

Wakefield School Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 19, 2020, 5:30 p.m.
Meeting held remotely via Zoom
Minutes – Amended & Approved

Present: Chair Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair Relf Fogg, members Tracey Kolb, , Mary Collins, and Sandy Johnson; Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D’Agostino, Attorney Mike Elwell of Soule, Leslie, Kidder, Sayward & Loughman, Principal Jim Lampron, Assistant Principal Jenn Spector, Transportation Manager Brennan Peaslee, Peter Miller, Uniserve Director of NEA New Hampshire, Beth Capen, Special Ed Coordinator Amy Wentworth Godfrey, Facilities Manager Joe Williams, Elizabeth Hadzima, and members of the public including Priscilla Colbath, Dave Lee and Keri Palmer

Call to order: Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Nonmeeting, followed by Nonpublic

Mr. Fogg questioned nonmeeting versus nonpublic. Attorney Elwell stated consultations with legal counsel, and negotiations, are two purposes where nonmeetings are appropriate. Mr. Fogg objected to the fact that no minutes are required for nonmeetings.

The nonpublic meeting is to take place in a Zoom breakout room from 90 minutes to two hours.

Motion to go into nonpublic

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to go into nonpublic, at approximately 5:10 p.m., listing provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a): The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. 91-A:3, II (c): Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant, and, as added by Attorney Elwell, RSA 91-A:3, (e), Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against this board or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership therein, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion; roll call vote 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, and Collins, aye.

Motion: A motion to come out of nonpublic session was made by Mrs. Kolb, seconded by Mrs. Johnson at 7:51 p.m.; roll call vote 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson aye, Collins, aye.

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda:

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion to approve the consent agenda (AP & Payroll manifests), seconded by Mr. Ouellette; roll call vote 3-2, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, nay, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, nay.

Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Mr. Fogg made an approve the public minutes of May 5, 2020, and the nonpublic minutes of May 13, 2020, 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

Monthly Financial Report – May 2020

Mrs. D’Agostino reviewed highlights of financial reports including a proposed increase to meal prices, trust fund balances and expense reports. Elementary and middle school lunches increase to \$3 and Elementary and Middle school breakfast increase to \$2. The financial reports also show a credit for tuition when the Rochester School District amended its end of school year date due to COVID 19. The district has \$10,700 in unpaid lunches.

Motion to Extend Meeting: A motion to extend the school board meeting beyond 8 p.m. was made by Mrs. Johnson and seconded by Mrs. Collins. Roll call vote, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye.

COVID 19 Update

Mr. Lampron reviewed highlights of his memorandum, including the schedule for the collection of student and teacher belongings, tentative graduation plans, end of year staff expectations, update to meal serving schedule, Q4 grading and more. Mr. Fogg asked about the possibility of remote learning continuing this fall. Mr. Gregoire said the leadership is discussing this, and that a committee is being formed to prepare for next school year, with an eye towards preparing for the possibility of continued remote learning, or some sort of hybrid. Officials will receive direction from Homeland Security; the local committee will include members of the community, health officials, state officials and the CDC. Mr. Lampron added that the state has a task force as well; Mr. Gregoire noted no superintendents are on that task force, which lacks school leadership. Graduation celebration plans include virtual celebrations for pre-K and Kindergarten graduations. An 8th grade graduation is planned for June 13 at 2:30, with a parade starting at the town ballfields to the school parking lot. Graduates will stay in their cars. Spaulding High School’s graduation is on June 12. Kindergarten screening is planned for August 10-11, with registration packets ready for pickup after June 10. Interviews and hiring for open teaching positions is going well, with four potential new hires.

Expenditure requests: Mr. Lampron requested permission to expense \$37,394 for literacy programs, guided reading kits, and textbooks, and \$7,050 for math intervention materials for k-5. Board members and staff discussed funding and budget lines.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Kolb, to approve the request for \$37,394 for literacy and reading programs. Members voted all in favor, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Kolb, to approve the request for \$7,050 for math program materials. Members voted all in favor, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Other Business

Mr. Williams asked the board for direction with some issues, including extensive repairs to the playground and replacement of CO2 detectors and the fire panel. Playground repairs would run about \$27,000. Board members and staff discussed whether to fix the playground or shut it down for now. Mr. Ouellette suggested shutting it down and asking for funding next year. Mr. Gregoire said the town vote was not to approve the capital reserve fund for the playground, but the board has the authority to move

funds in the repair line. He said the budget is a bottom-line budget, and municipalities frequently move funds to other lines, i.e., to cover snow removal costs. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to close the playground tomorrow [May 20], for the time being until further action is taken, seconded by Mrs. Collins. Discussion ensued regarding whether purchasing a new slide to replace the broken one for \$7,000 would fix the safety problem. Mrs. Johnson said members should tour the playground. Mrs. Kolb said the children deserve a safe playground but if the board doesn't want to fund repairs, it should be closed. Members voted 4-0-1, roll call, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Johnson, aye, and Kolb, abstaining.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion add an amendment to the prior motion, to close the playground and to spend \$27,000 to restore it to its full potential, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted 2-3, roll call vote, Johnson, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, nay, Collins, nay, Ouellette, nay. Motion fails.

Upgrade to fire panel and CO2 detectors

Mr. Williams said he's bringing a packet of projects and information of things that need to be fixed to the Facilities Committee, who will then bring the priorities to the board. Replacement of the fire panel, which would include CO2 detectors, was discussed.

Motion: Mr. Ouellette made a motion to approve \$26,470 for replacement of the fire panel, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted roll call vote, 2-3, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, nay, Collins, nay, Johnson, nay. Motion fails.

Replacement battery and cleaning supplies expenditures

Motion: Mr. Ouellette made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$61.75 for a battery backup system, seconded by Mr. Fogg. Members voted roll call vote, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$1,214.47 for cleaning supplies including floor stripper pads and finish; Mr. Ouellette seconded the motion. Members voted roll call vote, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Church Use of Parking Lot

Mr. Gregoire reported that a local church as requested permission to use the school parking lot for a multi-denominational service from 9 a.m. to noon on Sunday, May 31. The police are involved in planning, and they are required to present a \$1 million hold harmless insurance clause.

Old Business

Pay for unaffiliated staff

Mr. Gregoire said the board has the authority to reduce the number of instructional days for the school year, but the district still must pay employees for the number of days in their contract [180 days.] Mr. Fogg said he made motion some time ago to pay the hourly workers commensurate with their service to the district. He noted not a single paycheck has been reduced.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the hours per day of ABA tutors, paraprofessionals, and unaffiliated staff such as secretaries, custodians and bus drivers. Certain secretaries who work school year only have Memorandums of Understanding to get paid for 180 days, as does the CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement) for union employees, added Mrs. D'Agostino. Mr. Fogg said he supports paying those people who continue to work but not those who are not coming in to work and who are still

receiving pay. He said some workers are getting money they didn't work for. Mrs. Kebler reminded the board that ABA tutors are working with students that require a longer program and are working through to the middle of June; they are working the hours they would have in a traditional program. She added all the paraprofessionals are working although their hours may vary. Mrs. D'Agostino noted the Business office staff are working and will continue to work when school ends. Mrs. Johnson said many of our employees cannot apply for unemployment, and the board should show appreciation for all our employees. Mrs. Kebler said it is extremely hard right now to find and hire paraprofessionals and ABA tutors – we all want to keep our paras and ABAs working. Mr. Fogg asked why his prior motion was not still effective. Mr. Gregoire said the question came up when school gets out there won't be the need for direct student support, but there will be Professional Development days and food that needs to be distributed through June.

Mr. Ouellette asked Mrs. D'Agostino what the bottom line would be; she responded it would be difficult to say at this point because there are paras that are working to June 30; she won't know until the accounts are reconciled.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson submitted an amendment to the previously approved motion [from the March 23, 2020 school board meeting] to pay our hourly employees the agreed upon pay, to regular end of the 2019-2020 school year -- to what have been the regular end of the school year. Mrs. Kolb seconded the motion. Mrs. Collins asked for dates; the original end date was June 19. It was noted that employees worked through April vacation, and six snow days were logged this year. Mr. Gregoire noted 166 was already completed and another 14 days were needed to fulfill the CBA. *[Note: No end date was submitted for this motion after much discussion, nor was a second motion provided, as suggested by Mrs. Johnson, which would have separated the unaffiliated staff from the affiliated paras and ABAs.]* Roll Call vote, 3-2: Ouellette, aye; Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye; Collins, nay, Fogg, nay.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion, that the Wakefield School District grant step and longevity increases to all eligible school employees covered by the Wakefield Education Association CBA, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. Members voted, roll call vote, 2-3, Fogg, aye, Collins, aye, Ouellette, nay, Johnson, nay, Kolb, nay. Motoin fails.

Policies

Mrs. Kolb read the policies, all but the last were first readings, the last being a reaffirmation. All are required by law.

- a. First Reading Revision: GBED/ADC/JICG - Prohibitions Regarding Use and Possession of Tobacco Products, E-Cigarettes and E-Liquids in and on School Facilities & Grounds
- b. First Reading Revision: GCO - Teacher Performance and Evaluation System
- c. First Reading Revision: IFA - Instructional needs of Each Individual Student
- d. First Reading: IGE - Parental Objections to Specific Course Material
- e. First Reading Revision: IHAM - Health Education & Exemption from Instruction
- f. First Reading Revision: IHAMA - Teaching About Alcohol, Drugs & Tobacco
- g. First Reading Revision: IHBA: Evaluation Requirements for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities
- h. Reaffirm: IHBI - Alternative Learning Plans

Second readings where applicable are forthcoming at next board meeting.

Public Comment

Mrs. Colbath said normally what's changed in the policies is in red or blanked out. Mr. Gregoire said there were no structural changes to the bodies of these policies, except for in one. Mrs. Colbath asked how many teachers the school has lost because the contract didn't pass. Mr. Gregoire said teachers have told him they are leaving because the contract didn't pass.

Keri and Chad Palmer asked for Mrs. Johnson's resignation, and asked Mr. Ouellette to oversee the negotiation committee. Mr. Ouellette said he can't be on every committee; and that Mrs. Johnson is an elected official and it's her decision to stay on the board; the board cannot vote to force a resignation.

Norma Joy made several comments about book funding, unfinished facilities projects, and contract negotiations.

Gavin Kearns, the WEA union rep, said in exit interviews, teachers said they are leaving partly due to a lack of community support and contracts not passing, and that they could leave and make more money elsewhere.

Motion to enter nonpublic session: A motion to enter nonpublic session was made by Mr. Fogg, seconded by Mrs. Collins, at 10:42 p.m. under the following provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (d): Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are averse to those of the general community. 91-A:3, II (k): Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A, which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general public or the school district that is considering a contract, including any meeting between the school boards, or committees thereof, involved in the negotiations, and RSA 91-A:3 (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

Motion to exit nonpublic session: A motion to exit nonpublic session was made by Mr. Ouellette, seconded by Mr. Fogg at 11:03 p.m. Members voted all in favor, roll call, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Motion to adjourn: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ouellette, seconded by Mr. Fogg at 11:04 p.m. Members voted all in favor, roll call, 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Fogg, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, Collins, aye.

Respectfully submitted:
Larissa Mulkern
Administrative Assistant