

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY
JULY 17, 2014**

Board Members Present: R. Horton, J. Cardinale, T. Croteau, K. Bazan, E. Jackson
Administration Present: J. Lewis, L. Schmidt

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm. by Chair, R. Horton.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

None.

T. Croteau MOVED to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2014 Board meeting with corrections - on Page 4, last line before Superintendent's Report, amending *She wants everything here...* to *She wants everything ordered by July 8th*; on Page 5 and 6 amending the spelling of Cardinal to Cardinale and on Page 6 under Keene Withdrawal Study, amending the second to the last sentence to *J. Lewis advised a couple of Construction representatives have come in and toured the building. They need to provide the committee with more information*; **SECONDED** by: J. Cardinale, **VOTED: 4-0-1** (E. Jackson – abstained), **MOTION PASSED.**

PRESENTATION – GUEST SPEAKER:

Dan Black was originally coming to speak, but e-mailed J. Lewis and advised KHS wanted to come in a small group in non-public session. The Board did not agree. Keene will come in on August 21st at a public meeting. Members from SAU 29 will be Chris Coates, Wayne Woolridge and Jim Logan.

R. Horton advised he is disappointed Dan Black is not here. Now they are another month behind.

J. Lewis told them we feel disrespected.

OLD BUSINESS:

WSD Policy Book Review:

J. Lewis received a letter regarding the policy review from the NHSBA. They will go through each word, each page. The turnaround time is two to three weeks. We should have the policy book back before school starts.

R. Horton asked J. Lewis to please make sure they have the correct policies.

J. Lewis advised once they get it back, the Board will take 15 minutes at each meeting to go through and review policies.

J. Lewis advised the drain pipe has been ordered and should be here in up to two weeks.

T. Croteau feels J. Lewis should follow up with Dale regarding the pipe installation. They may be backed up due to the weather and the work will be pushed back.

J. Lewis will call him.

J. Lewis advised the chair lift has been put in; it seemed perfect, but the side panel is damaged. They haven't heard back regarding a date for the repair.

Facility Update:

J. Lewis advised the floors in some places are shining and some wax is stripped. He spoke to D. Chamberlain; they are one day behind. He has hired an additional person.

L. Schmidt advised they are still looking for staff; ACCESS is contributing funds. That person would stay after ACCESS is over to make sure everything is locked up.

R. Horton asked about the gym.

J. Lewis advised they will definitely do it.

J. Cardinale asked if it would be stripped and waxed or sanded.

J. Lewis will look into it.

R. Horton feels it is upsetting that they asked for a quote which included sanding and refinishing and we don't do that.

R. Horton feels they should relook at it during the budget process. It should be worked on. Do we have a maintenance manual?

J. Cardinale feels it would be good to have one to show what things get done in the Summer, etc.

R. Horton – At least the big projects would be good to have.

Val Wilber knows D. Chamberlain and P. Bigelow were working on that very thing. Advised she doesn't know what stage they were at.

T. Croteau asked about the floor in the kitchen; have we looked at what that would cost?

D. Chamberlain has gotten quotes; he is very much on top of it. He believes it will cost \$7,000 to refurbish.

J. Cardinale advised Coll's Cleaning service has a machine.

Nancy Dziedzic advised that when the cooler, freezer and kitchen floors get wet, they stay wet. She feels if they are looking to redo the floor, would need to put a new floor down.

R. Horton feels the floor would need to be replaced. It would be a week-long project.

J. Cardinale feels they should not strip and wax the floor if they are going to replace it.

L. Schmidt will talk to D. Chamberlain and get information for the Board as far as pricing. D. Chamberlain is getting bids.

T. Croteau wants to make sure they do not get the same grouted material.

Joan Franklin – That was Banwell. We are replacing a lot of what they did.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Manifest:

L. Schmidt advised there were some problems today; Julian helped. Accounts Payable wasn't completed. She didn't think she should finish it with the stress levels they were under, so it wasn't ready for the meeting.

J. Lewis advised they were lucky with Julian's help they got as much done as they did.

L. Schmidt advised they can't wait until the meeting on the 31st; she will e-mail the Manifests to the Board in a PDF, one for the 2014 School Year and the other for Payables and then meet to review and vote. After discussion, the Board agreed to meet on Tuesday, July 22nd at 6:45 pm.

Audit Update:

The firm is doing some of the audit work remotely. L. Schmidt advised she is sending information to them. Payroll information has not been sent. They will have to come in and do some work, but she is taking advantage of some cost cutting efforts.

L. Schmidt heard today that the Town is going with Discount Oil. Advised she will send an e-mail and voice mail to Amy at the Town tonight when the Board has made a decision.

L. Schmidt reviewed the prior oil costs with the Board and projected costs for this year. Advised they can take up to 24,000 gallons from Discount Oil.

R. Horton asked if Discount Oil would cut us a check if we overpaid.

L. Schmidt advised she didn't know, but we are not buying as much as we did when the money was returned from the previous company.

J. Cardinale MOVED to purchase 23,000 gallons at \$3.099 per gallon from Discount Oil for a cost of \$71,277; SECONDED by: E. Jackson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Cardinale MOVED to purchase 750 gallons at 3.179 per gallon from Discount Oil; SECONDED by: E. Jackson, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

E. Jackson asked about a lock box for the thermostat.

L. Schmidt advised they will have it in place before school starts.

J. Cardinale MOVED to approve the July delivery of 13,000 gallons of oil for a total cost of \$38,467; SECONDED BY: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 4-0-1 (K. Bazan – abstained), MOTION PASSED.

L. Schmidt worked with Diane this week on purchasing. She has been entering requisitions and has been instrumental in helping to facilitate internal controls. All requisitions went through J. Lewis and the principal. This year they went through V. Wilber; which was very beneficial. The process is essentially done. There are a few stragglers. They are light years ahead of where they were last year.

J. Cardinale has been doing research on Federal and State purchasing of food, facilities, supplies, etc. It is very detailed; started scanning through. Not sure if we are already taking advantage of the discounts.

L. Schmidt discussed with D. Chamberlain; he will review it. He is always looking for a better price.

L. Schmidt has been talking to Monadnock. She thinks there may be a little more to why they are switching from their current time card system; thinks the cost will be higher than we are looking for. She has been discussing a system with a company in Florida. That system will allow employees to see hours worked, e-mail reports, allow supervisor access, etc.

Mel Harrison advised she needs reports.

L. Schmidt advised the system can do that.

L. Schmidt and Connie will be taking a Webinar on Tuesday. There is no purchase cost for the software, but there is a \$99.00 per month fee; \$2,000 for the initial year. L. Schmidt wants to see it in action through the Webinar and then call Florida and ask for a 60 or 90 day guarantee instead of the 30 day they offer.

R. Horton wants to see a presentation due to the issue this has been.

Val Wilber asked if they looked at any kiosk or computer-based programs.

L. Schmidt thought there would be problems with staff getting to computers.

V. Wilber advised we have a computer lab, computers in classrooms, etc. It could also be done on Smart Phones or IPADS.

L. Schmidt explained this system does have the capability, could do it on an individual basis.

L. Schmidt advised they have a color printer in the SAU office and in the computer lab down here. They have sufficient equipment to handle and then evaluate the needs and make a decision as to what is needed.

J. Cardinale they should move the color printer from the SAU office and put it in the school.

L. Schmidt advised they have had problems with the copier. She thinks they should see if the air conditioner helps. She would feel bad switching them out and having issues. The cost is \$25,000 to trade up for four copiers within the school; the SAU is separate. She feels it is not advisable to do anything at this point.

R. Horton – Everyone has a job to do. He doesn't think the SAU delivering copies is a good use of their time. Feels the color copier should be at the central office.

The staff advised the copier is working now.

Joan Franklin – A lot of teachers would like to make copies in color. She doesn't think they realize how much work that could be.

J. Franklin feels they should have one on the Elementary side and one here. She can't currently print from her room to the central office here.

L. Schmidt advised her concern is they don't know what the need is; don't know what the solution is or what the volume is.

R. Horton - Need to find a solution. Feels we should use what we have here.

J. Cardinale – SAU could get a laser color printer.

L. Schmidt advised she can look into that.

Food Service:

L. Schmidt has been talking with Meals Plus; there is a \$10.00 per family fee to use it. They would wave that fee. They are working to get it set up in a week or two; will get the information in the newsletter. The system could also be used for field trip fees, club fees, etc. They are waiving the registration fees. She has been talking with Erin. Will be able to see payments made and breakfasts purchased, etc.

Grants:

Working on payroll and purchasing, then will work on Grants. Advised she should be able to close out most of June. By month-end will have some closed out.

E. Jackson – Year end reporting; what is the plan?

J. Lewis – Good with year-end numbers.

L. Schmidt advised the goal is to have everything for the Board to sign off on September 4th.

The Board feels they should have a special meeting so they have everything signed by September 1st. They do not want to be late.

R. Horton asked about the late bus.

L. Schmidt is going to look into pricing for a van instead of going through First Student. She hopes to have something for the Board by July 31st.

R. Horton thinks maybe we need to call companies for other bus bids.

T. Croteau -What would a whole package be to do the bussing here with our own people?

L. Schmidt – Could we start with the option of using the ACCESS van at first?

J. Cardinale suggested maybe purchasing a small bus.

E. Jackson – What days work best? Maybe the time needs to change.

L. Schmidt advised the cost would be \$13,000+ to run a bus every day.

R. Horton – Need to communicate to students when they sign up for sports. Need to look at van companies who would like to have the business; need pricing.

J. Lewis reiterated that the bus/van needs to be used for sports, clubs and school functions.

R. Horton feels they should ask First Student if they can be a little more consistent on the time the students are picked up.

Morning pick-up is always different.

E. Jackson feels we should have the bus company come in and give a presentation on the route schedule.

E. Jackson MOVED to approve the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$125,516.69; SECONDED by: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – J. LEWIS:

The Board received J. Lewis' report.

*E. Jackson came to the Board with a recommendation from the Withdrawal Committee. She gave an overview of why the Committee was formed; looking at academics, financial components, community pride. They feel there is a disconnect. Reviewed the contract limits. The Committee feels going to Keene may have been the best fit then, but it might not be the best fit now as far as contract limits. Our costs are inflated and we are covering other students.

The Committee made the Motion to recommend continuing to look at other options and seek legal advice.

R. Horton feels Winchester's best interest is not being met; our law firm represents Keene also.

R. Horton time to ask for more and demand more; 12% of Keene's students are from Winchester.

The Committee has had discussions with other schools including Brattleboro, Hinsdale and Monadnock.

Brian Moser thinks if we are going to spend money to get another lawyer's opinion, we should ask if Keene is in violation of the contract.

R. Horton agreed we should.

Joan Franklin asked if Matt Upton was also the Attorney for Keene when we went into the contract.

B. Moser – Since we have been using Matt Upton, he took a specific portion of Keene. He was our attorney first.

J. Lewis spoke to Eric Harland. He can get us names of good attorneys. He is part of Drummond and Woodson. Advised he is not comfortable looking at the contract.

B. Moser doesn't want a recommendation from someone representing Keene.

J. Lewis will check with Barrett Christina.

Sara Louder advised they have been asking for information repeatedly and not getting it. Can we give them a deadline?

J. Lewis – We did; will do that again.

J. Lewis advised he will look into another attorney prior to the next Board meeting.

There was much discussion by the Board.

R Horton advised the Committee also looked at renovation costs/possibly building a new school. Feels it is really a function of the School Board and the SAU. Need to do what is needed.

R. Horton - Need SAU and Board to put together information.

R. Horton – Need to move forward; need experts. It will cost money to save money.

J. Cardinale – Is there a short and long term plan? Would Brattleboro go with a five-year contract?

E. Jackson feels if we don't do something soon, costs will rise.

R. Horton doesn't know if to keep moving kids is the right thing.

Val Wilber feels it would be hard having kids at three different high schools or having them leave one just before they graduate.

Sarah Louder advised yes, \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000 is a lot of money, but how much have we spent for what we have and we have no control of it.

J. Cardinale – There will be additional maintenance, supplies, repairs, etc.

E. Jackson and L. Schmidt met with the Monadnock Economic Development Corp. There would be a tax credit; a tax exempt bond pays for the school. We are one of 12 qualifying schools.

T. Croteau asked if D. Chamberlain has been working on the showers.

E. Jackson advised they can get Grant money for the showers.

E. Jackson feels the committee should review the Keene contract and then come back to the Board with a recommendation. Need to meet in conjunction with the Board.

J. Lewis gave a presentation for a merit raises system; distributed information and reviewed with the Board.

V. Wilber feels for some people there might not be an opportunity for them to have an idea on the same scale as someone else according to J. Lewis' rubric.

After discussion, the Board liked the idea of merit raises, but thinks this might work better for teachers.

E. Jackson – Maybe there could be different buckets. Advised she liked the rubric idea.

J. Lewis advised this is a first draft. He has never done anything like this before.

E. Jackson thinks maybe the best idea would be to ask people who would be involved for their input.

R. Horton feels the idea of merit raises was to have a plan so that each non-union employee had the opportunity for a merit raise.

J. Cardinale – That way all would have some ability to obtain a merit raise. There could be different categories.

Mel Harrison – who would do the judging?

R. Horton – We just brought it up. There would be evaluation form.

Mel Harrison feels it is a judgment; if there was a personality problem the merit raise could be affected.

R. Horton – Could go to another supervisor.

Mel Harrison advised a merit raise could not come out of a Grant for Grant workers.

R. Horton advised that wouldn't be part of this program. If they need to put in a specific process, they will.

V. Wilber and others are uncomfortable with merit raises; feel they are unfair. V. Wilber advised she does like E. Jackson's idea of basing the 2% increase per year on staff evaluations and not extra things; maybe that could be something additional.

V. Wilber advised they have some employees that are non-union; they are not allowed to go above and beyond their job description.

R. Horton feels that is looking at this from a negative standpoint. Feels if they are going to give merit raises, it needs to be directly tied with evaluations.

The Board agreed.

E. Jackson feels they could also use the rubric as a separate step. That would be nothing to do with evaluations. It could be available for everyone; would be set as a line item.

Sue Rice thinks this brings up a bigger topic of the evaluations in general. She has four different evaluations. Feels it is hard for a teacher to be critical because they need to work with you. Thinks it is a good time to talk about this.

R. Horton advised they discussed it at a prior meeting. The Board tasked J. Lewis to look into it. It shouldn't have to mean something negative.

Sue Rice feels just because you are not getting tens on your review, doesn't mean you are not doing a good job.

R. Horton feels the question is how can we be better than we are now?

Val Wilber – Need to piggy back an honest evaluation. Don't hold as much stalk in doing a better job than someone else and getting the same raise. By having an honest evaluation, improvement plans and being let go if you are not doing your job, she feels they don't need merit raises.

J. Lewis advised they are trying to put a positive spin on it, but people need to pull their weight.

J. Lewis advised the insurance company will be doing a water challenge. They will be coming in on a half-day to prepare a healthy meal for the staff to show they are all about health.

J. Lewis explained that when one of the employees passed away, Harvard Pilgrim picked up the cost to the widow. The other company would not.

Technology:

J. Lewis advised they have hired Julian Stanway. The web page will be done by August. There is someone who has offered to do the design and maintain the website.

Distributed draft policy on Contracts vs. Letters of Assurance.

Resume proofreading/job skills will be offered at the school on Monday evening, August 11th.

E. Jackson suggested having Sylvan Learning Center come in. She also suggested someone from temporary employment agencies, unemployment agency, etc.

Sue Rice – Could Luke Stauder help with a class on resumes, etc.?

Accountability System:

J. Lewis gave a presentation and explained he believes they can provide the same information as School Dude for no cost on Excel. He feels School Dude is good, but it is too detailed for us.

Val Wilber advised when they talked about this before, D. Chamberlain and P. Bigelow had a process in place for doing this. There was a conversation as to whether this was effective. She feels they should wait and let the new principal see what she wants to do with her staff.

R. Horton advised the Board voted to spend money on School Dude and he feels they should continue; have only had it for seven months. They made a commitment to try; can't just throw it out the window.

E. Jackson feels they should leave it up to the people who are using the system.

V. Wilber – When a request comes in it goes to School Dude; if through e-mail, it goes to a phone

J. Cardinale advised School Dude should be e-mailed to phones. That is the way it was set up.

The Board agreed if J. Lewis feels he can do it as presented tonight instead of with School Dude, that's fine.

Sue Rice suggested an e-mail or phone call to the person who enters the repair and then forward it to the appropriate person.

The procedure will be used for Technology and Maintenance.

J. Lewis and Lisa Spencer will take a crack at this procedure.

J. Lewis will do a presentation on January 8th.

R. Horton reminded J. Lewis to keep in mind that they need to know how many times things are breaking, being repaired, replaced, etc.

Deliberative Session:

After discussion the Board agreed to try another Saturday for the next Deliberative Session.

J. Lewis advised that the first of January is a Thursday and January is a five-week month. The Board will meet on the second and fourth Thursdays that month.

J. Cardinale advised at this time he is unable to make one of the meetings.

COMMITTEE REP. REPORTS:

Budget Committee:

J. Lewis will check with Jim Tetreault; need to start the budget process.

Community Relations:

J. Cardinale advised he is posting agendas and minutes on the Board's Facebook page. The Board feels the minutes should not be posted until they are approved. They would be available if requested, after five business days for public minutes and 72 hours for non-public.

K. Bazan feels they should not post information with teachers' salaries.

R. Horton feels minutes on Facebook are cluttering, but the agenda should be available.

J. Cardinale will change the Facebook name to Winchester, NH School Board Facebook page.

J. Lewis and R. Horton will give information on the Improvement Program, meetings etc. to J. Cardinale to put on the Facebook page.

Keene School Board:

E. Jackson advised that the Keene School Board does not hold meetings in the Summer unless there is a need for a special meeting.

Negotiations:

W. Vaughan was spearheading the Technology Committee; will J. Stanway be doing that?

J. Lewis advised they will probably do it.

V. Wilber advised she finally heard back from the State on the Professional Development Plan. It was finally approved.

Now they can have a meeting.

R. Horton – Asked about review and tests on Common Core subjects.

Val Wilbur explained there are a few number of topics, making sure students master sixth grade. That would be assuming they were part of Common Core from Kindergarten up. If they haven't had it, need to go back and get in-depth on a subject before moving on, i.e., fractions. It is much different in second grade than sixth. If a student is in second grade, they have always had Common Core instruction.

R. Horton knows the reason why and understands, but need to explain and support it. People need to understand.

Joan Franklin asked about see-through backpacks.

J. Lewis advised it seems to be the trend

Joan Franklin feels girls don't want see-through backpacks. She wanted to be sure they are not a requirement.

J. Lewis advised it is not a requirement.

Sue Rice asked if they have hired a long-term sub for Focus 2 and 3.

J. Lewis advised not yet, thinks they are close.

Sue Rice advised there is a person in the Media Center and a person in the Computer Lab, but no Computer UA.

J. Lewis advised they are still looking at that.

E. Jackson thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting. Advised it shows dedication, especially in the Summer time.

The Board asked if there was anything more on the student issue from the previous meeting.

J. Lewis advised nothing more can happen.

R. Horton MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 pm; SECONDED by: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary