

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
**APRIL 1, 2021**  
**VIA ZOOM**

Board Members Present: L. Picard, T. Perkins, E. Holmes, T. Kilanski, J. Rokes

Administration Present: V. Carey, D. Jack, T. Taylor, I. Spencer

Absent: K. Dassau

The meeting was called to order at 6:34pm by School Board Chair, L. Picard.

**L. Picard MOVED to approve the Public minutes of the 3/18/21 Board Meeting; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, under Citizens' Comments amending Todd Bushey to Rob Bushey, VOTED by roll call: T. Perkins – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, L. Picard – yes, J. Rokes – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

L. Picard read the Right-to-Know meeting checklist, took roll call and all Board members advised if anyone was in the room with them. T. Perkins advised people would be walking through the room and T. Kilanski advised his wife was at home. All other members were alone in their space.

L. Picard welcomed Teresa Taylor as the new Business Manager. She was hired a couple of weeks ago. She and D. Jack will work together at tonight's meeting so Teresa can observe the process.

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – V. Carey:**

\*Title One Night of Gratitude will be held April 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm via Zoom. Staff have worked hard to put together fun activities and goodie bags. They hope to get a lot of participation from families.

\*State Assessments for grades three to eight will be held in Winchester beginning in May until June 11<sup>th</sup>. Winchester applied for a waiver this year, so the tests are not being used for accountability and it also waives the 95% participation rule. Data will provide information as to where children are or are not, due to the happenings of the past year. Results will still be published and provided to parents.

\*Need to start discussing the return to school five days a week. Administration has been discussing this all year. The Governor announced today at 3:00pm. that schools need to be in-person five days a week prior to our scheduled April vacation.

V. Carey advised some things will take quite a bit of maneuvering.

V. Carey reviewed information shared in the family survey regarding the Winchester School. Everyone at the school wants the kids here, but there are challenges.

\*Need to offer a remote option that would require non-budgeted, extra teachers.

\*There is a portion of the building that is not usable.

\*Seventh and Eighth Grade structure of five cohorts and four on any given day, so each remote student has two classes a day.

\*Classrooms are at capacity even with taking things out and storing them elsewhere, to allow for as many seats as possible.

V. Carey explained there is funding through Esser funds, but that is not the challenge. There is a national teacher shortage. We will have to be posting for staff for remote classes. There are various staffing positions currently open; it is a struggle to fill them.

V. Carey advised they have been working on grades three and four. We can get them to five days, but it will still not be an easy task. In other grades, it will depend on finding people to fill teaching positions and get materials from vendors. It is not possible to have those nine rooms done in three weeks. Money is available; which is excellent, but that doesn't solve the other issues. She wants the Board to be aware that it will be very challenging.

Ian Spencer advised this is another challenge for Teresa Taylor because Federal Money has federal requirements. All money needs a long paper trail. He expects the next nine rooms to have a cost of \$250,000-\$275,000 and material costs are going up.

T. Perkins asked how long we can have these teachers. Is it the next three school months or through the Fall? Can monies be used for hiring teachers?

V. Carey advised yes, but whoever we hire can't be guaranteed anything past this fiscal year. The monies can only be used to add extra staff because of COVID. Need to see what happens at the May 11<sup>th</sup> vote.

V. Carey is not sure how long remote learning will continue. Could not use Esser funds for staffing if no COVID requirements are in place.

T. Perkins thinks people being hired want longevity; won't jump at a three month position.

L. Picard asked how this will impact transportation in the Elementary School.

V. Carey feels as long as the same students are coming, even if not in the same rotation, it should be okay. Also, it is possible to use Esser funds for busses. There are more monies coming too, per the Governor.

L. Picard advised this will certainly have an impact on high schoolers as they will need to be transported five days a week.

L. Picard acknowledges that Administration will be coming to the Board for decisions and they can offer support. She knows V. Carey and Administration have been working on this. She understands there is an order, but feels it might not be a safe place to have the students.

V. Carey has been looking for collaborators. Will do what they have to do. They have been working hard. They now have to go through the process of following the rules to secure the monies needed to get them approved and then spend those monies. That is another challenge, but they are doing it. There is a lot of work to do to access the money. They will work to get things done as quickly as they can. Will reach out to the DOE and Governor's office to come to the school. If they want to help, V. Carey advised they will take their help.

### **BUSINESS MANAGER – D. Jack:**

#### **Manifests:**

After a question by the Board, **L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest of 4/2/21 in the amount of \$123,043.29 and the Payroll Manifest of 4/2/21 in the amount of \$197,386.99; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED by roll call: T. Perkins – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, J. Rokes – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

#### **Year-to-date Budget Update:**

The Board received and reviewed the year-to-date budget numbers.

T. Perkins asked how we are trending.

D. Jack explained paras have not been encumbered; believes there is \$225,000 there and \$100,000 in contracted services. Consequently, his feeling is they will probably be in the area of \$760,000. Next month should be in the area of \$430,000. They will continue to look at PO's to be sure they will need all the funds they think they will need. Want to end up with money left over. Might have expenses here which are COVID related and we could use those COVID monies for. Working on a budget during COVID19, things are very hard to predict. Will review again at the beginning of May.

### **FACILITIES REPORT – I. Spencer:**

\*I. Spencer explained he had a brief discussion at the Facilities Meeting about the location of the tent.

T. Kilanski checked with the Fire Chief who said because it is only a one day request, he doesn't need to do a big inspection, but will swing by and make sure we are within code. Tents and chairs can't be blocking any areas where emergency vehicles would enter. Fire trucks need to be able to get through in case of an emergency.

J. Rokes asked about putting the tent near the sidewalk by the Elementary cafeteria and the Elementary playground – in the middle of the parking lot.

L. Picard - It would be pretty much parallel to the Elementary wing. That would alleviate the issue of blocking the emergency lane.

Ian Spencer is still concerned about it being in the front lot. That is a thru road. He feels it would be less than desirable. Feels it could go in the back which would allow the Moderator and Clerk to control the crowd better, give better access to bathrooms, etc.

After discussion, it was the general consensus of the Board that Facilities set up the tent in front of the Elementary School building. There was no Motion required.

J. Rokes will reach out to Dale Gray to be sure they will be able to encourage traffic to go to the far end of the lot rather than near the school.

I. Spencer would love to see traffic diverted up Swan Street.

J. Rokes – What do we plan to do if people don't wear masks.

V. Carey – If spaced apart and outside, it is not an issue.

### **CHAIR REPORT/COMMENTS – L. Picard:**

\*Will have Audit report, MS25 and Deficit Warrant Article and supporting documents for Deliberative Session. L. Picard would like the Warrant Article explanation to be available to the public prior to the Deliberative Session. She plans to meet with the Moderators to be sure things are ready to go. The Moderators have asked if the School Board and the Selectboard could assist with meetings if available.

The Town's Deliberative Session is Saturday, 4/3/21 at 9:00am. in the School gym.

\*L. Picard advised the School Board and Administration spent many months on the budget and coming to a consensus with the Budget Committee. She feels they have given the Community every opportunity to review the budget, Warrant Articles, etc. She encourages Board members to be cool, calm and collected and stand by what they we put out. They may feel like they are being attacked. New Board members may reach out to L. Picard with any questions prior to the Deliberative Session.

\*Sports Boosters are gearing up to offer Softball/Baseball and are looking to continue the agreement with the School. They do need to know we can't do maintenance to the field.

E. Holmes asked if they have an updated insurance policy for this year?

L. Picard will check on that.

Ian Spencer explained they are down to one-and-a-half full time employees. The exterior of the buildings will be done when possible, but he doesn't expect to be able to do what he did in the past.

**T. Kilanski MOVED to allow the Sports Boosters to use the equipment and uniforms as the contract was previously written contingent upon insurance being continued; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED by roll call: T. Perkins – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, L. Picard – yes, J. Rokes – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

### **KHS Committee:**

The Committee has met and are moving forward. There are a couple of students who will receive acknowledgements from the Board on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board will be hearing from Keene High School regarding Winchester students at Keene. L. Picard hopes whatever documents being presented they will be able to review prior to the meeting, in case of questions. Working to solidify feedback from the community on various topics. The first is transportation. Lindsey Hildreth will be receiving the feedback. The next meeting will be held on 4/22 at 6:00pm.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:**

None.

L. Picard advised leading up to the Deliberative Session, the Board needs to speak positively and productively.

**L. Picard MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:02pm; SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED by roll call: T. Perkins – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, J. Rokes – Yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins  
School Board Secretary