

School Board Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 28, 2017

Lyme Elementary School

approved as is, 10/26/17

Board Members Present: Jay Davis, Elizabeth Glenshaw, Hayes Greenway, Heidi Lange, Sam Levey, Pinky Tullar, Alicia Willette. Administrators: Jeff Valence, Elise Foxall, Miki McGee, Janet Mitchell; 2 public attendees including Jen Boylston, Carl Furstenberg. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. **Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Glenshaw.

2. Agenda Review

The Retreat subgroups would report on their discussions at the beginning of the meeting.

3. Reports of the Retreat Subgroups

a. The High School group discussed issue related to high school choice for Lyme and agreements with Thetford Academy, St. Johnsbury Academy, and Hanover High School will be reviewed. The High School Committee will prepare for discussion at the annual school district meeting. The district high school policy will be reviewed.

b. The Strategic Plan group recommended that the Strategic Plan Committee speak with the former chairs of the committee to see what they learned about the process. It will look at existing strategic plans in similar schools and examples that could provide aspiration. There would be a review of the existing strategic plan to consider what has not been accomplished and a school district self-assessment. There will be data collection (forum, surveys, focus groups) and analysis for the main issues. The audience to target for input includes parents, community member, teachers from lower grades and middle school, Board Strategic Planning Committee members, administration, former Lyme School students now in high school and college, and high schools. It was suggested that administrative support would be a great value to the chair or co-chairs of the committee. The first meeting of the committee is scheduled for Elizabeth Glenshaw's office in Norwich at noon on Tuesday, October 3.

4. Business Requiring Action

a. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Greenway) to approve an amendment to the Lyme School Board meeting minutes of the June 22, 2017 as submitted and amended. The motion was approved 6-0-0. The change in item 5A was to remove "s" at the end of Squire.

b. A motion was made and seconded (Levey, Willette) to approve an amendment to the Lyme School Board nonpublic meeting minutes of the June 22, 2017 as submitted. The motion was approved 6-0-0

c. A motion was made and seconded (Lange, Davis) to approve an amendment to the Lyme School Board meeting minutes of the August 17, 2017 as submitted. The motion was approved 6-0-0

d. A motion was made and seconded (Levey, Greenway) to approve an amendment to the Lyme School Board meeting minutes of the August 23, 2017 as submitted. The motion was approved 5-0-1 (Davis abstained).

e. A motion was made and seconded (Greeway, Tullar) to approve an amendment to the Lyme School Board nonpublic meeting minutes of the August 23, 2017. The motion was approved 5-0-1 (Davis abstained).

f. Administrative Support for the Strategic Plan Committee

Superintendent Valence suggested that the Board could expend up to \$5,000 for costs associated with an administrative staff for support of the Strategic Plan Committee (from the Board expense account) and this amount of time could bring the staff person into eligibility for benefits. Valence will speak with the candidate to see if the added time could avoid being treated as overtime.

A motion was made and seconded (Greeway, Davis) to approve expanding hours for administrative staff to support work of the Strategic Plan Committee. The motion was approved 6-0-0

g. Amendment to March 22, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

The Board discussed how much detail to include in the public comments section of the Board meeting minutes and about documents submitted to the Board made by a member of the public at the Board meeting. Board member Sam Levey read the proposed rewritten public comment section for the March 22, 2017 to incorporate a statement from resident Jules McCutcheon. A motion was made and seconded (Tullar, Davis) to amend the March 22, 2017 meeting minutes as proposed. The motion was approved 6-0-0.

The Board discussed the music instructor search process as it transpired through the spring and summer as well as the requirements of the alternative certification process.

A motion was made and seconded (Willette, Greenway) to designate the music instructor position as an "Area of Critical Need" at the Lyme School. The motion was approved 6-0-0.

B. Short Term Disability

Superintendent Valence explained about consideration regarding short term disability and whether it is better to have the school district self-funded or to use an insurance company for this coverage. Maternity leave is an issue related to short term disability. Some policies on insurance need to be updated to align with the current collective bargaining agreement. The new policy involved is GBRID. The Board asked questions about short term disability, maternity leave as unpaid when sick days are used. The Financial Committee can review the issue and make some decisions.

A motion was made and seconded (Willette, Greenway) to approve the Financial Committee review the short-term disability options and approve related expense at the Lyme School. The motion was approved 6-0-0.

