

**Lyme School District
Emergency School Board Meeting
Saturday, March 14, 2020
Lyme School Cafeteria**

approved w/ changes, 4/28/20

Board Members Present: Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegelé. Administrators: District Administrator Jeff Valence. Public attendees: Antonia Altomare, MD- ID physician and epidemiologist guiding the DHMC response; Mike Hinsley, Lyme Health Officer and Hanover Assistant Police Chief, Margaret Slosberg- Emergency Response Team of Lyme, Rose Knaus, Lara Dwyer - school nurses, Shaun O'Keefe- Lyme Police Chief, Kevin Sahr- Selectboard Representative; Other public: Stacey Jellison, Jen Boylston, Hank Stokes, Tim and Kristin Burdik, Laurel Ross, Kati Miller, Rebecca Beisswenger, Todd Maxfield, Tara McGovern, Erika Breton, Deb Robinson, Alex Grossman, Kim Werner, Ken Hayes, Sarah McBride, Lisa Rayes, David Lysy, Mike Mundy. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. Call to Order

Chair Jonathan Voegelé called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. He acknowledged the stipulations for holding an emergency meeting with less than 24 hour notice. The meeting was intended to hear about the COVID-19 virus outbreak situation from emergency and health professionals. The meeting attendees were introduced.

2. Public Comment

There were public questions about COVID testing and if the school would be closed. The community will take a cue from the school's actions and there was interest in getting some clarifications of the outbreak situation.

3. Items for Discussion or Action

The background about the COVID-19 outbreak in the region and the impact on Lyme and Lyme School was presented by Antonia Altomre, an epidemiologist from DHMC and Mike Hinsley, the Lyme fire chief. They referenced the need for physical social distancing, isolation, and quarantining as ways that the population can address the spread of the infection. Hygiene and sanitizing techniques were reviewed. Projections are that the COVID-19 situation may impact the region for 12-14 months. The duration of the virus and re-infection are unknown. Asymptomatic individuals may be contagious, too and they are not aware that they are spreading the virus.

The Lyme community has a large portion of residents that are in the health sector and closing the school would be difficult for their families who would have to coordinate and/or participate in remote learning. Community-wide participation is paramount across the region and this strategy will be a significant undertaking to attain success.

Superintendent Valence has been in discussions with representatives from the state and the Hanover and Lebanon school districts with regard to school closing and remote learning. It was suggested that all of the districts would need to make a united decision to close. Lyme School has been continually sanitized and teachers are preparing to transform to a remote learning scenario. The plan would be to create normalcy for students and teachers to handle the stress involved.

There was a discussion about nonessential activities at the school (rec programs, school play, etc.) and if they should be cancelled or postponed. It was suggested that extra-curricula programs be suspended.

The Board asked questions about contagiousness, quarantining, and physical distancing concepts. The superintendent and nurses have been considering what is practical for students and staff. The decision to close the school would most likely be a state decision that would be enacted for a specific time period. The state has been deferring to the local deciders on school closing and Superintendent Valence stated that the decision would be based on conditions and what is best for the staff, students, parents and the community.

There was a discussion about the students' social emotional aspect of the COVID outbreak. They are worried about their parents and there has been misinformation. Concern was expressed for people in need and funding available to help them. Shared responsibility was recommended. Meals are produced for those in need and the Principal's Fund is one option to help pay for what is needed. The superintendent will speak with the Select Board about resources to help those in need.

The Board asked to be informed about the financial impact of COVID-19 on the school district. It was stated that requirements related to overspending and the number of school days will be loosened at the state level. Remote learning could be used through the end of the year, if necessary.

A motion was made and seconded (Bujarski, Hayden) to authorize the superintendent to close the school for non-school and non-town activities and business at his discretion.

Discussion: The Board acknowledged that this motion would impact issues that may not be currently considered at this time.

The motion was approved with 6 in favor (Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegele) and none opposed.

4. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway). The motion was passed unanimously favor (Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegele) and none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 AM.