

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY
FEBRUARY 20, 2014**

Board Members Present: R. Horton, E. Jackson, B. McGrath , T. Croteau – arrived at 6:44 pm.

Absent: J. Cardinale

Administration Present: J. Lewis, L. Schmidt, P. Bigelow

Vice Chair, R. Horton called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

None.

MINUTES:

E. Jackson MOVED to approve the public minutes of February 4, 2014 as amended, adding *R. Horton advised right now we are reactive...*; SECONDED by: R. Horton, VOTED: 2-0-1 (B. McGrath – abstained), MOTION PASSED.

FINANCIAL REPORT: L. Schmidt:

The Board received the Manifest for review and asked questions. The Board had previously asked about a bill on the prior Manifest. L. Schmidt advised it was for \$170.83 from Stanley for their Service Agreement. The Board asked that the contract be researched.

E. Jackson MOVED to approve the Manifest in the amount of \$137,520.46, SECONDED by: B. McGrath, VOTED: 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

T. Croteau arrived at the meeting. R. Horton continued to run the meeting as Vice-Chair

CREDIT CARD PROPOSAL:

L. Schmidt has researched credit cards. She would like to go with American Express and then a back-up of a VISA or MasterCard. She is looking for authorization from the Board. The Board was in agreement of L. Schmidt using her best judgment about choosing the credit cards. The check for the monthly credit card payments would still need approval by the Board and would need to be broken down for the Board's review.

After discussion, **B. McGrath MOVED to allow L. Schmidt her discretion to seek the best credit card companies for two accounts with the three authorized existing signers; SECONDED by: E. Jackson, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.**

L. Schmidt advised they have hired a new Payroll person. Explained she did look into hiring an outside agency for Payroll per B. McGrath's inquiry, but we would still need to do all the prep work and it would cost what it costs us now. Also, the 403B, NH retirement, etc. would still be our responsibility.

The Board received the Revenue and Expense reports and reviewed them with L. Schmidt.

R. Horton – Need to do our best to return as much as possible to reduce taxation.

E. Jackson advised she likes the Report of Expenditures format. Did ask for a percent column by each line to show what is remaining. There would be a percent column before and after encumbrances.

B. McGrath asked where we stand with the auditors?

L. Schmidt advised she has to call the auditors and schedule the 2012 audit. It has been postponed in the past by both sides. The Board feels they need to get the 2012 audit done.

B. McGrath feels they need to put effort into getting it done.

R. Horton asked if they could look into using a Power School component to look at the lunch accounts.

J. Lewis advised they did look into it. Power School is too big and cumbersome.

R. Horton would like there to be something available.

L. Schmidt advised she can look into that.

R. Horton advised there is a Pearson Power School program. The application can be downloaded. He would like that available.

R. Horton asked if Keene could call the cancellation of school a little earlier. Advised he received the Robo Call at 6:05 am.

J. Lewis contacted Keene about that and discussed it with Wayne Woolridge.

B. McGrath – Would it be better to cancel school than to delay it or close early?

R. Horton advised parents are asking him why they continue to have both February and April vacations.

J. Lewis advised that comes up every year; people talk about it.

B. McGrath saw on the news that a town outside of Boston eliminated one of their vacations.

R. Horton feels that would give kids continued time in the classroom and from a parenting viewpoint, scheduling for vacations is a nightmare.

J. Lewis – This would not be something they could do soon. The Keene schedule is also different.

R. Horton advised the Winchester teachers' contract is for hours and not scheduled days.

The Board suggested possibly eliminating both vacations and having one in March.

R. Horton - Can we get feedback?

J. Lewis feels they should look into that.

B. McGrath is concerned that there are some ideas that the Board came up with that they have not followed up with. He feels notes should be made and then the Board can be sure whether or not things get done.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

The Board received J. Lewis' report in their packet.

*At this point, the last day of school will be June 18th. J. Lewis advised they can't risk safety. If the weather is bad, they need to cancel school.

*The Committee is ahead of schedule with the Principal Search. They have received 14 resumes.

*A survey was sent to all families asking whether they preferred the Deliberative Session on a Saturday or a weekday. They only have about a dozen back so far. The majority said it didn't matter, but those that preferred a specific day, chose Saturday morning.

P. Bigelow feels two Saturdays in a row for Deliberative Sessions could be why people weren't there. Saturdays are a time for families.

E. Jackson thinks they should try one more time holding the Deliberative Session on a Saturday.

*Asking the Board for air conditioning for the SAU during the summer. Advised it is very hot in July and August.

The Board discussed possible options.

J. Lewis will call for quotes. Explained he is planting the seed, not asking for a decision now.

E Jackson asked about heat control; is that in place?

L. Schmidt advised thermostats are not in place yet; they are in the process.

E. Jackson asked that someone check the thermostats before they leave for the night until something is put in place.

It could be set up on a computer system like the one they have in the library that goes down automatically.

*J. Lewis asked the Board to move the March 20th meeting to a day either before or after, so he can attend an out-of-state speaking engagement at DHMC for the March of Dimes.

After discussion, the Board agreed to hold the Board meeting on March 18th.

J. Lewis discussed the drainage problem in the neighbor's yard. He is very concerned; the snow is attaching to his fence and the drain doesn't work. J. Lewis advised the neighbor is right. This has been going on for 15 years. He has discussed with D. Chamberlain getting the snow out of there.

R. Horton wondered if they could ask the Town to remove the snow, even if they bill us.

J. Lewis will call the Town.

T. Croteau – Once it is fixed, it shouldn't be an issue again.

We have received the third quote for the elevator. The company looked at it, but didn't want to touch it with new parts because of the elevator's age. Quotes on a new one are approximately \$20,000.

J. Lewis feels it doesn't have to be identical to the one we have now. A repair would be \$9,000.

R. Horton was concerned about that price. He asked for quotes for a new one and then would like the service contract for review.

R. Horton asked if Tech Services have been put out-to-bid. He feels they should get started with the process.

J. Lewis will start tomorrow.

J. Lewis reviewed a letter from M. Upton regarding Keene Tuition costs being charged to Winchester.

R. Horton asked where they are at getting costs for a new building.

J. Lewis advised they are waiting for information.

R. Horton asked about MobyMax

J. Lewis advised they have a 30 day free trial.

J. Lewis advised it is a Math program.

R. Horton thinks it is great; includes Math and Reading. Each child has an assessment. It defines a student's struggles and where they are fluent. Teachers can talk back and forth. They can see what students are doing and review their work. Students need to successfully complete a level before they can proceed to the next level. He would like to see it sent home and used during school vacations, etc.

R. Horton MOVED to purchase a school license for MobyMax; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: 3-1 (B. McGrath – no), MOTION PASSED.

B. McGrath asked about the sign for the playground.

J. Lewis advised donations will be raised to pay for a sign showing those who supported the playground. Advised he can send B. McGrath information. They did the same thing in Hopkinton. They will put it at the entrance of the playground area. They will use this as a source of fundraising to pay off the \$8,000 and help towards adding a track and basketball court.

B. McGrath asked if they have been having dinners each month that had been planned to raise funds for the playground.

J. Lewis advised they did one last month before the Super Bowl and combined it with other events at the school. They are looking to have a Mother's Day Breakfast.

J. Lewis advised no money has been taken out of the general fund for the playground.

The Board asked if other sign companies have been contacted.

R. Horton is not sure Lawrence could do that big of a sign.

J. Lewis advised they are expecting a check for \$1,000 from Box Tops for Education.

The Board would like to have visitors come to the next meeting.

B. McGrath would like to have D. Chamberlain and W. Vaughan here at the next meeting to discuss School Dude.

J. Lewis advised they could have one person come in per month at the second meeting of the month.

B. McGrath advised he had asked M. Braley to make changes to some NHSBA policies.

L. Schmidt explained it was a PDF file which needed to be sent out to be converted. M. Braley now has it back and is making the changes.

B. McGrath advised he would be looking for information on the default budget. Explained he hasn't been to the last two to three meetings so he missed when they discussed it.

B. McGrath asked if J. Lewis found the visits to other schools beneficial. Did you learn anything? Asked if there are any practices we can adopt.

J. Lewis advised he could give him a report. He gave a verbal report to the Board at a prior meeting.

P. Bigelow advised the assistant principal in Gilmanton stays after school to help kids who need extra help. In Winchester, teachers have put that practice in place as there is no assistant principal here.

B. McGrath asked about the policy J. Lewis reviewed at the last meeting.

J. Lewis explained it was the policy regarding the Chain of Command.

B. McGrath distributed a copy of the NHSBA policy; feels the Board might want to review their policy. Advised it is food for thought.

B. McGrath apologized that he hadn't reported on the changes in legislation as part of the Legislative Committee. Advised he will report tonight.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

P. Bigelow advised she does her full report at the first meeting of the month; will have it for the Board then. She feels they do need to look at policies; will be looking at the Contagious Disease policy. Advised they have had one report of bedbugs. She will be looking for a policy on that.

*Have been missing school due to the weather. They have been packing a lot in when students are here.

B. McGrath recommended that policies be reviewed more than once per month. Feels they haven't made much progress. Explained there are basically four policies that with legislative changes have changed some of our policies and appendix items. He will bring a fifth policy to the next meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Legislative Committee:

B. McGrath apologized, advised he has been remiss in his duties on the Legislative Committee. This is the first meeting that he has been able to bring policy changes. He prepared policy packets for the Board to include our policies and the NHSBA policies so the Board could review and compare them. They will discuss them at the next Board meeting.

B. McGrath advised there were some errors on the NHSBA policies. Barrett Christina will make changes.
R. Horton advised they can set some time aside to review at the next meeting.
J Lewis advised they can take 15 minutes at the next meeting.
P. Bigelow advised they will review the Contagious Illness policy as well as a Bed Bug policy if we have one.
B. McGrath feels that possibly prior members on the committee might not have kept abreast of the legislative changes that affected the policies. Need to keep that in mind when reviewing policies.
T. Croteau thanked B. McGrath for preparing the policy information.
R. Horton advised they will review the Committees again with the new Board.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Nancy Dziedzic advised in the past Gary Zitta was here for all maintenance issues in the kitchen. He was so busy though, that he got backlogged. Explained they do have a refrigeration person who comes in and he and his staff are good. Feels the Board should ask D. Chamberlain.

Jeremy Miller asked that ACCESS be added to the agenda for the next meeting. He would like to give a five to ten minute presentation with a few minutes for questions and answers. Explained ACCESS is moving forward to form itself as a 501(c)3. He would like to do a presentation to the Board. ACCESS has been in Winchester for 10 years. He would like to review what ACCESS is and what it looks like moving forward.

B. McGrath asks that it be made after elections so that any new members can see the presentation, too.

J. Miller appreciates that, but they are working on a funding timeline; applying for several grants they are allowed to as a 501(c)3. Advised they can invite candidates to the meeting. He will reach out to them.

R. Horton is worried about having to ask for funding from taxpayers. He feels the information is important to let people know what the program is.

R. Horton asked if it is possible to offer adult education.

J. Miller explained. Access is a good community catalyst. Wants people to approach things thinking we need to get this done and ACCESS will get it done.

P. Bigelow advised Amy Hill applied and was accepted to Common Corps. They are looking at how teaching practices are changing. She would like to come soon to report to the Board.

The Board discussed the lunch program. E. Jackson talked to Erin about the School Board challenge; Board members coming up with different menu items. The students would then vote on what they liked the best.

B. McGrath MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 pm; SECONDED by: E. Jackson, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary