

Wakefield School Board
10-6-20 Public Minutes
Held in the Multi-Purpose Room and via Zoom
Approved

In attendance:

Board: Bob Ouellette, Relf Fogg, Mary Collins, Lino Avellani and Sandy Johnson via Zoom

Administration: Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino, Student Services Director Anne Kebler via Zoom, Principal James Lampron and Vice Principal Jenn Spector.
Facilities Manager Joe Williams and Transportation Director Brennan Peaslee

Public: Randi Fox, parents and community members via Zoom and Jim Miller from ClearView TV.

Call to Order

Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 5:30 and led those present in person and on zoom in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then thanked Lino Avellani for stepping up and filling the vacant seat left by Tracey Kolb.

Non-Public

Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to enter non-public at 5:32 under RSA 91-A:3(e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with anybody or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)

The Board returned from non-public session at 6:07. During non-public they discussed the MOA and they voted to go back to the negotiating table. (Vote 3-1-1) They also voted to make Mrs. Collins the alternate to the negotiating team (Vote 5-0).

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Avellani asked, what is Game Time? Mr. Gregoire said it is the Playground equipment company. Mr. Avellani asked if it went out to bid. Mr. Gregoire said it did not. Mr. Williams said this company is the one that installed the equipment twenty years ago. Mr. Avellani also asked if Amazon was for supplies and the answer was yes long-term supplies. With a vote of

Roll call: Ouellette aye, Johnson aye, Collins nay, Fogg nay (2-2) Mr. Avellani asked why two Board members voted against approving the Consent Agenda. Mr. Fogg said there is always something that he can't support. Mrs. Johnson said you have the option to pull an invoice for discussion and still approve the manifest. Final vote was **(2-2-1)**. **Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to reconsider at the end of the meeting. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

Mr. Avellani asked for introductions. Everyone in the room introduced themselves.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the minutes of September 15th with any amendments offered.

Mr. Fogg asked that what he said at the last meeting be added to the minutes. He said it was time to put out an RFP for Superintendent Services. Mrs. Colbath has this in her notes and has already added it to her copy of the minutes that are being reviewed for approval. Mrs. Johnson asked to table the minutes until she can review the video.

Mr. Fogg rescinded his motion and Mrs. Collins rescinded her second.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to table the minutes and add them to the next agenda. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)

RFP for Superintendent Services

Mr. Gregoire asked the Board if they wished to discuss the RFP for Superintendent Services. He said he did not have one prepared for tonight but could have one for the next meeting. He asked if that was a consensus of the Board. All were agreeable except Mrs. Johnson.

Reports

Superintendent Report

Covid-19

Mr. Gregoire said due to recent events in the last three days he is making sure that everyone is aware of what's happening in the building and staying in close contact with DHHS for the next few days about a Covid case in the building.

Planning for the next school quarter is an ongoing matter. We are currently able to provide social distancing of at least three feet. There are classrooms that are at 3 feet, while others are around 4 feet. We have looked at the classrooms and those classrooms that are at the 3-foot distance, will go below that threshold, with the addition of new students, either newly enrolled students or students who choose to move from remote learning to the face to face learning. I have heard from several parents who will likely return to face to face, as well as some who intend to move to remote learning. In either case, this will have an impact on the number of students in our classrooms, which may bring us beyond the limits established in our re-entry plan. It may also impact the number of students that have been assigned to our remote teachers. These changes in

how students are enrolled, may cause the district to re-examine what re-entry level we are operating under

The district leadership team has been participating in tabletop exercises, to better understand how we will respond in a real time Covid-19 diagnosis, that is in our building. This has been helpful in understanding the process with DHHS, communicating with the families impacted with contact tracing, and communication with the families. There have been conversations with other school leaders, who have already walked through this experience, which while unfortunate for their districts, is proving to be a wealth of knowledge in navigating a complicated circumstance. District leadership team will continue to develop and walk through these scenarios in efforts of being well prepared.

As is the case in many school districts, we are experiencing a shortage of substitute teachers and paraprofessionals. The building staff have done a stellar job in assisting with indoor recess coverage and helping where they can. As we enter into the flu season, I anticipate that the district may be in a position that we will not be able to cover the staff shortages" In that case, I further anticipate that the school may have days, when we are not able to fully and safely staff the building, which will be a remote learning day.

