

MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 1 MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON June 8, 2020 AT 6:00 PM. (NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Board. Such action, either to approve or amend and approve, is anticipated at the **June 22, 2020 meeting).**

Members Present: Stephen August, Chairperson; Lou Ensel, Vice Chairperson; Anita Brown, Megan Fuller, Bill Perkins, Lorna Ryan and Jennifer Ritch-Smith; Tanner Hennin, Student Representative; Patrick Manuel, Superintendent of Schools

Members Absent: Hayden Platteter

Others Present: Katie Joseph, Debra Clark, Dean Emmerson

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson August called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm, conducted a roll call, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson August reported that the Board did not receive any public comments by noon today for this meeting. Mr. August addressed the requests for increased nursing services in Phippsburg that were brought to the Board during a previous meeting by a number of parents and members of the community. The district is receiving about \$430,000 from the Cares Act in addition to state and federal funds to help get us through the pandemic. Mr. August assured the Phippsburg residents that some of the additional resources will be assigned to Phippsburg School. The funds can be spent over the course of two years and will be put towards nursing and the health and safety of our students.

UPDATE ON REMOTE LEARNING COMMITTEE

Chairperson August thanked Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph, Technology Integrator Bob Jordan and Superintendent Patrick Manuel for getting the committee together and getting the survey out so quickly.

Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph shared a presentation that we will look at more carefully later at the June Board meeting. The committee included 22 people that met to create a survey, analyze the results and come up with 14 recommendations for the Board and administrative team to consider should we need to use some form of distance learning in the future. Ms. Joseph emailed the PowerPoint to the Board so that they can read it before the June Board meeting when we will have an in depth conversation and ask questions. The administrative team has been continually having conversations about what is going well, what needs to change and how we can do better. While we have a very diverse community of thinkers, most of the conclusions and recommendations the committee came up with were in line with what the administrative team was thinking. The committee has given all the recommendations to the Board through this document and survey data and Ms. Joseph created documents for each of our schools to review with their teachers. The staff will then make suggestions on how to put in place all the changes that

we think need to happen. The information will be collected from the building groups and then we will come up with a list of suggestions on what we are going to change the next time this needs to happen. This information will go to the fall planning committee that Superintendent Manuel is putting together. Ms. Joseph stated that she tried to pair a graph from one of the surveys with each slide that best represented why the committee made the determination we did that a recommendation should take place.

Ms. Joseph explained that a digital portal is a learning management system where students can find their login for Google Classroom, Infinite Campus and all the different curriculum pieces in one place. Our technology department will be looking at three companies to purchase a program for next year with the Cares Act funds. For those students without an Internet connection, some of the Cares Act funds will be used for some hot spots and we will be working on how that will be allotted to families. Other ideas that we are looking into include open Wi-Fi with social distancing and opening up the cafeteria for students to take online classes or complete their work. Ms. Joseph has also purchased standards aligned packets that are less work for teachers that do weekly packets so we can get better with the paper items that we send home.

Technology Director Dean Emmerson reported that with over 400 students responding to the survey and noted that 4.5% of our students have no Internet connection and 9-10% do not have connectivity sufficient for streaming or video conferencing. Our staff will be reaching out to all our families to determine their technology needs. On the community survey, 440 families responded to the survey and five people reported that they cannot get Internet connectivity of any kind based on where they live and three said that they couldn't afford the service. Mr. Emmerson reported that there are ongoing programs through the local utilities that offer reduced Internet connectivity at home through the cable company.

Chairperson August reported that once the Board has an opportunity to receive the final report containing the results of the survey, they will be shared with the community.

Superintendent Manuel reviewed the membership of the committee focused on the district reopening plans for the fall. The first meeting will be Thursday, June 11 at 10:00 am which is when we will set more meeting dates. Dr. Manuel stated that his goal would be to have the reopening plan available for the Board to review on July 27th. School based teams are working on this already and providing input into the process as well as the eventual recommendations that we will have.

SECOND READING AND APPROVAL OF FY'21 SCHOOL BUDGET

Chairperson August stated that the budget up to this point has been the administrative team's budget and at this point the Board is in a position to vote and adopt the budget as their own. This is a \$38,205,538 budget with the local contribution of \$19,043,000 or an increase of 2.1% in the tax levy.

Superintendent Manuel reviewed the topic of the school revolving renovation fund which is going to be a separate question on the ballot. The district applied for a school revolving renovation fund program called Priority One Health Safety and Compliance Renovations related to the conversion from steam to hot water and abatement at Dike-Newell School. This was a project that we would have had to do with local funds, so we were excited to receive this award. The Maine Department of Education awarded the district a loan in the amount of \$365,327 through the state's zero interest rate loan forgiveness project. The Maine Municipal Bond Bank will forgive 51.06% or \$188,536 of the total approved loan amount and RSU 1 will be obligated to pay 48.94% or \$178,791 over a five-year period.

This is in our budget and the first payment will be taken out of the Dike-Newell School's operation and maintenance account in amount of \$35,000. We are obligated to make that same payment over the next four years.

MOTION: Ensel

SECOND: Perkins

VOTE: Board (7-0)

Students (1-0)

TO: Approve the FY '21 RSU 1 school budget as proposed.

VOTE TO CALL AND APPROVE THE WARRANTS FOR A (COMBINED) SCHOOL BUDGET AND SCHOOL REVOLVING RENOVATION FUND REFERENDUM AND TO CALL AND APPROVE THE NOTICE OF A REMOTE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THAT REFERENDUM

MOTION: Ensel

SECOND: Ryan

VOTE: Board (7-0)

Students (1-0)

TO: Move that the Vote entitled, "Vote to Call a Regional School Unit Budget and Minor Capital Bond Referendum, Call a Public Hearing, Approve the Referendum Warrants, and Approve the Notice of Public Hearing," be approved in form presented to this meeting and that a copy of said Vote be included with the minutes of this meeting

Whereas, pursuant to Governor's Executive Order #56 FY 19/20, the Regional School Unit budget meeting is suspended and replaced by a remote public hearing and the proposed budget submitted to referendum, and whereas the School Board has approved a proposed budget and other questions for submission to the voters of the Regional School Unit; now therefore be it

VOTED: That the Warrants and Notices of Election for the Regional School Unit Budget and Minor Capital Bond Referendum presented to this meeting be approved, and that a Regional School Unit Budget and Minor Capital Bond Referendum be called for July 14, 2020 for the purpose of submitting the fiscal year 2020-2021 school budget, other fiscal matters, and Minor Capital Bond question to the voters of the Regional School Unit for approval, as set forth in the Warrants and Notices of Election;

That the Notice of Public Hearing presented to this meeting be approved, and that a remote public hearing be called for June 22, 2020 for consideration of and comment on the fiscal year 2020-2021 school budget, other fiscal matters, and Minor Capital Bond question to be submitted to the Regional School Unit voters at the July 14, 2020 Regional School Unit Budget and Minor Capital Bond Referendum; and

That the Warrants and Notices of Election and the Notice of Public Hearing shall each be signed by a majority of the School Board, and that such signatures may be made electronically, by execution of counterparts, or in person at the convenience of the members of the School Board.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Ensel

SECOND: Ryan

VOTE: Board (7-0)

Students (1-0)

TO: Adjourn at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Manuel, Ed.D.
Superintendent