

Wakefield School Board
Public Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2019
Approved

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

Administration, staff: Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Student Services Director Anne Kebler, Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino, Paul School Principal James Lampron, Paul School Vice Principal Jenn Kuehl, Facilities Director Joe Williams, Administrative Assistant Larissa Mulkern

Others: History Teacher Chris Soule with Paul School students [National History Day competition winners], Carlene Stewart, Donna Martin, Clearview TV, Priscilla Colbath, Beth Seldin, Steve Brown and others.

Call to Order: Chair Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance flag salute.

Non-public session: Motion: Mrs. McCawley made a motion at 6:04 p.m. to enter nonpublic session under NH RSA 91-A:3 II, (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee, and (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. Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion. Roll call vote 5-0, Ouellette, aye, McCawley, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, Johnson, aye.

Motion to exit nonpublic session at 6:36 p.m. by Mr. Fogg seconded by Mrs. Kolb, Roll call vote 5-0, Ouellette, aye, McCawley, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, Johnson, aye.

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda: A motion to approve the consent agenda made by Mrs. Kolb was withdrawn; Mr. Fogg suggested separating the meeting minutes from the consent agenda. Mrs. Kolb made a motion to separate the meeting minutes from the consent agenda, seconded by Mrs. Johnson; Corrections were submitted. Mr. Fogg made a motion to approve the public and nonpublic minutes of April 16 as amended, seconded by Mrs. Kolb. Members voted, 4-0-1: Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, McCawley, aye, with Mrs. Johnson abstaining.

Members briefly discussed that a motion taken in the nonpublic session had failed. No action resulted.

Members reported briefly on the AREA Joint School Board meeting on April 29 at Spaulding High School. While the AREA Agreement with Wakefield is firm regarding instructions on how many Wakefield students can apply the Spaulding tuition rate to another school. Mrs. McCawley encouraged parents with children going into Spaulding to visit and learn about all the opportunities the school provides. Mr. Gregoire noted that Chair Paul Lynch [Rochester School Board] indicated an interest in talking about the 10 percent allocation, but that it was a long process to amend the agreement.

Motion: A motion to approve the minutes of the April 29 AREA Joint School Board meeting was made by Mrs. Kolb and seconded by Mrs. Johnson. Members voted 4-0-1, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, McCawley, aye, Johnson, aye, Fogg, abstained.

Mr. Fogg added that if a member wants to add a comment for the record or would like minutes amended to reflect a comment for the record, the amendment must be granted.

Reports:

Superintendent's Report: Mr. Gregoire reviewed his report, including notes on the committee meeting schedule [to be posted], an update on a discussion with Café Services regarding portioning, and a legislative update alerting the board to pending Senate bills on suicide prevention, and another banning a box on a job application asking for criminal history. Mr. Gregoire also attended a NHSAA Student Behavioral Health conference. In response to a board member query, Mr. Gregoire, with assistance from Mrs. Kebler and Mr. Lampron, provided an update to the intervention plan for a problematic fifth grade class.

Student Services Director's Report:

Mrs. Kebler provided a written and verbal update of Federal Grant status, School District Special Education numbers for all classes, the high schools, and out of district placements. She provided a spreadsheet with information on the begin and end dates of grants (allocations totaling \$550,426.44). She responded to queries regarding how and for what purpose the grants would be allocated. Mrs. Kebler noted that there have been a lot of changes in the federal grants and the School Board now must approve general assurances, which will come to the board in June.

Old Business:

Mr. Gregoire updated the board on the bids for four (used) school district vehicles which were opened May 6 at 4 p.m. Members reviewed the bids. Discussion ensued regarding a potential alternative use of the Chevrolet Impala that had gone out for bid. Mr. Lampron and Ms. Kuehl discussed ways the Paul School could use the car.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion to award the bid for the 2009 77-passenger Thomas school bus to Janice Townsend for \$2,679; to award the bid for the 2009 30-passenger wheel chair Thomas school bus to Seacoast Learning Collaborative for \$3,000; to award the 2010 Dodge Caravan to Janice Townsend for \$831, and to hold on to the Chevy Impala for now. Mrs. Kolb seconded the motion. Members voted 5-0 all in favor, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, McCawley, aye, and Johnson, aye.

Ubiquiti equipment bids: Mr. Gregoire noted that in this case the district did not request sealed bids and received one bid via email and the second sealed.

Motion: Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to award the Ubiquiti equipment bid to Stephen Polizzi. Members voted all in favor 5-0, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, McCawley, aye, and Johnson, aye.

School Board Committee meetings: Members reviewed a tentative schedule. An updated schedule will be posted on the SAU website. One session to note, the Right to Know workshop has been rescheduled to Tuesday, June 4 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Paul School Library.

Update to policy: Mr. Ouellette noted that at last meeting the start time of the regular board meetings had been changed to 6 p.m. The School District Policy manual needs to reflect that change. It will be updated for its first reading at the next school board meeting.

New Business:

National History Day: Contestants and teachers Washington D.C. trip. History teacher Chris Soule discussed a variety of fundraising efforts, including a booth at Pride Day, raffle, a dinner and tagging. There was a short window between date of the state competition (April 13) and the trip registration due date (May 14). The school is sending five students representing three projects that won first and second places. Mr. Fogg suggested using the money from the vehicle auction to pay for the trip, but it was clarified that those funds need to go into the transportation fund. By consensus, board members agreed they would find the funds. Mr. Fogg said he would donate his entire school board member stipend to the NHD trip; Mr. Ouellette and Mrs. Kolb said they would donate as well. Mrs. D'Agostino noted that checks should be written to the Paul School with the specific purpose (National History Day) noted. The funds go into the Student Activities account. The Lion's Club has made a separate donation.

Last Day of School: Mr. Gregoire noted we had an abundance of snow days plus a water system closure day. We can either count school days or hours. As we are a K-8 school, we have two groupings: 990 hours for the middle school and 945 hours for the elementary school. Our hours for elementary are 982 ½ hours. Currently, the last day of school could be June 21 under the hourly calculation; the other method, meeting the 180-day formula, would make the last day of school on June 27, and by that time it could be very hot in the Paul School. The date of Friday, June 21, would give the staff time to plan end of year award day and 8th grade graduation.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to set June 21st as the last day of school, a half day of class. Members voted all in favor 5-0. Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, Fogg, aye, McCawley, aye, and Johnson, aye.

Facilities: Mr. Williams said the contract with Constellation is coming up for renewal in November; the district's electric bill is \$50,000 a year. The supplier's rate is 8 cents per kilowatt, a savings of two cents per kilowatt. It's the best deal and the rate is guaranteed for three years. Mr. Fogg discussed investing in solar power, setting up panels perhaps on school owned property. Mrs. D'Agostino noted that this is a great conversation to have during the budget season; she noted at one time it was learned the initial investment for solar would be \$280,000. Mr. Fogg asked Mr. Williams for more information on electric usage, costs and solar power.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to give Mr. Williams approval to sign a three-year contract with Constellation, locking in the rate for three years. Members voted 5-0 in favor, Ouellette, aye, Kolb, aye, McCawley, aye, Johnson, aye, Fogg, aye.

Learning/Activity Centers

Mr. Williams discussed the rough estimated costs [\$26,000] and draft layout of the Learning/Activity Centers. The project includes installing electrical outlets, sprinkler heads, light fixtures, emergency lights, installation of fireproof doors and electricity for each room. The bidding process was discussed; he is concerned with the cost of posting the RFPs in the newspaper during a budget freeze and the tight timeline to get this constructed this summer. Mr. Fogg said by policy this would have to go out to bid due to the dollar amount. Mr. Fogg said we have a website, an electronic place, which is used on a

regular basis that would be acceptable by law and another place would be town hall bulletin board or at the school or post office. Contractors may also look at Craigslist and social media for jobs.

Motion: Mr. Fogg made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kolb to continue the meeting past 8 p.m. members voted all in favor 5-0.

By consensus, the board agreed to forego the cost of newspaper bids and post the upcoming Request for Quotes on the website and on the town and school bulletin boards. It was noted that the project is funded in the budget, with funds available after July 1.

Mrs. Johnson wanted it noted on the record that if we knew we had the money, the plans should have been in place by April. Mr. Williams explained there were unanticipated projects that came up, such as repairing and replacing the sprinkler system.

Mrs. Kolb asked for updates on the project. Mr. Williams said he'd like a Feasibility Study added to the budget for next year, to have an outside entity come in and evaluate what is needed.

Mrs. McCawley said parents have complained to her about messy and unorganized classrooms and that people should be held accountable.

Other business:

White boards: Mr. Gregoire said another school district did not want \$4,000 worth of new white boards, so Mr. Williams arranged to rent a truck for \$175 to pick them up. They are brand new and will replace older boards in the building.

Public hearing coming up: Mr. Gregoire said a public hearing will be set for next board meeting to withdraw funds from the special education trust.

Water District Grant: Mr. Gregoire said that Peter Kasprzyk of the Water District called him to ask for a letter of support from the school district for an application to a community (block) grant that would allow them to move forward on repairing the water system. Mrs. McCawley said she votes no. Mrs. Kolb said she didn't know how they could support a water district when we are already over on our budget. Mr. Gregoire said it was just a letter of support that was requested. Mr. Fogg said keep in mind the school is on the water system. Mrs. McCawley said Mr. Kasprzyk opposed the school budget because it was up over three percent. Mr. Williams discussed the well; last time it was tried they did not get water; it had been fracked and the veins, which had been filled in, were not recovering, Mrs. Kolb said she thinks they need to look at alternatives; there are holes in the water system.

Mr. Gregoire responded to questions from a community member submitted at the last school board meeting, reading from a document. [See attachment.]

Superintendents' Salaries

Mrs. Kolb passed out a chart that Mrs. Colbath had sent to her with superintendents' salaries from nine communities in 2019-2019. Mrs. Kolb had compared the numbers, noting that one of the positions was a part time position, 32 hours, three to four days a week during school; they also have a BA at \$73,000; and other positions that are full time. Gratham is the same, part time; Lyme, at \$145,860, actually a full-time position combined with Principal and Academic Director making \$90,000. Some of these are misleading. In Mason, with 89 students, at \$71,186, it's actually \$79,181; Plainfield, 214 students, at

\$64,045 part time, but it's actually full time with Cornish for \$139,000; Alton, according to the DOE its \$88,000 with 518 but there are other full-time people on the property. Fremont, you show full time for 423 students at \$80,000, I called, and they are actually part time at \$80,000. Winchester, full time at \$74,000, is a full-time position with Surrey and Sullivan at \$30,000 and \$30,600 for a total of \$135,200. She looked at all the numbers at the DOE. Wakefield has lowest beginning salary for State of New Hampshire. Mrs. Kolb had a list of salaries from the DOE, highest to lowest. Wakefield is 147th out of 159. She used the DOE charts.

Mr. Gregoire noted workshops would be held at 5 p.m. The Goals Workshop is set for May 14th at 5 p.m.

Mrs. Johnson distributed an RSA pertaining to meeting minutes; the minutes should include names, a brief discussion of each topic, final decisions including decisions to meet in nonpublic and so forth. Minutes do not require stenographic descriptions. She's like to see shorter minutes. Mr. Fogg said the law will allow comments from board members to be clearly stated in the minutes whether public or nonpublic. Mr. Fogg said during public comment it would be wise to listen to entire comment, not to respond, but if a back and forth should ensue he'd ask the chair for point of order. Members agreed.

Public comment: Mrs. Colbath said she was comparing apples to apples with the number she provided. She returned her school board policy book noting there were policies required by law that are not included. She said she reviewed the tape and the board never voted on [school board] committee members. She was never rude. Since when does the Board Treasurer have to send a note regarding the deputy treasurer; she has held this nonpaying position for a number of years. Steve Brown said spending is out of control. Will additional spending get students in the 50th percentile?

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was moved by Mrs. Johnson and seconded by Mrs. McCawley at 8:38 p.m. Members voted all in favor 5-0.