

WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY
JUNE 2, 2016

Present: K. Bazan, R. Horton, L. Picard, S. Thompson - Absent: T. Croteau

Administration Present: J. Lewis, E. Jackson, B. Stevenson

The meeting was called to order by Chair, R. Horton at 6:36pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Sue Rice shared that the Winchester Support Staff received the NH Award for Communications. The WTA did an outstanding job in both community outreach and internal communications and supporting the school; working in partnership with the Teachers Association on activities such as the talent show, Pickle Festival, etc.

Heather Pelkey asked about interviews that Jen Weisenberger did with students at Keene in the Spring of 2014.

R. Horton asked that next time, a request be passed to J. Lewis before the meeting.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Public Minutes of the 5/5/16 Board meeting as printed; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Noah Horton, President of the Student Council came before the Board to give an update on the school year.

Noah Horton reviewed some of the accomplishments of the Student Council this year:

*Can Drive was a great success

*New Year's Dance went well

*Money from wood raffle started school store off. Now selling bracelets, pencils, Winchester Proud t-shirts and still have some scarves.

*Have been planning the semi-formal dance which will be held on Saturday, June 11th.

R. Horton advised the Student Council had asked about a budget line for next year when they attended a previous meeting.

E. Jackson explained it is a small group, but they are very active. They have raised \$1,000. It was very hard work. They should be very proud.

E. Jackson advised they also teamed up with Elementary students to make holiday cards. Teachers said it was awesome.

One of the teachers in the audience advised that it was really special for the kids.

E. Jackson advised communication was a bump in the road. They are working on having e-mails in place for officers.

R. Horton asked what is planned for the upcoming year.

Noah Horton advised he will give as much information as he can to E. Jackson and she will assist Ashland, who is the Vice President now.

Noah Horton advised the Student Council has invited Chesterfield; Chesterfield invites Winchester to their dances.

E. Jackson advised they also reached out to Keene who offered to lend us DJ equipment. They plan to connect with other Student Councils.

Sue Rice asked who will monitor the music.

R. Horton advised they are working on a list and will poll the kids and he will be sure the music is approved.

Heather Pelkey asked why the 6th Grade was not included.

R. Horton advised they discussed it, but agreed it should be for the 7th and 8th grades.

E. Jackson – Class reps are allowed to attend.

Amanda Nordberg understands maybe not the semi-formal, but next year maybe they could include the 6th grade in the other dance.

E. Jackson advised the 6th grade had been invited to the other dance.

J. Lewis advised Erik Murphy from Sym Quest has a proposal for us. J. Lewis asked the Board if it is okay with them if he changes the First Student guest speaker time.

E. Jackson advised Sym Quest was hired to do an assessment for Technology. They have a proposal for next year's services. She thought it was important to have them come in and at least discuss the assessment.

The Board agreed to have both guest speakers here the night of the 16th.

The Board recessed for a legal call with the District Lawyer at 6:54 pm.

The Board came out of recess at 7:45pm.

OLD BUSINESS:

Public Forum – J. Lewis reminded everyone that the purpose of the Public Forum was to have Keene High School and Pioneer here along with the public. Everyone in Town should have received a newsletter with the meeting information. Approximately 100 people were here; less attended the forum and there were 35 speakers from the public. J. Lewis reviewed the breakdown of feedback received:

8– Pro-Pioneer

15– Absolutely for Keene

5- Choice

1- Education Decision/Not financial

2 –

2- Student input – Kids need to be challenged more

1-Unrelated comment

8-Feel should bring to Town-wide vote

J. Lewis read the questions from the public along with the answers.

What was the purpose of the forum?

J. Lewis – to be clear and give people a choice. All should have a choice.

Would students need to take the MCAS test at Pioneer?

J. Lewis – Yes, all would; the test is being phased out in 2019 and replaced by PARK. We could be compared with schools in other states.

J. Lewis explained regardless of where kids go to school, they live in NH; Cheshire Career Center is still at our disposal.

AREA – Doesn't change much and other schools would need to approve us.

J. Lewis explained the reason for the forum was so the Board could have discussion on this. They received feedback from the public until 8:22 pm. on Wednesday. He feels the Board should not take comments tonight unless they decide to.

Amanda Nordberg asked for clarification on the Cheshire Career Center.

R. Horton explained it is not owned by Keene. It is a County-run program. They pay for kids to go plus transportation.

L. Picard feels overwhelmingly, they heard there are great options at Keene, but they don't fit every mold. Feels having a choice elevates us over what other schools can provide. To have a choice helps all of our students excel no matter where they are. Feels that is the best possible option. She doesn't know if bringing our own school back to Winchester is the best option.

R. Horton agrees with most of what L. Picard said. Would agree that it is difficult to build and maybe not in the best interest of the Town, but feels Alt Ed is a definite option for students.

S. Thompson – Definitely heard a lot of passionate opinions, very valid. Feels doing kids a disservice if we don't try to offer more of a choice than just Keene. Maybe there needs to be another option, more of a spectrum offering.

K. Bazan has had a lot of experience with Keene being on the Withdrawal Committee. Feels there are a lot of negatives and positives, too. He attended Senior Night; saw Winchester kids on stage that went to KHS and excelled. As a Board member, doesn't want to take that option away. He respects the passion of parents who want kids to go to Keene. He learned when he was on the Committee that there are students that don't fit in Keene. Advised the Board's job is to be sure that kids have the best opportunity to excel. He is not convinced they do in Keene. Feels it should be the goal of the Board that high school

students can choose the school that fits them. It is great that there are currently kids that excel, but can't leave other students behind.

K. Bazan MOVED to give immediate notice to the Keene Board of Education that unless a mutually agreeable modification to the exclusivity provisions set forth in sections 1 and 6 of the current Tuition Agreement between Keene and Winchester is reached prior to June 29, 2016, it is the present intent of the Winchester School Board to give notice to Keene that said Tuition Agreement shall terminate effective June 30, 2019.

The letter authorized by this motion shall further indicate that Winchester seeks a modification under which a negotiated percent of its high school aged children would be permitted to enroll in secondary institutions other than Keene High School. The letter may or may not be accompanied by specific proposed language regarding the exclusivity and related modifications to be approved by the Keene High School Committee; SECONDED by: R. Horton,

A parent in the audience asked if there would be any discussion tonight.

R. Horton advised no; they had an Open Forum on the 25th.

The parent's understanding was it was an information session. Don't you think it would be appropriate if we have input?

R. Horton advised this is the process. It is the Board's decision.

L. Picard advised J. Lewis went through the questions tonight and they will be posted.

Heather Pelkey advised the agenda wasn't posted in time.

L. Picard answers to questions wouldn't have changed the Motion. The forum was time to give feedback. There is a motion and then there will be discussion. Feels they should let the Board do that.

L. Picard advised the Motion is to show intent.

R. Horton advised the Motion is to do with the negotiation process and to do it in public.

R. Horton – No one on the Board wants to take a child's education away. Explained it has been a very difficult decision for him since he joined the Board four years ago.

L. Picard advised they are also asking Keene High School to negotiate the exclusivity. We are giving them the opportunity.

R. Horton advised it was heard loud and clear, not just in the forum, that kids need options.

R. Horton feels they are unique as a Board that they see that not all kids fit into one box. It is awesome to see them excel; hard to see them struggle.

K. Bazan advised it is the goal of the Board to make sure kids get the best education there is for each student. Explained we are in year six of a 20 year contract. The exclusivity clause ties our hands. Advised the Board feels they need to address it right now and this is the way to do that.

Sue Rice asked K. Bazan to read the Motion again.

Sue Rice – Basically you are asking to do away with the exclusivity.

K. Bazan – No, negotiate the exclusivity.

Sue Rice - And if they are not willing to by June, 2019, we will be doing something else?

K. Bazan – Possibly.

VOTE on MOTION: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

Policies –DKA, EEAA, EHAA:

The Board received Policies DKA – Payroll Procedures, EEAA – Video and Audio Surveillance on School Property and EHAA – Computer Security, E-Mail and Internet Communications as a First Reading. Will review and bring back to the first meeting in July.

J. Lewis will bring the School Policy on Bullying to the first meeting in July, as well.

Sue Rice asked why there were no microphones at tonight's meeting.

K. Bazan advised he is in favor of the set up they used at the previous meeting.

Sarah Louder advised it would be easier to hear if people in the crowd weren't talking.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – B. Stevenson:

*It has been a busy week; many class fieldtrips going on.

*Yearbook signing will be held tomorrow

*Field Day next Friday

*Successful workshop day – Included CPI training. Staff completed Needs Assessment for Technology

*Abacus Awards Dinner will be held next week.

K. Bazan – Town Little League Awards start at 6:00 pm.

B. Stevenson advised ours starts at 5:00 pm.

L. Picard will attend and help.

*More field trips happening next week.

*June 13th is Eighth grade graduation

*June 14th – half day of school. Kindergarten graduation is at 9:00 am.

*Eighth grade goes to NYC on Saturday.

*Will be starting with Stem Scouts; utilizes Science Lab, mobile lab and once a month field trips and competition. First year is grant funded; would look at how we would continue. There is one other school in NH that is part of Stem Scouts. It is pretty much extra-curricular. It is very much volunteer-based.

*The Garden Committee planted flowers by the flag pole; will plant more.

The Board discussed the website.

J. Lewis advised Blackboard Connect offers one; don't want a boring web site.

R. Horton advised they have been talking about the website for four years; it needs to happen.

J. Lewis advised it is no excuse, but their plates are full.

Heather Pelkey explained the Technology Committee went back to the website previously used because the new one was not teacher friendly and lost momentum.

L. Picard – Perhaps they could have a small Committee to work on it.

R. Horton – Need to find something usable.

B. Stevenson advised they did see demos and several stakeholders were included. Thinks we're close.

J. Lewis advised by August 1st we will have a new website.

R. Horton wondered if maybe the NHSB has some information; that is our image.

The Board reviewed classroom count.

R. Horton – Try to watch the number as time goes on.

*There were 20 families plus on both days of Kindergarten Registration.

Amanda Nordberg advised there are 20 signed up, plus our Pre-Schoolers; looking to be about where we are this year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – J. LEWIS:

*J. Lewis – Considering changing the name to the Science Research Center from the Science Lab. He showed the Board the 3D Egyptian figure made with the 3D printer.

*Heather Pelkey advised that Mr. Pymm is starting to introduce the printer to 6th-8th graders.

*Have received four additional resumes. Two members have gone off the committee; still need to replace one. Need to have a decision by June 30th.

*Interviewing for Music, Math and Library positions. Unquestionably School Spring has been a positive addition.

*Cleaning out third floor – if anyone wants anything let them know. J. Lewis strongly suggests considering updating and using the area for a low-level Special Needs Program. They could provide good meals, etc. in a dormitory setting.

R. Horton asked J. Lewis to please not leave behind the kids on the other end.

J. Lewis advised there is a meteor shower happening in August in the early morning hours. Feels it would be great to do something like that for those kids.

K. Bazan asked if all ACCESS stuff is out of the third floor.

J. Lewis is not sure whose stuff is whose. To be fair, we need to get ours out, too.

*Ted Comstock from the NHSBA can offer training for Strategic Planning.

R. Horton advised they have discussed a Board retreat. It sounded like a great idea, but we haven't moved forward with it.

S. Thompson asked if training would be at both the Board and Administrative level.

J. Lewis – Yes.

L. Picard – It happens concurrently?

J. Lewis – Not necessarily.

J. Lewis advised with five members it would be a meeting. He thinks the Board needs to take more advantage of what we have available.

L. Picard advised that was discussed at the NHSBA training.

The Board would be in favor; need more information and logistics and then could discuss.

*There was an issue with one of the busses on a field trip. It wasn't good. The bus didn't have enough gas.

L. Picard advised they have a new hire; filled the Vice-Principal position. She would like it announced in the Parent Newsletter.

L. Picard wants to set up a conversation with J. Lewis regarding the agenda. She feels it needs to be in more of a descriptive nature. She wants to put it on the calendar, so they will have that conversation after June 30th.

FINANCIAL REPORT – E. JACKSON:

The Board reviewed the Manifests and asked questions.

*Third Floor – The master electrician’s license is up for renewal in NH. It might take a few weeks to get it and then they can start the work. We will need chairs and desks for additional classrooms. The antique store in town will be taking the doors.

*Two originals of a letter to the Chair of the Trustees of Trust Funds have been prepared to be signed by Board members.

R. Horton read the letter.

The School Board is requesting withdrawal in the amount of \$46,910 from the Capital Reserve Building Fund that was expended in 2015-2016 School Year for building improvements. Please request the withdrawal from Charter Trust. Thank you.

*Technology – Moving along with E-Rate, PBX and Internet with FairPoint.

911 tested phones; now they don’t know where in the building an emergency is. The new phone system will fix that. E. Jackson explained it is an involved process.

R. Horton asked if they have a cordless piece available.

J. Lewis – Yes.

R. Horton – Cordless and the ability to dial an extension, is what we need.

E. Jackson – Absolutely what we need.

E. Jackson advised will be upgrading Internet switches; the whole cart will be clean and brand new and they will manage them.

E. Jackson advised they could sell two switches on E-Bay or hold on to them if we want to switch back.

The Board feels they should sell them.

*Sym Quest will be here on the 16th. Overall it was a good assessment; will review with the Board on the 16th.

*Smart Boards – Will be getting six projectors for July 1st so J. Stanway can start installing PBX from the middle of July to the middle of August.

*Audit – Received findings for 2012; will receive others as they write them up. E. Jackson reviewed with the Board.

The Board asked that the findings be put under Old Business for the next meeting.

*Building and Grounds position – D. Chamberlain has accepted the position. He will start on Monday. An announcement is going out tomorrow.

*We contract mowing to be done every two weeks, but they are behind. They did come out to get the field done for the game. E. Jackson is looking into getting a mower or rider.

R. Horton feels that might be a conversation to have with the Town; they have a rider.

K. Bazan asked how the shower situation is.

E. Jackson advised that is last on the list.

E. Jackson – Emergency Management Team is coming out tomorrow; the Town contact will join them.

K. Bazan MOVED to have Board Chair, R. Horton sign the Agreement between the Winchester School Board and the Winchester Support Staff for 2016-2018; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

*Supply ordering has begun.

E. Jackson advised the budget will stay the way it was originally set; some lines will be short.

K. Bazan MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$167,443.32; SECONDED by: S. Thompson, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to approve the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$223,882.10; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard advised she is working on tasks for contacting the NHSB for the Superintendent review. She thinks by the first meeting in July, they can chat about that.

E. Jackson advised they received a full check from the Town for May. It really helped them out doing it that way.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS:

Heather Pelkey advised she is very disappointed in the Board; thinks it is better to enter into negotiations than end the contract. Feels they went against the Town again.

Amanda Nordberg feels we are playing chicken with Keene High School. If they don't budge, we give up. Explained her child is a high flyer; wants classes that are challenging. She advised Keene doesn't have the responsibility to her kid, the Board does. She's disappointed; afraid Keene can say we don't want you. Feels they could end up in Pioneer by default.

Sarah Louder advised it was on the ballot twice and the Town did speak.

Heather Pelkey feels it was not clear on the ballot; needs to be clear.

Amanda Nordberg advised comments were already made and frustrated comments have been made, but you have already made the decision.

Barbara Depew doesn't think people were well informed. They didn't get answers to questions before the Motion was made.

Sue Rice advised the last day of school is not on the calendar and last week's forum is on the first page. Need to get that taken care of.

Amy Hill advised the Pre-School grass is reaching students' shoulders and some have ticks. Need to get that mowed.

E. Jackson advised she is addressing that at her level.

K. Bazan MOVED to go into non-public session at 9:15 pm. under RSA91-A:3(b); SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: K. Bazan – yes, R. Horton – yes, S. Thompson – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.

K. Bazan MOVED to come out of non-public session at 9:25 pm; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: K. Bazan – yes, R. Horton – yes, S. Thompson – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.

R. Horton advised while in non-public session the Board discussed the signing of the Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator contract with an editorial change. The Board Chair will sign it when the change is made.

S. Thompson MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:26; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 4-0, MOTON PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary