

Wakefield School Board

Public Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2019

APPROVED

School Board members present: Chair Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair Tracey Kolb, Sandy Johnson, Jen McCawley, Relf Fogg

Administration, staff: Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino, Student Services Director Anne Kebler, Principal James Lampron, Asst. Principal Jenn Kuehl, Administrative Assistant Larissa Mulkern

Other: Donna Martin of Clearview TV, Priscilla Colbath

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Ouellette opened the meeting at 5 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance
2. **Non-Public Comment:** None
3. **Consent Agenda:** Public minutes March 19; nonpublic minutes March 19, AP and Payroll manifests; SAU Job Descriptions [moved to New Business]. **MOTION:** A motion to approve the public minutes with amendments was made by Mr. Fogg, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Vote 5-0. Motion to seal the nonpublic minutes of March 19 for two years by Mrs. Kolb, seconded by Mr. Fogg. Roll call vote: (4-1). Mr. Ouellette, aye, Mrs. Kolb, aye Mrs. McCawley, aye, Mrs. Johnson, aye, Mr. Fogg, nay.
4. **Reports:**
 - a. **Superintendent's Report:** Mr. Gregoire is researching funding sources and potential facilitators to assist with Strategic Plan for the SAU. He anticipates additional information for the SAU's E-rate reimbursement by the end of this school year. The SAU is a member of the Strafford Learning Center (SLC); he will ask a representative to come to a School Board meeting early next fall to review what services are provided to the SAU. Mrs. Kebler notes there is a committee that represents board members of member school districts and in the next few weeks they will be asked if a board member would like to attend a meeting. Members are invited to SLC events. Café Services is here today for a presentation. Every five years the SAU must go out to bid for food services and what they'd like to do now is to renew the Café Services contract.
 - b. **Student Services Director Report:** Mrs. Kebler reviewed highlights of her report including the Teacher Workshop Day and final session with Dr. Malcom Smith around the topic of bullying and harassment. A Climate and Culture survey will be distributed, and Mr. Fogg asked for copies the School Board can fill out. She will provide a financial status of all our federal grants at the first meeting in May. The District's number of students with disabilities has decreased by two to 123, in grades Pre-K to 12). Discussion ensued regarding bullying, atonement, communication, and providing food to students in need. Mrs. Kebler reported that

NH DOE is offering a competitive grant of \$250,000 to develop areas in math; the application is due April 12. The caveat is that funds

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Student Resource Officer Job Description:** Mr. Gregoire reported the new SRO Dave Landry started on April 1 and has been introduced to staff and students.
- b. **Wakefield students @ KRHS:** A list of Wakefield students currently attending Kingwood Regional High School, and requested to continue to the 2019-2020 academic year, was presented to the board for approval. Mr. Fogg made a motion to approved, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Vote 5-0 all in favor.

6. PRESENTATION

- a. **Café Services, with guests Christopher Faro, Director of Business Development, and Lynette Beaudry, District Manager:** Mr. Faro reviewed some highlights of recent improvements, including the hiring of new site manager Rachelle Prieto. The salad bar has been taken away to improve efficiency and instead salads are prepackaged with several options; this leads to less waste and less risk of contamination. A separate menu has been created for staff. In response to an earlier query from Mr. Fogg regarding donating leftovers to the food pantry, Mr. Faro said there are not much leftover in any given lunch. There are companies that transport food to food pantries, but that service would be costly for a smaller food program. Members discussed several programs that provide food to school children and their families, including End 68 Hours of Hunger and those at other larger school districts, and the potential of establishing a share table where kids can leave unused food. Locally, the Wakefield Food Pantry has a food store gift card program that provides \$25 to kids on the free or reduced fee lunch program. It was suggested to contact Tri-County Community Action Programs to see if they have resources to do a summer program in Wakefield. Overall, participation in the school lunch program is up 6 percent.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Schedule of Subcommittee meetings:** Mr. Gregoire is working on a schedule for subcommittee meetings; with most meeting monthly. A schedule will be forthcoming. Mr. Fogg asked whether there should be a Health Insurance Committee, and members don't have to be school board members, but perhaps three citizens appointed by the school board. He wants to be part of such a committee. Mr. Gregoire and Mrs. D'Agostino will put together a plan for review of health insurance and investigate past practices as well. Discussion ensued regarding the terms of the current teacher's contract. Mr. Fogg wants to find out if the teachers will work under the terms of the current contract by default, to keep it the same. He had maintained the contract was not properly ratified and brought forth to the board. He said the vote was in nonpublic, which was illegal. Mr. Gregoire added the school district's attorney advised that the contract is ratified legally once the voters approve it. The current contract, minus steps and longevity increases, is what's in place. Individual teacher nominations are brought forth to the board. Mr. Fogg asked if teacher reviews were done historically for teachers every year. Mr. Gregoire replied that they were. Mr. Fogg's motion to ratify the contract failed to garner a

second. Mrs. D'Agostino said, moving forward, to open negotiations, the NEA as well as the School Board must prepare a letter of intent to open negotiations before September 1.

- b. WSB Scholarship, deadline adjustment to April 29:** By consensus, the board moved up the application deadline for the Wakefield School Board scholarship to April 29, for review at the May 7th School Board meeting. Mrs. Kolb asked about sending scholarship money directly to the students be researched.
- c. Superintendent Selection:** Mr. Ouellette sent an email to school board members, asking how they would like to proceed; a query regarding the status of the superintendent's search came up at the last school board meeting. He asked board members via email if they would proceed with a superintendent's search or offer the job to Interim Superintendent Gregoire. Mrs. Kolb said she did a lot of research on this topic with the NH School Board Association; The feedback was that April was late to launch a search as most qualified candidates have been hired. The current Interim Superintendent has a relationship with staff, students and the community, and that things have settled down and are working well compared with last two years. Mr. Fogg said he found Mr. Ouellette's email to be somewhat illegal, as the board is not supposed to seek direction via email. He brought the email to the chief of police who agreed it should not have been done that way. Mr. Fogg asked if the board was following the withdrawal plan that appropriated \$80,000 a year for a part time superintendent. Members Ouellette, Kolb, McCawley and Johnson expressed support for a full-time superintendent position and noted shortcomings of the past two years with the transition.

Mrs. Kolb then read Mr. Fogg's letter to the School Board in which he requested records including "all email communications between all members of Wakefield School Board since the March election of 2018, including each email sent to and/or received from Staff and Administrators, as well as from vendors and other service providers, up until this date and each subsequent email within the same parties after this date. Any and all corrective actions proposed or taken to address violations of law that have been discovered through research of all email correspondence as requests." He expects a response within five business days.

Discussion ensued.

Point of order. Mr. Ouellette asked what the board wants to do here, regarding the superintendent search. Mrs. Kolb said Mr. Gregoire deserves a chance and that the district has been running more efficiently. Mrs. McCawley said Mr. Gregoire is doing fantastic job and has proven himself. Mrs. Johnson said he has stepped up to the place and is very professional. She is willing to offer the job to Mr. Gregoire. Mr. Fogg said if Mr. Gregoire is willing to work at \$80,000 a year he would support his hiring.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion to nominate Jerry Gregoire for a one-year contract for the Superintendent position, seconded by Mrs. McCawley. Mrs. Johnson added the motion should be for a full-time position. Vote was 4-1. Mr. Fogg was opposed to the motion because the job description had not been discussed.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion to reconsider the motion for purpose of discussing the job descriptions, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Vote 5-0.

Job Descriptions: Mrs. D’Agostino started the ball rolling with the change of leadership at the SAU; some positions had job descriptions, and some did not. The existing job descriptions were reformatted and modified to fit the new template. The job descriptions presented here are in draft form and can be revised. The goal is to have a set of consistent job descriptions for all positions by the end of the school year. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to table a vote on job descriptions pending the review of additional information. Mrs. Johnson asked whether the details of physical demands was necessary to included. Mrs. D’Agostino included the information to be consistent. Mrs. Kebler said they may be required due to ADA regulations. Vote to table 4-1 with Mrs. McCawley dissenting.

Motion: Mrs. Johnson made a motion to nominate Jerry Gregoire for one year (2019-2020) for a full-time superintendent position, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Mr. Fogg said for the record the board is following through on the email that was sent out. Mrs. Kolb added she got her research from the NH School Board Association. Vote was 4-1, with Fogg dissenting.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **Disposal of bus, car & van:** Mr. Gregoire said that the Town of Wakefield was offered, but not interested, in utilizing these three vehicles that the SAU seeks to sell. We can put the items on our website and request sealed bids. Mrs. Johnson asked about the potential of vehicle trade in; she was concerned with the cost of advertising. The trade-in values were discussed as noted in the memo.
- b. **Budget freeze:** Mr. Gregoire said the SAU has been restricting purchases and that a budget freeze prevents any nonessential purchases. The Superintendent has the discretion to approve purchases for necessary repairs and would not prohibit purchase or payment of contractual obligations, utilities or matters that would prevent daily operation of the school. **Motion:** Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to impose a budget freeze. Vote 5-0 in favor.
- c. **Café Services Contract:** Mrs. D’Agostino explained that the district will be required by law to increase lunch prices by at least 10 cents. **Motion:** to approve the Café Services contract, moved by Mrs. Johnson seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Vote 5-0 in favor.

9. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Mrs. Colbath explained there was no Wakefield policy concerning the car that belonged to SAU 64 that we received during the split. She asked if the Superintendent search had to go out to application. She added the transition team already worked on job descriptions. In response to her query about paying for the SRO, Mr. Gregoire said the Town would include it under their budget. He referred to the updated Memorandum of Understanding that was not included in the board packet.

NOMINATIONS/Teacher renewals – The list of nominations/renewals was included in the board packet. Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the contracts, pending discussion, seconded by Mrs. Kolb.

Mrs. McCawley objected over the grounds that she had insisted on reviewing the teachers' evaluations prior to authorizing any renewals. Considerable discussion ensued, including those that noted contractual obligations to notify union members by December 1 in the event their contract was not to be renewed. Mrs. D'Agostino noted that renewed teachers are obligated by RSA to receive their intent to hire notices by April 15. Mr. Fogg proposed a follow up board meeting date of April 11. Mr. Gregoire added all the evaluations are not done for this year. Mrs. Kebler questioned whether the evaluation process had been reviewed by the board – there is a document that describes the process, which included 10 walk throughs and teacher observations. Mrs. Gregoire said he'd have to investigate how much information the board could see and come up with a plan to allow board members some access. Mrs. McCawley would like more information such as attendance as well as teaching skills. Mrs. Johnson added that she felt the administration came up with the list and that it was not the board's position to undermine their work. Mrs. McCawley said she felt there were some teachers that may not deserve renewals. She was not willing to vote to approve the nomination list as a blank slate, she said. Mr. Gregoire asked that the board approve the nominations tonight and provide a clear direction on when they want the evaluations done in advance of the next hiring. A deadline of the second meeting in February would not be unreasonable. He understood Mrs. McCawley's concerns and is not unwilling to make changes. He asked to come up with a plan for next year. Discussion continued regarding the evaluation process and timing of the notifications to renew and not renew contracts, and the disruption it may cause if contracts were not renewed at this time. Mrs. Kebler said she had not heard the board require evaluations to be done prior to nominations, because that would mean they would have had to be done last month for her six employees. Mrs. McCawley reiterated she had been talking about this all year. She would not vote to approve this as a blank slate.

Motion & Roll call vote to continue the meeting past 8 p.m. Mrs. Johnson made a motion to continue the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Kolb, vote 5-0 roll call, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Johnson, aye, McCawley, aye, Fogg, aye.

Principal Lampron continued the discussion with a description of the evaluation and observation plan for teachers, per contract. They need 40 minutes of observation by 90th day of the school year and 80 minutes of observation total with a post observation debrief. That's what is in the contract. Mrs. McCawley said if this is the case this should not be coming to the board before pink slips go out.

Motion to approve the contracts for noncontinuing (15) and continuing (29) contracts, on the table as moved by Mr. Fogg. All in favor, Kolb, aye, Ouellette, aye, Johnson, aye, all opposed, McCawley, nay, Fogg, nay. Vote 3-2.

Mr. Gregoire also presented a resignation from Emily Smith. Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the resignation of Emily Smith, with regret, seconded by Mrs. Kolb, vote 5-0-1 with McCawley abstaining.

10. **Correspondence:** The board received a request from Town Clerk Valerie Ward to use the Paul School during the Presidential Election in 2020. In the past, school was not in session that day.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the Town Clerk's request to hold the 2020 Presidential

Election in the Paul School on November 3, 2020; motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted all in favor 5-0, the motion passed.

11. **NON PUBLIC SESSION:** Motion to enter into nonpublic session made by Mr. Fogg at approximately 8:12 p.m. seconded by Mrs. Kolb under RSA 91-A:3 II C 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. Roll call vote to enter nonpublic session: Mrs. McCawley abstaining (out of room for a few minutes), Mr. Fogg, aye, Mr. Ouellette, aye. Mrs. Johnson, aye, and Mrs. Kolb, aye.

12. **Motion:** Mrs. McCawley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to come out of nonpublic session at 9:06 p.m. Roll call vote (5-0); Mr. Ouellette, aye, Mrs. Kolb, aye, Mrs. Johnson, aye, Mrs. McCawley, aye, Mr. Fogg, aye.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to offer a one-year contract to Mr. Gregoire for a full-time superintendent position at a salary of \$110,000 plus benefits at 82 percent. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Gregoire noted the contract would start July 1. The funds would come from the deferment of a planned software update in the coming year's budget. Roll call vote (5-0); Mr. Ouellette, aye, Mrs. Kolb, aye, Mrs. Johnson, aye, Mrs. McCawley, aye, Mr. Fogg, aye.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to increase the Assistant Principal's salary to \$70,000 with administrator benefits [shift in position from Interim Assistant Principal to Assistant Principal] at 82 percent. Roll call vote (5-0); Mr. Ouellette, aye, Mrs. Kolb, aye, Mrs. Johnson, aye, Mrs. McCawley, aye, Mr. Fogg, aye.

Motion: Mrs. McCawley made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Kolb, to increase Principal Jim Lampron's [shift in position from Interim Principal to Principal] salary from \$70,000 to \$85,000. Roll call vote (5-0.) Mr. Ouellette, aye, Mrs. Kolb, aye, Mrs. Johnson, aye, Mrs. McCawley, aye, Mr. Fogg, aye.

Other: Mrs. D'Agostino reported the Harlem Wizards event tickets are sold out.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn at 9:12 p.m. was made by Mrs. Kolb seconded by Mr. Fogg; vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted:
Larissa Mulkern
Administrative Assistant