Budget Committee Meeting

Mrs. D'Agostino and the Superintendent attended the Budget Committee meeting of which Mr. Fogg is part of and participated also. We discussed the past years budget and the impact that Covid-19 had on the budget (which was both positive and negative). We expect to be meeting with the budget committee in mid-November.

Mr. Fogg said we should be working on the budget. The negotiations will take the longest.

The staff will work on whether students will be taking computers home. If the school has to close, they may do blizzard bags. This is being discussed. They are also waiting for the next delivery of Chromebooks that were ordered three months ago. Mr. Lampron said we are able to accommodate the sixty remote learners with technology and that leaves us tight in the school building. Mr. Fogg talked about a student that was having trouble with his MacBook Air because of his location and that he had to wait to join his class because the teacher was waiting for her child to get off the internet from their class. Mr. Gregoire said he didn't know this was a problem but it would be addressed. Mr. Gregoire said he doesn't want to over react or underreact to conditions. The person that tested positive hasn't been in school for eight days. DHHS is doing contract tracing. Parents who had kids in contact with the person were called. Mr. Lampron sent out a document to see if families would need technology if we turned to remote learning. They also asked for permission to record.

School Administration Report

Mr. Lampron read the classroom sizes as of September 30th for each teacher. He had a graph showing how many students they could fit in each room with the three-foot distancing. Some rooms are at capacity and may be moved to a classroom that was used by a remote teacher or the gym. Mrs. Collins asked if any students have left and gone to remote. Mr. Lampron answered that changing is a problem for the in-school teacher and the remote teacher. They're asked to

change at the end of the quarter. There are currently 91 remote learners and 368 in person students as of 10-5-20. The students are doing very well wearing their masks. There is a total of 459 students. They will begin to communicate with parents about their plans for quarter two. NH-SAS testing will happen for all students grades 4-8. They are ironing out how the remote learners will take the test that is not for accountability but to find out where they're at. Progress reports will go home. Mrs. Spector explained the discipline report. The majority of the students are meeting expectations.

Old Business

Teachers Pay Scale

Mr. Fogg referred to a vote of 3-2 to hold both sides to every part of their contract. He said if the CBA included a 1 step increase after one year of service. He asked Mr. Gregoire and Mrs. D'Agostino to calculate a step increase and the impact on the current budget. The past three-year contract has been frozen and no pay scale or contracts have been approved by the voters since then. He said this is an attempt to clarify his motion and to make sure the teachers got their one step increase according to article 18.2. Mrs. D'Agostino reminded the Board that the contract ended in 2019 and the teachers have not received an increase since. Mr. Fogg's suggestion would not make the teachers whole. Mr. Fogg said the defeated article included a new pay scale. His intention is to address a one-step increase for this year only. He believes that the voters do believe the teachers deserve a raise but were put off by the smoke and mirrors. Mr. Fogg said the \$34,945 that they are looking at is in the operating budget. This does not include those teachers that are at the top step. He said this is an attempt to clarify that 3-2 motion. Mr. Gregoire read the motion that Mr. Fogg had made on August 18th : Mr. Fogg made a motion to reject in its entirety the teacher and para MOA and with this rejection hold school district employees to every part of their current contracts. Mrs. Johnson asked if there was enough left over in the 1100 function to accommodate this. Mrs. D'Agostino replied, there is a savings from new hires but money will be needed for items that will not be covered by the Cares Act. She will have an expenditure report for the Board at the next meeting. Mrs. Johnson asked that this be tabled until they have a financial statement. Mr. Gregoire read a paragraph from the School Board attorney stating that there is no provision in the contract for this and that the School Board would have to either negotiate an MOA with the Union and then obtain voter approval or would need to obtain a waiver and release from the Association. Mr. Fogg said we need to honor these contracts. Mrs. D'Agostino followed up by explaining that in order to do this they would need to have a special meeting. Mr. Avellani asked if this should be a non-public item. Mr. Gregoire replied that it was up to the Board. Mr. Fogg said he wasn't proposing negotiation he was proposing action. He believes there is money in the budget to cover this in the 1100 lines. There are teachers in other functions as well. Mr. Ouellette said he agreed with Mr. Avellani that this should be a non-public discussion which includes all the details. Mr. Fogg concurred. Mr. Avellani wondered if the Board had the first quarter numbers as the quarter ended in September. Mrs. D'Agostino said she supplies a monthly status and waits until September when all staff are in the building to get a more accurate number. They are still hiring staff.

