

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wayne Elementary School
September 18, 2019
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Chair Gary Carr, Vice Chair Wendy Brotherlin, Kim Bowie, Patty Gordon, Cathy Jacobs, Rebecca Lambert, Shawn Roderick (arrived 6:37), David Twitchell, Alexander Wright

Members Absent: Louise Ridley, Melissa Tobin, Adam Woodford, (one vacant position)

Administrator: Superintendent James Charette, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar, Abbie Hartford, Kristen Levesque, Assistant Principal Tina Brackley, Finance Manager Brigette Williams, Director of Maintenance & Transportation Shaun Drinkwater

1. Call to order: Chair Carr call the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Citizens' Comments: none

3. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent:

Chair Carr requested Board members look at their schedules for Tuesday, November 12 and Tuesday, December 10 as tentative meeting dates. There is one meeting scheduled for the months of November and December, and if a second meeting is needed these are the dates the board could meet. If you have conflicts with these dates please let Chair Carr know.

4. Workshop: Presentation of District Facilities Projects and Time Line

Director of Maintenance and Transportation Shaun Drinkwater reviewed the summer projects that are part of the facilities bond. Except for a few touch ups, all the projects except for the Manchester Elementary School boiler are complete. It is expected to be completed within the next 2 weeks. The High School roof project will be done next year.

Superintendent Charette distributed a bond project summary sheet and reviewed the allocations for each project, the add-ons, the total project costs, and the balance of each fund. As reported earlier, the high school roof project will be completed next year. At the September 4th meeting a question was asked whether unused funds from the bond could be returned to the towns. In checking with legal counsel, it is highly discouraged. The District has committed to borrowing this money and putting it toward facilities costs. With that said, the bond was written up open ended, which means the remaining funds can be used toward other facilities projects as the Facilities Committee and the Board deem appropriate. The district has 3 years to use the bond funds, so there is time to be thoughtful on how to spend the money. Mr. Drinkwater and Mr. Charette are having conversations on how to move forward and Mr. Drinkwater is generating a list to be considered.

Chair Carr added we were not awarded the grant for the door locks, so the board will need to consider whether to move that project forward using bond funds.

Superintendent Charette continued his report, stating he is recommending the Board consider adding the high school bleachers project to the bond. The voters approved going out for a lease purchase on the bleachers, but including them in the bond will eliminate the need for the lease purchase, eliminating an additional payment for the school. The Board budgeted \$20,000 in this year's budget for the first lease purchase payment, so he is recommending the balance of \$70,258.00 be taken from the bond. The board discussed whether it would make sense to take the full cost of the bleachers out of the bond and keep the \$20,000 as a carry forward for next year.

Suggestion was made to look into purchasing speed bumps for Millard Harrison Drive. Mr. Roderick asked about having the maintenance staff trained in propane. Mr. Drinkwater is looking into both of these items.

Superintendent Charette shared a letter he received from Mr. Henry Bonneau, the contractor who installed the septic system at Wayne Elementary. Mr. Bonneau was very complimentary of Mr. Drinkwater. The Board thanked Mr. Drinkwater for his work through the projects he oversaw over the summer.

5. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:

a. Approval of Minutes of September 4, 2019

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the minutes of September 4, 2019 as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

b. Approval of overnight trip – High School Outdoor Club, Pleasant Pond, Caratunk, Maine, September 27-28, 2019

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the overnight trip for the High School Outdoor Club, to Pleasant Pond, Caratunk, Maine, September 27-28, 2019 as presented.

Motion Carried: unanimous

c. Acceptance of Middle School teacher resignation effective TBD, Ally Cleveland

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to accept the resignation of teacher Ally Cleveland, with regret. Superintendent Charette reported her last day will be Friday, September 20th. The position will be filled with a long-term sub for the time being.

Motion Carried: unanimous

d. Approval of first probationary contract teacher, Karen Magnusson, MS Physical Education

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the first probationary contract teacher, Karen Magnusson, as presented. Superintendent Charette noted that he is working with Winthrop regarding Ms. Magnusson's start date. The person she is replacing is also looking to get to his new position. The Superintendents are working together. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

e. Vote on funding of High School Bleachers

Superintendent Charette reported that the board budgeted the equivalent of one year's payment toward the bleachers in the FY20 budget. If the Board approves the request this evening to pay for the remainder of the bleachers from the bond, the entire amount will be paid this year eliminating the need for a lease purchase. Question was asked if the board could leave the \$20,000 in the general fund budget and pay the full amount out of the bond. Finance Manager Williams responded the \$20,000 could be rolled over to the balance forward.

Ms. Gordon asked Ms. Williams what she thought about this option. Ms. Williams responded she had no preference, but feels the Board probably shouldn't lease purchase the bleachers.

Ms. Lambert asked - if the payment for the bleachers comes from the bond, can the carry forward be used for anything? Ms. Williams responded that at the end of the year she will project what the carry over will be, and typically we take the bulk of that amount as a revenue stream to reduce what is requested from the towns for in the next budget. Next year, and for the life of the bond, there will be 2 interest payments and a principal payment; the bond anticipation note will go away in November.