C. Policy GBRIB

There is a need to create a new subgroup of employees so that some special education specialists can be employees rather than contractors. This was a first reading of proposed Policy GBRIB.

D. Policy DGB

There was a first reading of proposed Policy DGB regarding extending the Lyme School credit card limit to \$5,000 to accommodate the need to make many on-line purchases.

E. RFP Process

Superintendent Valence explained the model of employment for custodial services at the Lyme School and wanted the Board to weigh on the decision. There were responses to an advertisement for a custodial employee and there was one submitted for custodial contract services. The Facilities Committee could make a recommendation about whether it would be preferable for the custodial position to be a contracted service or an employee. The committee favored using the contract service model for custodial services to save money. The Board decided to table the discussion and address it in nonpublic session.

6. Communications and Reports

Superintendent's Report

A. Drama Program

Superintendent Valence explained the drama program and staff associated with it in the middle school.

B. Robotics Grant

A state grant is being sought to establish a robotics Lego program.

C. High School

Superintendent Valence stated that a meeting has been held with Hanover regarding various issues including the status of Lyme students that have a parent living in Hanover. The agreement on these split homes will save Lyme School about \$60,000.

Board member Sam Levey reported that after its extensive review of the current high school choice model, the High School Committee has now concluded its study and found that various alternative models would not yield substantial costs savings. In fact, it appears that the alternatives would likely prove to be costlier to the school district. The High School Committee recommends that no substantial change be made to current model, either in its general approach or in its current group of partner high schools. It recommends that the School Board's Policy JBCCA-2 be refined and clarified on a few points, a matter which has now been referred to the Policy Committee. It also recommends that the language of the School Board's partnership agreements be refined and made more uniform across its high school partnerships.

The Lyme School Board accepted the recommendations by consent and agreed that the high school choice model shall not be further reviewed at this time.

D. Financial Update

The financial document was cited. Superintendent Valence stated that a new stove had to be acquired for \$9,000 and currently there is a \$300 overage in supplies. A \$26,040 small school grant was received and after summer hiring the instruction expense is under budget, leaving the deficit impacted by special education expenses at about \$8,000. Funds can be withdrawn from the Special Education Reserve Fund, if necessary.

E. Committee Reports

The Board discussed the need to warn committee meetings and produce meeting minutes that would include a list of meeting attendees and what was covered. Such reports are due within five work days of the meeting. The committee meeting minutes report (synopsis of what was accomplished or decided) would be an addendum to the Board meeting minutes document. There was support for verbal committee reports at the Board meetings and it was acknowledged that there is a need to keep the Board meetings as focused as possible. It was agreed that the committees could give a verbal report at the Board meetings while being aware of the Board time allotted to it.

E1. The High School Committee recommended that only refinements regarding high school choice would be incorporated in a revised high school policy. After some consideration, the committee felt that to change the high school choice process in some of the ways being discussed would probably be costlier to the school district.

E2. The Academic Committee held six meetings between May and August mostly about hiring personnel. The committee's agenda during the last year was reviewed and it was recommended that the committee conduct one 90-minute meeting per month. There are some state decisions that are expected to impact the Lyme School and the impacts are being considered. The administrative structure will also be discussed to make sure it has the support it need to succeed. The technology portion of the strategic plan, which still remains to be completed, will also be a focus.

E3. The Policy Committee forwarded several policies to the Board for consideration and approval.

E4. The Finance Committee has met with the town Budget Committee and it went well. The school budget process for 2018-19 has been initiated. The key points regarding budget issues will be highlighted at the next Board meeting so the Board has more time to consider dealing with any concerns.

7. **Non-Public Session**

A motion was made and seconded (Levey, Greenway) to enter nonpublic session in accordance with RSA 91-A3 II. (b and c) for discussion of matters relating to hiring and personnel. The motion was approved 6-0-0. At 9:45 PM the roll call was conducted, and the Lyme School Board entered nonpublic session.

The public session was reconvened at 9:50 PM.

8. Business Requiring Action continued

A motion was made and seconded (Willette, Greenway) to elect the following candidates for positions discussed in nonpublic session at the Lyme School for the school year. Larry Reed was awarded the RFP contract for Custodial Service. Joshua Kershaw was nominated as HS Aide. The motion was approved 6-0-0.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Greenway) to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 PM. The motion was approved 6-0-0.