School Board Secretary

Mrs. D'Agostino explained that as long as there is money budgeted in the function, sub-lines could be added even though budgets were not allocated to specific sub accounts within that function. She looked back ten years to see if there were any lines added. The grid shows that every year there has been lines added to a function. Mr. Ouellette asked, so we could add the School Board Secretary to function 2320? Mrs. D'Agostino replied, there is a line but it's zeroed out. Mr. Avellani stated that as far as he knows a budget doesn't have sub categories once it's voted on by line. He said it sounds like you're tweaking the system a little by adding sub categories for a line that's already zeroed. Mrs. D'Agostino said at the last meeting they had legal opinion which said as long as there is a dollar amount in the function, we can add sub accounts to it. Mr. Fogg and Mrs. Collins always believed a dollar has to be left in a line in order to utilize that line. Mrs. D'Agostino used the LPN using half her time in Special Ed and Half in the Nurses office as an example. Mr. Avellani said it sounds interesting to him that we're even going to consider adding a sub line to a line that has zero dollars. Mrs. Colbath asked Mr. Gregoire to give Mr. Avellani some history. He didn't recall the details. He believed he was still Principal at the time and Mrs. Colbath believed he was Superintendent. At that point Mrs. Colbath expressed her wishes to have this discussed in non-public.

New Business

RFP Legal Services

Mr. Gregoire said this hasn't gone out to bid for many years and to comply with policy the Board has asked that this be done. Mr. Avellani asked if an RFQ had been put out prior to the RFP. Mrs. Gregoire said he expects those who apply will be qualified.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to put out this Request for Proposals for Legal Services. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Johnson nay (Vote 4-1)

SAU Trust Fund-One Source Security

Mrs. D'Agostino told the Board that the ball on a stick used for opening the SAU locked door isn't really a good security idea. They have a quote of \$4,200 and are waiting for other quotes to come in install security items in the SAU building. She said there is \$21,527.40 in the SAU Building Repair and Maintenance and Equipment Trust Fund. They are asking the Board to approve moving forward with addressing the security concerns and using the Trust Fund money to fund this. Mr. Collins asked if they needed a Public Hearing and Mrs. D'Agostino said yes, that's why they're asking the board if they want to move forward.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to move this to a Public Hearing. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Johnson aye (Vote 5-0)

Policies

First Reading

Mrs. Collins explained that policy ACAC; Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Process replaces policy JBAA. She went on to explain the policy which is twenty-two pages long and is mostly about process and procedure. Mr. Gregoire suggested this be addressed in parts. Mr.

Gregoire explained the policy procedure to Mr. Avellani. Mr. Gregoire explained to Mrs. Johnson that policies required by law can still be tweaked by the Board. Policy IMGA Service Animals in School. This policy is a new version of the old NHSBA policy. Policy JEC, Change of School Assignment - Manifest Educational Hardship; the word application will be changed to request. There is no physical application to fill out. Policy JFAB Admission of Tuition and Non-Resident Students. The word necessarily will be removed. A paragraph at the end of the policy refers to allowing staff members children to attend Paul School when they live out of district.

Mr. Fogg asked how the Board would address a teacher wanting to bring their child to Paul School during the Covid crisis to remote learn in her classroom while teaching Paul School students if that is the only way the teacher would be able to come into the school. Mr. Gregoire said that would be a case by case basis. Mr. Avellani asked if this policy would address that scenario. Mr. Gregoire answered, this policy addresses tuition and he feels with the current situation they wouldn't be setting a precedent. This would allow us to keep the teacher in the classroom. The Board can supersede its own policies. Mrs. Johnson suggested Mr. Avellani read the MOA.

Other Business

High School Lottery

Mr. Gregoire will be sending out the High School lottery information. The parents have to have this in by December 1st and the Board has to make a decision at the first Board meeting in January.

Change of School Board meeting Day

The Board has changed their November 3rd meeting to Monday November 2nd because of elections being held at the school on the 3rd.

Conservation Commission Campership Program

Mr. Fogg talked about the campership program sponsored by the Conservation Commission. They would like as many students as possible attend these camps. More information will follow in the Wakefield Weekly.

Transportation Committee Report

Mr. Ouellette told the Board that one bus went down plus #16 which was under warranty. That bus has been returned to service. Bus routes, use of other buses and bus rental were discussed. The bus rental is up on the October 14th. Options need to be discussed. The new bus will be here in January of 2021. A loaner bus for the downed #16 bus is not part of the agreement. Mr. Fogg believes the spare bus is to be used during emergencies and this is an emergency. Mrs. Peaslee said the spare bus has not been used for only two days this year.

Mrs. Kebler said she is working on the Cares Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund grant and there will be money in this grant to rent a bus for four months at \$2,000 a month. If all that money isn't used for the bus rental the remaining amount can be reallocated. The grant will be submitted this week and she expects to hear about the \$147,000 award within a couple of weeks. Mrs. Peaslee said that they were renting from one company and purchasing

from another. They are using one of the two spare busses because she had to add another route to comply with the number of students on a bus during Covid. Mr. Fogg asked if we pay for the rental for a month and only use it for a week, will we be reimbursed for the time we didn't use it. Mrs. Peaslee replied no.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to extend the meeting past 8:00. Roll Call (Vote 5-0)

Mr. Avellani wanted to know if all the items they will be purchasing will come before the Board. Mr. Gregoire explained that they had recently held a Public Hearing to expend those funds as they are an unanticipated revenue. He brought to the Board where they expected to spend those monies: cleaning supplies, regular supplies, Chromebooks, remote learning resources and transportation. Mr. Avellani suggested taking the bus rental out of the savings in the teacher's salaries line and reimbursing that line when the grant money comes in. Mr. Gregoire said you have to pay for it from the general fund first but he wants to make sure it's reimbursable. Mr. Avellani feels that the funds should come out of the operating budget now as this is a necessity and if the grant can be used for transportation then reimburse, he lines. Mr. Fogg said the breakdown that was given was, \$50,000 for facilities, \$44,000 for technology and software, \$10,000 for remote learning resources, \$40,000 for hiring, \$3,356.47 for Professional Development and the motion was to approve the funding from the Cares Act Fund in the manner that the superintendent described previously. Transportation wasn't mentioned but he realizes things will need to be changed. He just wanted to make sure that we realized the transportation part has not been approved. Mrs. Kebler said this is why she is bringing up the addition of transportation and will be able to reimburse that line. The difference between this Title 1 grant and others is that you don't have to describe the activity up front and you can reimburse anything Covid related from March 13th on. Mrs. Peaslee recommends renting the bus month to month until January.

Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson to rent the bus month to month until January. Roll call (Vote 4-1)

Ionization

Mr. Williams asked the Board if they had looked at the materials he had sent to them and if they had a preference on either ionization or microband. There are eight classrooms with no ventilation. He recommends the ionization. GPS is the only company that is UL certified. There is \$50,000 in the Cares Act Grant going towards facilities. This is used in Boston Children's Hospital and the White House. Mr. Avellani asked if he had talked to other schools to see what they are using and if this has gone out to bid. Mr. Williams answered schools are all over the place and GPS is the only one with UL rating. Mr. Williams is asking that the Board not to put this out to bid and hire this company. Right now they are using fresh air but the weather will change.

The quote is about \$36,000. Mr. Fogg asked with all the reports on air quality etc. being good, is this step a real necessity? Mr. Williams said this isn't just for Covid-19 but for flu, SARS, tuberculosis etc. with a 99.4% kill rate. Mrs. Collins asked for more time to look this over. Mr. Williams said if we wait two more weeks with delivery and installation, we could be in the dead of flu season. Mr. Fogg said this has been mitigated by wearing masks.

Mrs. Johnson made a motion to use up to \$50,000 for ionization Units. Mr. Williams said the

estimate is actually \$34,080. Mrs. Johnson wished to keep her motion at \$50,000. **Mrs. Collins seconded for discussion.** She asked what the upkeep would be. Mr. Williams said it's plug it in and let it go. He does not know what the life expectancy is on the units. **Roll call (Vote 2-1-2)**

Nominations and Resignations

Mrs. Collins asked do we have new hires? Mr. Gregoire answered there are no new teachers but there will be some new paras. Mrs. Collins asked if they would see the paperwork. Mr. Gregoire said not normally. Mrs. Collins would like to see the paperwork and names. Mr. Ouellette added, and who they are replacing as has been done in the past. Mr. Gregoire said you haven't received this information for Paras or unaffiliated. Mr. Fogg asked if fingerprinting has been waived. Mr. Gregoire said we purchased our own fingerprinting device and are now doing our own. Mr. Avellani wanted to know why paras and unaffiliated personnel do not come before the Board for approval. He doesn't know why but it hasn't been done. Mr. Gregoire said the superintendent hires the paras and unaffiliated. Mr. Avellani questioned why the governing body doesn't approve all hires. Mr. Avellani said this is something he inherited. Mr. Avellani said moving forward he believes the School Board should be made aware of any new hires. Mr. Gregoire will bring anything that supports what he does to the next Board meeting.

Mr. Fogg questioned the steps of the new hires. Mr. Gregoire said this is based on their qualifications. Mrs. Kebler said Dr. Tyrie decided that teachers should be brought to the Board and Paras should be hired by the superintendent.

Public Comment

Mrs. Colbath asked if policy JFAB was for all students or if there were some that were exempt? Mr. Gregoire said all students except those who are homeless. Mrs. Colbath asked how many years they could be homeless? Mr. Gregoire replied forever. Mrs. Colbath said sending this student to high school will cost the district \$60,000 for a someone who does not live in Wakefield but is called homeless. Mr. Gregoire said correct, McKinney-Vento has no stipulations on when that happens. He said you could have a student for twelve years. Mrs. Colbath said even if they are not actually homeless, it doesn't matter.

Mrs. Fox asked if the School Resource officer was still employed at the Paul School. Mr. Gregoire said yes. Mrs. Fox was told that his job description is not available. Mr. Gregoire said it's available and to send him an email tomorrow. She is also wondering why, if he was involved in some non-public comment and some internal investigations why he's still employed by the Paul School. Mr. Gregoire said he's employed by the Police Department. She asked how someone would reach out to in order to investigate the internal discussions and comments he's been involved with private messaging students in the past. She was asking for the minutes and Mr. Gregoire said if she sent in a 91-A request he would send them to her.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Fogg asked for reconsideration of the manifest because he wants to make sure everyone gets their paychecks even though he doesn't agree with all the bills. Mrs. Collins asked to have the manifest ready Thursday at noon. Mrs. D'Agostino said they are ready on Friday at noon. There was an issue with the school paying late fees. Friday morning is the earliest they can have them.

Mr. Avellani asked what the beginning and end date on a check run. Mrs. D'Agostino said there were three weeks this time. She can have some ready earlier for Board members to look at. Mr. Gregoire will send Mr. Fogg the information he has on bus inspections.

Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to accept the AP and the payroll manifest. Roll call (Vote 4-1).

Mr. Ouellette made a motion seconded by Mr. Fogg, to go into non-public under 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 the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to 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.

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 adverse to those of the general community. And

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. A contract negotiated by a school board shall be made public prior to its consideration for approval by a school district, together with minutes of all meetings held in nonpublic session, any proposals or records related to the contract, and any proposal or records involving a school district that did not become a party to the contract, shall be made public. Approval of a contract by a school district shall occur only at a meeting open to the public at which, or after which, the public has had an opportunity to participate. at 8:55. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Johnson aye (Vote 5-0)

During non-public the Board discussed the offer of a piece of property. The Board voted to not accept the land (Vote 5-0) The Board discussed a student issue. They voted to allow the student to continue school. (Vote 4-1). The Board discussed a transportation issue. Mr. Fogg brought up an issue and it was decided by the Board that no more information would be shared with the Board. The Board discussed the School Board Secretary position.

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to exit non-public at 10:20. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Johnson aye (Vote 5-0)

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to adjourn the meeting at 10:25. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Johnson aye (Vote 5-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
Secretary Pro Temp

