

**Lyme School District
School Board Regular Meeting
Monday, August 26, 2019**

approved w/ changes, 9/24/19

Board Members Present: Phil Barta, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden, Pinky Tullar, Jonathan Voegelé, Becky Wipfler. Administrators: District Administrator Jeff Valence, Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell, Academic Director Elise Foxall; 10 public attendees. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. Call to Order

Chair Jonathan Voegelé called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

2. Agenda Review

Items from the proposed agenda that were tabled included the meeting minutes approval consideration and the policy on emergency data recovery. The River Road bus discussion was moved earlier in the meeting. The Board would be asked to sign the DOE 25 and MS 25 documents.

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway) to approve the meeting agenda changes as proposed. The motion was approved by all voting Board members.

3. Bus Acquisition

DA Jeff Valence reviewed the options to provide mandated transportation to students on River Road, which due to a partial closing has required a separate and additional bus for transporting students to and from school. The cost of the monthly lease will increase from \$600 to a range of \$1,200-1,800 per month. The River Road closure has been a situation for the school district for three years and there are concerns about how much longer it will continue and whether there will be other road closures in the district, and the costs associated with the closures.

A variety of options were researched including used vehicles, leases, paying families to provide their own transportation, and purchasing a new 10-passenger vehicle (which would cost about \$37,000). The long-term financing of a vehicle would require a town warrant vote in March similar to school bond consideration. A vehicle that carries 15 passengers would require a driver that has a CDL license. A plan was forwarded to acquire a new 10-passenger vehicle (central egress, ability to stand up, can provide space for more students if necessary, does not require a CDL, can be used for other purposes) and a school grant for two thirds of the funding is available for the acquisition which when combined with the school district's transportation budget of \$6,000, the district would need to find about \$5,000 from the existing school budget to cover the vehicle cost.

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Barta) to approve the expenditure of up to \$37,000 for the purchase of a vehicle for the Lyme School.

Discussion:

Given the uncertainty of the roads, and the high cost of short-term options. The school sought the input of the selectboard and budget committee to weigh in on the most practical solution to current and future road closures along bus routes. Operational costs of the vehicle would include paying for the driver as/if needed, fuel, insurance, and maintenance. Other uses of the vehicle, suggested by members of the audience included transportation for summer camp, small class trips, moving, or helping residents get to a medical facility.

The Lyme school Board, attending members of the Lyme Selectboard, Lyme Budget Committee and members of the public discussed the issue at the meeting. It was stated that the town would not be able to help fund the acquisition. It was suggested that issues such as the need for child restraints be investigated. It was the consensus of the members of the budget committee, as well as those present, that this was the best long term solution and they supported this purchase. Members also expressed appreciation for efforts to involve the budget and select board in the discussion.

VOTE: The motion was approved by all voting Board members 7-0-0.

4. Reports

A. Chair Report

Chair Jonathan Voegle reported that the superintendent evaluation discussion was held during the summer and he will submit a summary to the Board. The Board may decide to discuss the evaluation in nonpublic session.

B. Finance Report

Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell distributed financial documents. DA Valance and the Board recognized Ms. Mitchell for her work with the auditors during the summer. The Trust Fund balances as of June 30, 2019 were reviewed. Student activities and petty cash accounts were reviewed. Once the 501C3 is established, the balance of the current Principal's Fund will become part of the Petty Cash Fund. The Grade K-6 account was explained.

The Audit was reviewed for the Board by Ms. Mitchell and some findings and adjustments were made. She had to explain variations in some of the budget line items. There are some issues with purchase orders and how a security deposit was handled on the balance sheet.

The high school and special education budget variations were the most significant (under budget by \$134,000). The elementary special education was \$69,000 under budget while the regular instruction and building and grounds were over budget. Accounting for variations in revenue and expenses, the net positive year-end unrestricted budget balance was over \$200,000. The ending fund balance surplus is \$171,503 that amount would be forwarded to reduce Lyme taxes in December.

It was stated that the school district may consider creating a contingency line item in the budget and by law can use up to 2.5% of the unrestricted budget surplus funds (within state stipulations) that could be held for 10 months.

5. Business Requiring Action or Discussion

A. Personnel Changes During the Summer

DA Valance stated that six staff positions were filled during the summer to replace those who had left the school district. The new hires included Sara Rose, Emily Marshall, Amanda McGinnis, Amanda Perry, Sara Evans and Elizabeth McGee.

A motion was made and seconded (Tullar, Hayden) to accept the list submitted by DA Valance of six staff (Sara Rose, Emily Marshall, Amanda McGinnis, Amanda Perry, Sara Evans and Elizabeth McGee) that would join the Lyme School staff for the 2019-20 school year. The motion was approved by all voting Board members 7-0-0.

B. Retreat Consideration

The Board discussed and supported holding a retreat to consider implementation of the Lyme School Strategic Plan. The Executive Committee will consider dates for the retreat to be held in October (before the holidays).

C. Administrative Input on the Proposed Strategic Plan

DA Valance reviewed an overview of the academic aspect of the proposed Strategic Plan document that included examples of tactics and indicators. It was suggested that staff professional development in the Strategic Plan be considered going into the CBA. DA Valance recognized Academic Director Foxall for her work on the plan implementation tactics. It was also suggested that the plan's curriculum development and review be incorporated into Policy Committee consideration.

D. Schedule Changes

The Academic Director Report will be added to reports at future Board meetings. It was stated that the school schedule changes are ambitious and they will require some adjustment. It was recommended that the Board become familiar with the reasoning for the school schedule changes. There will be longer instructional blocks of time that will provide more academic time on subjects and help decrease the impact of snow days and assembly time. Additionally, the end-of-day subjects will change weekly to maintain attention at the end of the school day. The new schedule will continue to be communicated to parents. There are parent nights scheduled to discuss the changes and school news about it has been sent.

6. Policies

The Policy Emergency Data Recovery was tabled by the Board for consideration at the meeting as it is currently being drafted.

7. Committee Reports

Chair Voegelé asked Board chairs to finalize the committee rosters and to set up committee meetings to consider 2019-20 committee goals that can be brought to the next Board meeting. DA Valance would attend the committee meetings so scheduling needs to incorporate his availability.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway) to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 PM. The motion was approved 7-0-0.