading or synopsis of email correspondence that had been received by the Board. The public interest on the matters related to the school and COVID impact has been high in Lyme. Statements were made regarding the need for transparency and the ability of the Board to hold meetings to conduct Board business and make decisions while incorporating the public sentiment (including such sentiment as received in emails) on Board business. Recently the Board meetings have been excessively long and it was stated that public comment at school board meetings is not required by law and the Board meetings are not intended to be a public forum, which is a different type of meeting. Additionally, it was stated that correspondence to the Board could be appended to the Board meeting minutes document.

**VOTE: The motion failed 3-4 (In favor Barta, Bujarski, Hayden; opposed Berk, Greenway, Voegele, Wilson).**

**3. Reports**

**3A. COVID Task Force Report**

Board member Matt Hayden informed the Board about the recent COVID Task Force meeting. The Task Force is debriefing the process for decision making on COVID for the Lyme school and community and. School nurse Kati Miller stated that data is showing the Lyme remains low in the

state's COVID matrix. Superintendent Valence stated that he could create an update regarding school exclusion statistics to inform faculty and parents. The Task Force felt that athletic events at the school should be limited to students of the Lyme School (both in-person and remote learners).

### 3B. Finance Report

Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell stated that a mistake was made **on the MS24, the district revenue report for the DRA, in the reporting of the food service transfer, which was omitted. This increases appropriations by \$20,000. The treasurer was notified immediately upon discovery. Town tax bills have already gone out and no adjustments can be made at this point. There is no impact on the town tax rate for this year. To put this in context; the food service transfer has been reported this way on the MS24 for the last 20+ years. The first year it was reported correctly was the 2019 tax year.** The issue has been reported to the state. Ms. Mitchell wanted the Board to be aware of the matter **due to the focus on the town appropriations number this year.**

## 4. Business Requiring Discussion and/or Action

### 4A. Length of School Day and Annual Calendar

Regarding the interpretation of the school calendar, Superintendent Valence informed the Board that he is scheduled to speak with a representative of the state board of education to clarify the number of hours that are included in a school day. The school district can then apply these specifics to the decision regarding the request of a waiver on the calendar.

### 4B. Teacher Retirements

**A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway) to accept the resignations at the end of the 2020-21 school year of Skip Pendleton and Elaine White with gratitude for their years of service to the Lyme School District.**

**VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved.**

### 4C. Initial Proposed 2021-22 School Budget

Superintendent Valence reviewed the process for understanding, developing, and prioritizing the 2021-22 school budget in what he anticipates as collaborative and constructive process. Board members Hayden and Barta have been involved with the preliminary budget discussions. A challenge for developing the budget is uncertainty about COVID and its impact on the district in the next budgetary cycle.

It was felt that the existing school model and staffing associated with it is unsustainable and unrealistic. To remain with the model as it exists will require additional staff. Another issue involves incorporating strategic plan initiatives such as differentiation.

There are four areas that the Board was asked to consider including the length of the school day; the requirement for distancing in the school that would determine the number of sections and staff needed in each grade; whether the programming should be preserved such as differentiation, art, specials, and advisories; and the level of the district's remote learning program.

Board member Barta stated that the existing contracts yield a 2.54% increase over last year's budget while maintaining the COVID protocols would be an increase to the budget of last year by 4.5%. If staff is to be increased to keep the six foot distance and a realistic number of sections it would exceed a 9% increase in the budget. Continued COVID fiscal support from state or federal sources is uncertain.

Superintendent Valence cited staffing models that would shift allocation of support staff, and an increase in technology for devices and software associated with instruction. The health insurance is slated to increase by 4.7% and high school tuition (with 102 high school students projected) will apply at least a 2.5% increase in tuition without accounting for growth in the number of high school students which is currently 93.

Superintendent Valence will propose staffing for the remote learning program and he stated that if the sections in the school model remain similar to the current situation, he'd suggest that additional staff could include an FTE for humanities, .2 FTE for art, .2 FTE for design lab, .2 FTE for Spanish as well as continuation of a lower school enrollment teacher for another year, an additional educational assistant, and replacing the retirees.

Some of the Board members voiced support for enhancing the instructional day and the programming. There was a request to see budget summary options from the district administration. The exercise for getting perspectives on the four areas was intended to limit the amount of time that needs to be spent developing alternative budget scenarios. There was some support for smaller classes in the middle school and some support was voiced for the continuance of six foot distancing, cohorting, and preserving programs.

#### **5. Consent Agenda – Minutes Approval**

**A motion was made and seconded (Bujarski, Wilson) to approve the non-public meeting minutes of October 17, 2020 as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Bujarski) to approve the non-public meeting minutes of October 28, 2020 as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**A motion was made and seconded (Berk, Bujarski) to approve the public meeting minutes of October 28, 2020 as submitted and amended.**

Discussion: The change on item 4 last sentence should replace full remote learning with in-person.

**VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved.**

**A motion was made and seconded (Wilson, Hayden) to approve the public meeting minutes of November 10, 2020 as submitted and amended.**

Discussion: The change on item 3 replace the amount related to Order #38 to \$147,406; on item 4C, modify the Barta motion as there was no vote taken on it; on item 6, modify the motion language as per Janet Mitchell.

**VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved.**

**A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Berk) to approve the non-public meeting minutes of November 10, 2020 as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### **6. Non Public Meeting**

**A motion was made and seconded (Wilson, Greenway) to enter nonpublic session in accordance with NH RSA 91-A:3 II (a) and (c) to address matters related to employees and matters related to reputation. The motion was unanimously passed. The roll call was conducted and the Board entered nonpublic session at 9:30 PM.**

**A motion to reconvene the public meeting was made and seconded (Berk, Greenway). The motion was unanimously passed.**

After leaving nonpublic session (Beck, Hayden), the public meeting was reconvened at 11:57 AM.

**7. Motion on Consultant**

**A motion was made and seconded (Beck, Hayden) to retain NHSBA for Board professional development training and to engage a consultant to evaluate district structure. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**8. Adjournment**

**A motion to adjourn was made and seconded (Hayden, Wilson). The motion was unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 AM.**