

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2021
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Board Members Present: L. Picard, T. Perkins, L. Hildreth
Absent: T. Kilanski, J. Rokes
Administration Present: K. Dassau, V. Carey, T. Taylor, M. Hill

The meeting was called to order by Chair, L. Picard at 6:35pm.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the public and non-public minutes of 7/15/21; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

PRINCIPAL – V. Carey:

***Emergency Operations Plan:** V. Carey advised the plan needs to be updated each year and sent to The DOE and Homeland Security by 9/1. It requires Town approval.

***Reopening Plan:** V. Carey explained the Committee was planning to have a meeting the first week in August, but received the template and then had a meeting on 8/11 as to how to prepare it. They needed to do that before they could confirm a plan. She is requesting an additional Board Meeting to receive feedback and approval of the plan. Administration also hopes to have a nomination at that meeting.

V. Carey explained the process for reopening, i.e. surveys, addressing requirements from Homeland Security, etc. There is a checkbox of compliance items they must do.

V. Carey reviewed items that need to be addressed regarding use of COVID funds. Will have more discussion in non-public.

***HB2 State Budget:** passed in June with a new rule on teaching divisive subjects. There have not been a lot of answers from the DOE or others. V. Carey advised they received information last week from the DOE created by the Commissioner of Human Rights and the Department of Justice. There has been no training on how to implement it. V. Carey reviewed the documents received. She explained the rule is fully unrelated to the budget. She read Winchester's response to the new law. Advised they are not going to change how they teach history as Winchester is not breaking any rules. She read the list of new requirements and reviewed areas that will need additional review and clarity. The documents are on the DOE website from the Commissioner of Education.

V. Carey will be reviewing the new rules with staff and will get clarity. Advised they need to commit to supporting teachers and their concerns. There needs to be discussion as to how to protect staff against claims, that will include the School Board, School Board Attorney, Teachers Union, etc. They will start with a round table discussion.

L. Picard and Amy Hill advised they will sit on the Committee.

V. Carey will set a meeting date and time.

V. Carey advised there has been some effort to combat the language in the budget and work on ways of appealing the rule.

L. Picard feels the benefit is it is a two year budget.

V. Carey will review the information again at next week's meeting for the full Board.

Amy Hill would like to be added to the agenda for this subject, at next week's meeting.

V. Carey advised they will need a Board decision on masking for the return to school. It is the intention of the Winchester School to stay in-person as long as possible even if specific cohorts are required to quarantine. V. Carey thinks they will be looking at mandates to stay in-person. ESSER funds come with requirements of staying in person as long as possible.

L. Picard would like to hear from the Reopening Committee as to their recommendations.

V. Carey wants to hear from the Union, too.

L. Picard advised they will bring back for further discussion at the next meeting.

The current policy has been used for Summer Camp and Summer School.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – T. Taylor:

L. Picard MOVED to put into the record the Accounts Payable Manifests of 7/23/21 in the amount of \$839,805.06; 7/29/21 in the amount of \$23,917.02, 8/6/21 in the amount of \$44,453.84; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to put into the record the Payroll Manifests dated 7/23/21 in the amount of \$131,900.31 and 8/6/21 in the amount of \$135,403.95; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

The Board needs to sign a letter requesting a \$125,000 withdrawal to be placed in the Special Ed Fund from the Trustee of Trust Funds.

T. Perkins MOVED to sign the letter to the Trustee of Trust Funds requesting a withdrawal of \$125,000 to be placed in the Special Ed Trust Fund; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

T. Perkins asked how we ended up at the end of the fiscal year.

T. Taylor advised enough to pay frontloading Summer pay; \$130,000 was unspent. The auditors are coming; numbers could move. She hopes to bring more information to the first meeting of September.

M. Hill advised they have received new ventilators and all but three have been installed. Everything should be finished for the beginning of the school year.

K. Dassau – Still have outstanding debt from last year.

T. Taylor explained \$463,000+ is owed to Keene High School. It was in the budget; strictly a cash flow issue.

L. Picard – The Town has asked that if the School is coming back to request funds that it be after the July tax bills.

L. Picard will follow-up with T. Taylor to see if the School Board is going to bring a request to the Town and she will bring a letter to the Selectboard. She feels they should also have a discussion with Amy at the Town.

K. Dassau and T. Taylor advised they should not be in this position next year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – K. DASSAU:

*Non-public session is needed tonight for a nomination and two contracts.

POLICY DAF-6 AND DAF-7:

L. Picard brought two policies from the Policy Committee to the Board.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to approve Policy DAF-6 – Administration of Federal Grant Funds and DAF-7 – Administration of Travel Reimbursement; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.**

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS/REPORTS:

L. Picard explained to Amy Hill the procedure to add someone to the agenda.

Amy Hill advised a lot of legwork has been done and clarified regarding the new law.

L. Picard advised the Board would want to see the information before adding it to the agenda.

Amy Hill feels the most vulnerable to the new rule are teachers not protected under the Union. The Union is very clear, but those not in the Union would be in trouble if anything comes down; wants training for them and to meet with them. She feels for next time, they really need to have the meeting recorded. Everyone has their own ideas.

L. Picard advised the School did a great job with the livestreaming option and zooming. Since we came back to in-person, it has not been working as well.

L. Picard has received information for the Selectboard regarding livestreaming; a company would livestream for us too, so residents can access the meetings. She has received information from two companies. The cost would be between \$3,000.00 and \$4,000.00 per year for unlimited meetings. Will include committee meetings, etc. The public could see government at work.

L. Picard advised next week she would like mics and a laptop to record/stream the Board meeting.

L. Picard feels with the cost comparison they should go with a company rather than to purchase our own equipment and do it ourselves. She will bring information to the Board after further discussion with the Selectboard.

L. Hildreth feels it is a good idea to go with a third party.

T. Perkins is also interested in the potential of a third party vendor.

V. Carey is comfortable if recording equipment is mobile rather than fixed; due to recording rules in classrooms.

SELECTBOARD MEETING:

L. Picard advised last night at the Selectboard meeting they received updated information on funding which includes millions of dollars available to municipalities. Would like the school involved and put together a wish list.

V. Carey suggested a generator; the school is supposed to be an emergency shelter, but as we don't have a generator, so we can't do it.

L. Picard feels there should be a committee that should include a member of Administration.

V. Carey explained the work has been done as they applied for a previous grant, but didn't qualify.

M. Hill will be included in that committee. V. Carey advised if she is needed she will be happy to be part of it.

L. Picard advised the Selectboard is honing in on hiring a new Chief of Police. They hope to hear in the next week.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Amy Hill asked about stipends as part of the Reopening Plan.

V. Carey advised that is something they have to do as part of the plan. Would then have to explain how they will expend the remaining 80% of the funds. Reviewed items that are required with the Board and answered questions.

Amy Hill asked if the Board is monitoring propaganda about critical race theory from people on Facebook. She wanted the Board to know it is happening and to be cognizant of it.

L. Picard does her best to monitor and address issues as a sole board member. One member has her blocked so she hopes other members will monitor things.

L. Picard asked Amy Hill to definitely bring to the Board anything that comes to her.

Amy Hill would not want to censor people on how they feel, but feels it is propaganda.

L. Picard feels that is where live streaming is crucial. Someone might say something they wouldn't say if looking you in the eye.

K. Dassau reminded the group about the disinformation campaign regarding the budget cut that was sent out to the public. He feels maintaining transparency and putting the truth out there is the best way for us.

Budget Committee:

L. Picard advised the Board Rep. for the Budget Committee is not here tonight and she has been trying to get to him to schedule a meeting. If anyone sees him, please ask him to get in touch with her.

L. Picard advised the Chair of the Budget Committee has resigned. She urged them to appoint K. Bazan, but they have put it out for letters of interest.

L. Hildreth advised if the School Board Rep. can't be at meetings, she will go.

K. Dassau advised she can always go as a member of the public.

L. Picard advised the Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for 9/14/21. She encourages all to be there at 6:00pm.

L. Picard MOVED to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3,III(b) and (i) at 8:30pm; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: T. Perkins – yes, L. Hildreth – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to leave non-public session at 9:24pm. SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to seal all non-public minutes for a minimum of six months; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

T. Perkins MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:25pm, SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary