

Wakefield School Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 5, 2020, 6 p.m.

Meeting held remotely via Zoom

Minutes – Approved

Present: Chair Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair Relf Fogg, Members Tracey Kolb, Sandy Johnson, and Mary Collins; Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Principal Jim Lampron, Assistant Principal Jenn Spector, Transportation Manager Brennan Peaslee, Facilities Manager Joe Williams, Business Administrator Marie D’Agostino, Student Services Director Anne Kebler, Administrative Assistant Larissa Mulkern, and others logging remotely.

Call to order: Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6 p.m.

Mrs. Johnson read a statement in which she apologized for the comments she made at last board meeting; she said she was sorry in expressing herself in an inappropriate manner and said her comments were in no way a reflection of the town, but rather out of frustration at the political atmosphere under which the board has had to function.

Public Comment: None.

Consent Agenda: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to accept the consent agenda (AP and Payroll Manifests), seconded for discussion by Mrs. Collins. Mrs. Collins asked if the manifest could be brought back to the board meetings so questions can be asked and answered at the meetings. Board members agreed by consensus to do this. Mrs. Collins asked questions on a couple invoices related to security grant. Mrs. D’Agostino provided background on the security grant the district received from the state covering 80 percent of the cost of security upgrade. A public hearing has been held to withdraw the funds. Mrs. D’Agostino will prepare a timeline for the board. Members voted 4-1 to approve the consent agenda; roll call vote, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye, Fogg, nay.

Meeting Minutes: Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 21 board meeting, with any amendments offered. Mrs. Kolb seconded the motion. Roll call vote, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye.

Reports/COVID 19 Updates: Mr. Lampron and Mrs. Spector reviewed highlights of their report, including an overview of the survey regarding last day of school, a town-wide parade for students, plans for teacher pickup, tentative plans to celebrate 8th grade student graduation, and more. Mr. Lampron also recognized student Julia McCarthy whose National History Day paper, “The Pink Triangle: The Silent Genocide of Gay Men in Hitler’s Germany,” was selected as NH Middle School winner of the Hildebrandt Award.

Mr. Fogg asked how certain employees’ service to district is being calculated, per the motion to pay commensurate to service to the district. Mrs. Kebler spoke to the question, describing the tasks and the work performed by the school nurse, guidance counselor, social worker, and paraprofessionals, with each worker performing vital roles during this pandemic including interactions with students, teachers and parents. Mrs. D’Agostino described compliance with Department of Labor reporting requirements, hour tracking and work tracking at the SAU.

In response to a query from Mrs. Collins regarding school communications, Mr. Gregoire said he would ask that all board members be including on the Paul School information email list.

Mr. Gregoire added that since last meeting he received direction from the state that meals can be delivered up until June 30 or the end of the school year. With more and more COVID 19 illnesses in the state, Extended Learning summer school and Title I will be held remotely during the summer as well to minimize exposure. Contracts to teachers have been received and await Mr. Ouellette's signature. He will be looking for a vote for a last day of school date.

Mr. Lampron restated the survey results for last day of school dates: Of 567 responses, 63.7 percent voted for May 26; 21.5 percent voted for May 29; 8.5 percent voted for June 5; and 6.3 voted for June 12

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to make May 26 the last day of school, seconded by Mr. Ouellette. During discussion, it was noted that students will have access to I Excel programs during the summer. Every student has his/her own account; they can access skills assigned by teachers. It was clarified that this date would not impact the meal program, where free meals will be distributed to June 30. Any missing classwork will be allowed to be worked on and completed until June 19. Members voted, roll call, 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Discussion ensued regarding providing meals. Mrs. D'Agostino explained that the school district can approve serving meals that can be reheated, and on weekends. Café Services and the state must approve that, but there is an addendum that would allow that to happen; a copy of the minutes where the board approved the additional meals to cover weekends would be provided to the state, she added.

Comment from the public: Ms. Dolaher said she has two kids enrolled in VLACS [Virtual Learning Academy Charter School], a program for grades 4 through 12; kids are assigned to their own teachers, and high school students can earn credits.

Facilities Report

Windows Project: Mr. Williams updated the board on changes to the window project estimate, as the performance bond of \$4,850 was not included in the original estimate. Mr. Fogg said this was why the prior motion specified the project not exceed the \$367,500; he believes that is more than enough to do the job and adding \$4,850 is going against the vote of the board. He said the school board needs to start opening the proposals. Mr. Ouellette added even if the school board opened the original bid, this bond cost would not have been included. Discussion ensued, with a consensus for Mr. Williams to call Portland Glass during this meeting for further explanation. Mr. Williams stressed this was a time sensitive project with a six to 10-week window. Mrs. Kolb agreed with Mr. Fogg adding the project has been on the table for 10 years; voters supported installing working windows for the students, and Mr. Williams has had trouble attracting vendors for this project. Mr. Williams added that a part of a window had come off due to the wind. Mrs. D'Agostino noted that the board did motion to approve the bid from Portland Glass and that the cost not exceed \$367,500, but it did stipulate in the quote that there was an exclusion for the bond so the \$367,500 did not include the bond. When the contract was reviewed by legal, it was learned the bond must be included and the company revised the quote, hence the cost of the project was increased. Mr. Ouellette said the board decided on a total and the project should not exceed that amount. Additional discussion ensued regarding whether it was common practice to pass along the cost of a bond to the customer. After discussion, a motion was presented by Mr. Fogg, and seconded by Mr. Ouellette, not to exceed the total that was previously approved, and

then the motion was tabled until Mr. Williams speaks with his contact at Portland Glass during this meeting.

Playground Repairs and Inspection Report: Mr. Williams provided via email an estimate for Paul School replacement parts, repairs and installation from GameTime [total cost \$27,382.40]. Mr. Williams had, at Mrs. D'Agostino's recommendation, contacted Primex for a second opinion but the company, during this COVID 19 pandemic is not doing that right now. Mr. Ouellette said the playground was discussed at Deliberative Session. where he was told we either close the playground down or fix the pieces that need to be repaired; he understood that we had those piece in house and those were to be added on shortly thereafter. He added the voters voted the playground down so how can we ask for funds now. [Warrant Article 16, to establish a Playground Repairs, Maintenance and Equipment Expendable Trust Fund and appropriate \$10,000 for the fund was defeated at March 10, 2020 town meeting.] Mr. Williams didn't know either, adding it may be a sign to close the playground until we can get it repaired; Primex is willing to come out for an inspection after the COVID 19 pandemic. Mrs. Collins said we aren't allowed to use any money to fix the playground; that was stated at the Budget Committee hearing -- to put the playground under the operating budget. Instead the school board chose to put it in a warrant article, per RSA 32:10, i-e. Board members concurred to look at options to fix the playground, where funds could come from, to look into potential grant funding, check in with the Town of Wakefield, etc. The topic was tabled for now to explore other options.

HVAC RFP: Mr. Williams asked the board to waive the mandatory walk-through in the Request for Quotes for HVAC maintenance.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to allow the RFQ to go out without the mandatory walk-through requirement. Members voted roll call, 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Water Testing: With no one in the building, Mr. Williams is postponing monthly water testing in the school.

Old Business

Café Services Draft Contract: Mrs. D'Agostino discussed the amendment to the Café Services contract authorizing food services to provide meals on weekends through June 30.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to approve the contract amendment and extend food service through the weekend, through June 30; Mr. Fogg seconded the motion. Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Subcommittee Member List: Mr. Fogg made some corrections to the Subcommittee Member list which were noted by the administrative assistant. The list will be updated and redistributed.

New Business

Technology: Chromebooks: Mr. Gregoire brought forth a request, considering the public hearing held previously to expend funds from the Technology Trust Fund, to purchase 60 Chromebooks with one-year support, related licenses, and charging carts for each classroom, for \$18,684.57.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Kolb, to approve the expenditure of \$18,684.57 for the new Chromebooks and materials. Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Technology: Website: Mr. Gregoire said the board previously discussed having MoxDog Media Solutions come in to revamp the SAU website at the end of the school year; this might be a good timing. They had discussed the project and services, at a cost of \$3,000- and one-year support including SSL certificate, back up services, security hack fixes at \$99 a month; they offer a pay up front discount of 10

percent. Without the discount would be \$1,188, less 10 percent would be \$1,069.20, for a total \$4,069.20.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to have MoxDog provide these services to the school district, seconded by Mrs. Johnson. In response to a query, Mrs. D’Agostino noted it wasn’t in the budget for this year but it’s a bottom-line budget; the expense would be under the 2800 line. Mr. Fogg was concerned with paying the monthly fees up front. Mr. Gregoire said they are an established local company. In response to a query, Mrs. D’Agostino said this technology expenses would not be covered by the CARES Act.

Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Call for Resignation: Mr. Fogg brought this topic up after receiving some calls regarding Mrs. Johnson’s comments at last meeting; he is most concerned about her behavior in the past, such as kicking him under the table. He searched for a catalyst but couldn’t find one; this is a bad example for children. He questioned whether the school board post is too much for her to handle. Mrs. Kolb said at time this is a stressful job. She has worked with Mrs. Johnson for two years and she has devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort and put her heart and soul into it. She would like to acknowledge Mrs. Johnson’s positive work and not just stress the negative. Mr. Ouellette said this will not come to a vote, because she is an elected official. He asked if she would like to step down or continue. Mrs. Johnson expressed her desire to continue to serve.

Wakefield School Board Scholarship: In response to a query about the School Board Scholarship, Mrs. Mulhern responded that the application deadline was extended to May 22; thus far, one application has been received.

Other Business

Expenditure – Kindergarten & 8th grade graduation: Mr. Lampron requested permission to expend \$1,400 from the Principal’s Graduation line to purchase certificates, caps, and an outdoor screen for 8th grade graduation.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to approve the request for \$1,400; Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Expenditure – Mr. Lampron requested \$19.80 for screen testing software.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to approve the request for \$19.80; Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Student continuation: Mr. Lampron said a few students have moved to Wakefield and now it’s the end of the school year. He asked that these students be allowed to stay in the district until the end of the school year, as opposed to requiring them to register in their respective new districts.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to approve Mr. Lampron’s request to allow the students finish up the year in Wakefield. Members voted roll call 5-0 in favor; Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Continued... Windows Project, bond expense

Mr. Williams rejoined discussion with Paul Vermette of Portland Glass on the phone. Mr. Vermette said the company usually services contractors as a subcontractor; thus, no bonds are usually included in their contracts. After the proposal was put together, it was brought up that a bond was required for the job and Mr. Williams asked them to include the cost in an updated contract. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Vermette left the meeting at about 8:12 p.m.

Motion: Mr. Fogg moved the earlier motion, to stick with the cost of \$367,500 for the window project, seconded by Mr. Ouellette. Members voted roll call vote 4-1 in favor with Mrs. Kolb opposed: Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye, and Kolb, nay.

Public Comment: Mr. Bob DeColfmaker said his family to Wakefield from Rochester; one of his daughter's will be in the 8th grade next year; he is asking for his daughter to be allowed to stay at Rochester Middle School to finish out the middle school before continuing to Spaulding High School the year following. His youngest child will enter the Paul School. He feels it would be in his daughter's best interest to stay in Rochester for one more year.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion seconded by Mrs. Collins to continue the meeting past 8 p.m. Members voted all in favor 5-0: Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye, and Kolb, aye.

Resignations: Mr. Gregoire announced three resignations: Social Studies/History Teacher Chris Soule, Title 1 Coordinator Penny Huckins and Custodian Wes Huckins, who are moving out of the area. Mr. Soule has taken another position.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to accept the resignations with regret. Members voted all in favor 5-0: Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye, and Kolb, aye.

Members discussed a motion to go into nonpublic, but the consensus was to postpone the session to confirm that holding a nonpublic via Zoom was safe and secure. Mr. Gregoire would verify this and get back to the board.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ouellette seconded by Mr. Fogg at 8:38 p.m. Members voted all in favor 5-0: Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye, and Kolb, aye.

Respectfully submitted:
Larissa Mulkern
Administrative Assistant