

**MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 1 MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON May 18, 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).**

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

**Members Absent:** Lou Ensel, Hayden Platteter

**Others Present:** Katie Joseph, Debra Clark

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**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson August called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, conducted a roll call, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON**

Chairperson August thanked administrators, teachers, parents, and the community for their perseverance as this exceptional school year continues. This year has certainly not been the year that any of us anticipated. The district has some activities underway to evaluate and consider what we have accomplished and what we need to improve upon going forward. Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph will be reporting on the first meeting of the ad hoc committee that was formed to look at distance learning. Superintendent Manuel sent a memo that included his recommendation on how to proceed relating to decisions concerning reopening RSU 1 schools in September which he will report on during the Superintendent Report. This is still an evolving situation and it is still not quite clear how we are going to proceed as we finish out this year and plan to begin next year. The Board needs to adopt a budget in June and have the community vote on it in July. The administration and Board are committed to having a positive end to this school year and a strong start to the next year.

**APPROVE/AMEND MINUTES OF APRIL 27, 2020**

The minutes were amended as follows:

- Page 5 – Public Form to Discuss Proposed Budget - 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph was revised to read “.....need some direction on what you would want to see for a decrease.”
- Page 1 – Comments from the Board Chairperson – 1st sentence was revised to read “....all their efforts during this unusual time.”

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ryan

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Approve the minutes of April 27, 2020 as amended.

## **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

Chairperson August recommended tabling Policy BE School Board Meetings because some Board members did not receive a copy of the policy.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Superintendent Manuel sent a copy of the comments received from the public by email to the Board members. Mr. August read the email from Rebecca Doyle that recommended all schools in RSU 1 have a full-time nurse due to the health risks that we all are facing. The comments included in multiple emails were directed at the situation at Phippsburg School where we only have a nurse one day per week. The Board also received an email from Jill Sinclair regarding ESY summer school services being offered in the in-person format and one from Erica Kramer regarding returning to in-school learning in the fall.

## **STAFF REPORT**

NONE

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Chairperson August reported that the Finance Committee met last week and had some additional discussion around some comments and suggestions that Board member Ritch-Smith had sent to the Board regarding some possible reductions in the budget.

Superintendent Manuel stated that the committee discussed possible reductions to the budget and looked at reducing the expenditures by \$88,928. This would include \$70,000 from health insurance reductions, \$11,500 from removing an additional support position at central office and \$7,000 from the maintenance facilities budget because some of the work is being done using this year's budget. The committee also discussed increasing the revenues by an additional \$150,000 from the projected savings from the current budget. If the Board supports this proposal this would reduce the local appropriation from 3.39% to 2.1%.

Chairperson August reported that it was the consensus of the committee that the Board should accept the further reductions to the budget and asked the Board vote on this item under New Business. The budget will come back to the Board at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. We are waiting for more information on the Cares Act, how the funds will be given to individual districts and how it affects next year's budget. Mr. August stated that we are scheduled to have a district budget meeting on June 30 and there have been discussions at the state level about whether those meetings are practical, whether we will be able to meet in person, or if the meeting can be conducted remotely.

## **FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

Board member Perkins reported that the Facilities Committee met and went over the facilities budget for next year and the work being done now using this year's budget which will not be necessary next year.

## **MORSE BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE**

Superintendent Manuel reported that some of the Board members recently had a tour of the new school and asked that if anyone else was interested to please let him know. Dr. Manuel sent a video link to the Board which was put together by Dean Emmerson and Damien Austin using a drone. The video shows the progress of the new school inside and out. Window installation, drywall work, and electrical work continues to progress on schedule.

## **AD HOC DISTANCE LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Chairperson August stated that the committee met for the first-time last week. Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph and Technology Director Dean Emmerson circulated three questionnaires to staff, students, and families and the committee received the results of the surveys. Mr. August also wanted to assure the public that the comments the Board received before this meeting are the kinds of issues we are looking at in this committee.

Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph reported the staff, student and family survey closed on Friday. Ms. Joseph thanked Dean Emmerson for creating the surveys and Bob Jordan for working all weekend to process the results for today. All the results will be on a website and shared with the committee and the Board tomorrow. The committee is scheduled to meet again on Wednesday which will give them an opportunity to review the survey results before the meeting. The participation results for the survey were as follows: Students (grades 6-12) - 400 out of 1,000 or 40%, Staff – 174 out of 300 or 55-60%, and Families - 440 took the survey or approximately 30%. The district currently has 1851 students; however, many families have more than one child which makes it a little more difficult to get an exact percentage of participation.

Superintendent Manuel stated that in planning for next year he has put together an initial planning team to look at different scenarios for reopening in the fall. The team includes Superintendent Manuel, Assistant Superintendent Joseph, two principals and two nurses. The team will meet a couple of times before expanding to a district leadership team which would include principals, athletic director, facilities director, technology director, public safety officials, public health consultants, staff, and parents. We will also be consulting with the CDC, Department of Education, and legal counsel. Another idea is to have school-based teams comprised of teachers, students, support staff, nurses, and administration to review site specific options for ensuring the health and safety of our students. The plan is to have the district leadership team present a proposal to the Board this summer for final approval. Dr. Manuel stated that we need to do our due diligence as a district and have these conversations. The administrative team and staff have been concerned about how we can best support our students when we do come back and provide additional support academically, socially, and emotionally.

Assistant Superintendent Joseph stated that the ad hoc committee focus is to make suggestions for the actual distance learning piece. The initial planning team goes beyond the academic piece and includes transportation, nutrition, nursing, staff safety, and childcare. The outcomes from the two committees will be presented to staff during the professional development days in June because it is going to impact how they do their grade level planning and how to prepare for September. Each principal has come up with a daily professional development plan that is broken down into two parts – 1) if we cannot be

together, and 2) if we can be in person. Examples of what would be included in the upcoming professional development days include staff to do lists, curriculum work, committee meetings, and other meetings that need to take place to plan for next year.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Business Manager Debra Clark presented the financial report ending April 30, 2020. To date, the district has spent \$25 million out of \$33 million budget. The report included encumbered salaries of over \$6 million. We spent 93.2% which is in line with our expenditures and brought in almost \$28 million in revenue. The district should receive around \$6 million more in revenue from town assessments and tuition.

Mrs. Clark reported that the Department of Education and business managers are meeting daily to go over the Cares Act funding and there is a law in place that restricts the amount that school districts can carryover into the next school year. Districts are waiting for the allocations from the Cares Act to be determined because it is hard to plan what to do until that is finalized.

## **SECOND READING OF POLICY JJIAA – PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS – ACCESS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL CO-CURRICULAR, INTERSCHOLASTIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ritch-Smith

**VOTE:** Board (5-1)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Approve the second reading of Policy JJIAA – Private School Students – Access to Public School Co-Curricular, Interscholastic and Extracurricular Activities as written.

## **REVIEW OF NEW STATE LEGISLATION REGARDING THE FOODSERVICE PROGRAM**

Foodservice Director Tim Harkins reported that both pieces of legislation require action by the Board to move forward with the programs that are required in each of these bills or to opt out of them. LD577 would require the district to have an afterschool meal program and LD 359 requires a breakfast after the bell or a second chance program. Upon consideration, Mr. Harkins recommended that the district opt out of both pieces of legislation. Mr. Harkins stated that these are unfunded mandates and do not really get to the core of our mission which is providing breakfast and lunch. An afterschool meal program would require increased staffing and additional costs to the district. The district does offer a second chance breakfast in some of our schools which has been successful. The legislation would require the district to also offer the program at Dike-Newell and Fisher-Mitchell; however, Mr. Harkins would rather have the district make those choices than have it be mandated by the state.

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ritch-Smith

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Opt out of participation in LD359 An Act to Address Student Hunger with a “Breakfast After the Bell” Program.

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ritch-Smith

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Opt out of participation in LD577 An Act to Increase Access to Nutritious Foods in Schools by Implementing an Afterschool Food Program for At-Risk Students.

#### **UPDATES TO FY '21 SCHOOL BUDGET**

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ritch-Smith

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee to direct additional reductions to the FY '21 budget by \$88,928 and increase revenues by \$150,000.

#### **SET NEXT MEETINGS DATES AND LOCATIONS**

- Board Meeting – Second Reading of Proposed Budget and Sign Warrants; Monday, June 8, 2020 – 6:00 pm
- Next regular RSU 1 Board meeting and public hearing on FY21 budget and minor capital bond – 6:00 pm
- Budget Validation Referendum; Tuesday, July 14, 2020

#### **ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** Perkins

**SECOND:** Ritch-Smith

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Adjourn at 7:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Manuel, Ed.D.  
Superintendent