MOTION by Wright to authorize payment of the bleachers in full from the bond, second by Bowie. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

f. Discussion – Board Committees and Assignments

Superintendent Charette reviewed the listing of board committees and assignments. There are some openings that remain to be filled. The following changes were agreed to: Rebecca Lambert will serve as an alternate to the Policy Committee. Wendy Brotherlin will serve on the Administration/Staff/Board Evaluation committee, and will not serve on the Health Services

Advisory Council. Kim Bowie will serve on the School Health Leadership Council. Cathy Jacobs will serve as the Board representative to the CATC Vocational Committee. A new list will be distributed and meetings will be scheduled.

g. Acceptance of teacher resignation, GT Coordinator, Pat Godin

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to accept the resignation of Pat Godin, with regret. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

Mr. Wright reported that a resident of Mt. Vernon who was part of the original committee that reorganized the RSU asked if the Board could revisit the funding formula that was developed when the school district reorganized into a RSU. Ms. Williams added the funding formula is currently based on 50% per pupil cost/50% town valuation. He asked if the Board could have a discussion about this at the next board meeting. Within that discussion, what the state will allow us to do?

Ms. Jacobs asked what the goal is to having this discussion. Chair Carr responded the costs to the towns.

Mr. Roderick apologized for not being present at the start of the meeting and asked if he could add a topic to the agenda. If not, he will request it be added to the next agenda. Chair Carr signified it was ok.

Mr. Roderick had questions regarding the election of the board chair from the last meeting. He believes there was campaigning done for board chair, and from his research, you are not supposed to campaign or ask for votes when it comes to boards. If those are the rules we are supposed to go by then we should follow them. He asked if there was campaigning. Second, there have been meetings of individuals outside of the board. It is very clear that meetings with more than 5 members, need to happen in this room; things shouldn't be preordained. We have a commitment to the public. Third, he heard from staff in the district that they have been intimidated or feel intimidated by this Board.

Mr. Roderick stated that when issues are brought to his attention that he emails or calls the Superintendent; it is the Superintendent's job to handle issues that are brought to the Board. He asked if there have been any meetings, and, if so, who was there? When you are elected to a board you have to be extra cautious with how you are talking with staff. He requested that decisions be made in this room and for people to follow the law.

Ms. Lambert reported that she did receive a call for support from Chair Carr. Ms. Brotherlin reported she did hold a "meet and greet" at her home over the summer but was cautioned against inviting the whole board, and if she did invite the Manchester people to keep it under 6. There were no more than 5 board members there at any time. Discussion ensued around Mr. Roderick's questions. Discussion was held about board members from other towns being in attendance, but not all members were invited. Ms. Brotherlin added she was not trying to conduct business, she was trying to be friendly. She did not realize it would be such a problem. Ms. Ridley attended but left early; Ms. Bowie attended but there was no business talking. Mr. Wright was there as well as Ms. Tobin. It was reported that there was discussion of who people were voting for board chair. Concern was raised that if it was only for Manchester Board members, why were other board members there, and not all board members received an invitation. Ms. Lambert stated anytime 3 or more board members get together it needs to be posted. She also feels there are some inconsistencies here.

Ms. Gordon asked if the "meet and greet" was before the August Policy Committee meeting, because she asked about it and was told it was not happening. Knowing there were 3 more people it was a meeting. Was meet and greet before policy committee meeting? Discussion ensued about the timing of the "meet and greet" and the August Policy Committee meeting.

Discussion ensued about the small community that comprises RSU #38 and how important it is for Board members to be cognizant of their roles as Board members, parents and community members.

Ms. Jacobs stated people in the community are saying people are meeting outside of official meetings. She is also hearing some of the decisions being made by staff and principals are being made under intimidation. She does not feel this is a supportive board. She asked the Board to look at what they are as a Board, and how they can evaluate how they are doing.

Ms. Bowie added that it sounds like it is good this is coming up. How does the Board move forward now that this information has been aired?

Question was asked as to whether members will agree to follow procedures. Holding a re-election of the Chair and Vice Chair will address the concerns raised in Mr. Roderick's first question.

Mr. Roderick added, something is happening to make people feel this way. Instead of letting things build up over time, this should have been brought up earlier. He thinks it's affecting the students when staff is feeling this way.

Mr. Twitchell stated he was grateful for all thoughts shared.

MOTION by Twitchell that at the next meeting, the Board hold a vote on whether to go through the nomination and election process for chair and vice chair again. Discussion ensued.

No second.

MOTION by Twitchell to hold a re-election at the next meeting. Second by Lambert.

Discussion followed. Mr. Twitchell reported he feels the nomination and election process at the board meeting was appropriate and open, there was space for other nominations, space for discussion, the fact that there were no other nominations or discussion, does not invalidate the votes. Mr. Wright concurred. This does not validate any campaigning or anything else, but it doesn't invalidate the vote.

Ms. Lambert requested the members who made the nominations for board chair and vice chair to speak to the nominations. Ms. Brotherlin, Mr. Twitchell and Mr. Wright spoke to their nominations and seconds. Dr. Carr spoke on his and Ms. Brotherlin's work as chair and vice chair over the past year.

Ms. Jacobs asked that for the sake of transparency and the sake of what the community is thinking of the Board, the Board should consider opening up the nomination of the board chair and vice chair as a first step to move forward. Ms. Gordon agreed stating the outcome might be the same, but it address the transparency issue.

Motion carried: 8 in favor, 1 opposed (Carr).

9. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James Charette, Superintendent/Secretary
D. Foster, Recorder