

WAKEFIELD SCHOOL BOARD
7-20-21 Public Minutes
Held in the SAU Conference Room
Approved

In attendance:

Board: Bob Ouellette, Relf Fogg, Mary Collins, Caitlin Gelinias and Sheena Robbins

Administration: Superintendent Pamela Stiles, Financial Manager Michael O'Neill, Special Ed Director/Coordinator Anne Kebler and Principal Kristen White.

Mary Soares with Clearview TV.

Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6:00. Those present joined in the flag salute.

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

Mrs. Robbins made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the consent Agenda. (Vote 4-1)

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the public minutes of 7-6-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the non public minutes of 7-6-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)

New Business

Student Services Report

The Procedural Safeguards Manual is complete and it has been sent to the State. Mrs. Kebler told the Board Summer School is a Universal summer program with 50 students enrolled. 24 special education students, 12 Title One and 14 non-identified students. There are now 10 students in the Partner Program. Attendance for week one was 92%, week two, 96%. Likely only one of our Out of District Placements will qualify for special education aid. Our Out of District numbers are 3 unanticipated placements (2 court ordered) and 4 anticipated (budgeted for)

Business Administrators Report

Mr. O'Neill reported that the amount remaining from 2020/2021 is \$548,616.96. Most of this is personnel related. There was a \$350,600.60 savings. This came from mostly from bus drivers and special ed positions that weren't filled. Mr. Fogg said this year we have a bare bones budget. Mrs. Stiles said she and Mr. O'Neill have gone through this budget and looked at comparisons and actual expenditures over the last few years. She is also tracking salaries, what we have coming in and the exiting staff. There's about a \$7,000 savings right now in staff expense. She said we won't have the savings like last year but revenues may be up this year. She believes we will be fine this year. In the packet there is a sheet with a clear concise listing of where money

was saved and any area where there were overruns, plus revenues. The total amount that will be returned to the town is \$615,794.00.

Transportation Lead Drivers Report

Mrs. Stiles told the Board she met with all the drivers on July 12th. They finalized the job description and contract for the lead driver position and they reviewed responsibilities and expectations. Routes will be released to the community no later than August 15th. Procedures for quarterly bus inspections are in place. They are continuing to look for new drivers and Mr. O'Neill is talking to someone about substitute drivers. She said we currently have six drivers and two more are needed. They are working to get all cameras working before school starts.

Manageable mechanical onsite work will be done by John Gavell who has been doing some of this work and not being compensated for it. She would like to continue this, and compensate him but not as a lead driver. This will be a cost savings to the district. They are beginning discussions about a bus replacement schedule. They know that one bus needs to be replaced. Mrs. Stiles, Mrs. White and Mr. Strout found that the messenger that goes out to parents contained duplicates and did not include everyone so they worked very hard to straighten this all out. The goal is to reach every household to get their transportation information into the school.

They will be having driver meetings once a month with the next meeting being on August 10th at 9:30 at the SAU. Mr. Strout will be the direct supervisor of the drivers. Mrs. Gelinas asked if we have enough drivers currently to transport students. Mrs. Stiles said the routes will be longer but we do have enough. Mrs. Collins asked how many buses were being used for Summer School. Mrs. Kebler replied, three of ours and they contract with SLC for special ed students. Mr. Ouellette asked if new drivers would get the sign-on bonus. The Board agreed that that amount is \$500 for new hires.

Facilities Managers Report

The lighting upgrade is to be completed July 30th. Wiring Testing Pricing prices were received today. The Outdoor Classroom start date is August 2, 2021. Mr. Williams will start getting the area prepped July 30, 2021. They are waiting on product for the Aluminum Door Project. The estimated arrival date is August 30. Install will take place in mid-September when everyone settles in. This will possibly be a weekend install?

Old Business

NECC Update

Mrs. Stiles reported that there has been no correspondence or communication at all between the district and NECC.

New Business

Technology Vision

Mrs. Stiles said we are fortunate to have Cara McNevech, a technology wizard in school. Technology is a main focus of grant money. Mrs. Stiles put together a visual. She said this district has 2.1 million dollars in COVID money which gives us an opportunity to build an

infrastructure that will be good for years to come. The Technology Committee met with Spectrum last week and they can get us what we need and the monthly fee will be paid for by the grant for the first three years. Then it will be \$800 a month and E-Rate will offset that amount. Currently we pay about \$200+ a month. She said this has to be done now. This includes fiber cable, wiring and WIFI connections. This can probably be done by August 31st. The wiring is a mess and needs to be done. She suggested we get this all done now. Mr. Fogg asked about Spectrum and the previous companies promises of 100% access.

We will not have to pay for poles or pole rental. Mrs. Robbins asked about the SCC Grant that Tara McNevech is applying for. That money could be used for several different items. Mr. Ouellette asked if we have used any of the 2.1 million dollars yet. Mrs. Stiles replied that we have used the Cares Act money of \$147,000 and it was used for PPE items and cleaning.

One of the grants runs through 2023 and the larger one ends in 2024. After the infrastructure is in and reliable the next purchase will be hardware. Ms. McNevech and Mrs. Stiles met with Mainstay. She said we have 472 devices and Mainstay will have them inventoried and ready when students return. They will be purchasing cameras and projectors.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to have the Superintendent move forward with her plan as presented to the School Board. (Vote 5-0)

Grant Direction Review

Mrs. Stiles outlined the available grants, the focus of each grant and how they will be spent. They made sure all the grants are child centered, that students are number one. She will present the results of the State testing at the next meeting. She said our students need some assistance with their education. Due to the class size another 5th grade classroom teacher will be hired for three years and paid for by the grant. Also, an extra Social Worker, teacher stipends for moving. They have come up with a solid plan utilizing space within the school to accommodate the fifth grade teacher. The grant also includes interventionists.

ESSER 3 requires a 20% set aside for learning loss. They are looking at music lessons and rentals also after school activities. The focus is on students and what they need. None of the grants have been written yet. She said the Board can make changes. Mrs. Gelinis asked about the list that Mr. Williams had presented to the Board. Mrs. Stiles said the window shades are in the IDEA budget and the backboards (upgrade to gym) are in ESSER 11. Mrs. Kebler said the window shades are in the IDEA Grant for a visually impaired student we have followed through the grades installing window coverings. Mr. Fogg requested a copy of the assurances. Mrs. Stiles said she will be bringing them to the Board at the next meeting.

There will be a back to school barbecue on August 30th for parents, students and staff. More details to follow. On August 10th Mrs. Stiles, Mrs. White and Mr. Strout will have a meet and greet with the community. From 5:30 to 6:00 they will meet the public and from 6:00 to 6:30 will give an overview on where they're going. Mr. Fogg asked about a media club and Mrs. Stiles said yes. **Mrs. Gelinis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve the proposed grant expenditures. (Vote 5-0)**

Mrs. Robbins asked if the HVAC is written in stone. Mrs. Stiles said this is a possibility and Mr. Williams said this is something that has been discussed. She is leaving \$600,000 unencumbered for possible additional decisions by the Board.

Re-Entry Plan

Mrs. Stiles handed out the results of the re-entry plan survey from staff and parents, bus drivers, the two unions and the administrators. Mrs. Robbins said one thing that stuck out to her, and it was the same for staff as well as students, is that anyone with COVID would have to quarantine for ten days. She had hoped that looking at data to find out how many people who were quarantined after possible exposure actually developed COVID to see if possible exposure would maybe not require quarantine. She questioned one student testing positive and the whole class being quarantined. Mrs. Stiles said it was CDC guidelines but it was up to the Board. Mrs. Collins said it's only guidelines. Mrs. Robbins is concerned about so much missed school. Mrs. Gelinis said it doesn't always mean the whole class has had close contact.

Mrs. Stiles said right now, distancing has been changed from six feet to three feet and New Hampshire said if you can't do three feet it's still better to have the kids in school than not have them in school. There were children out for fifty days last year. For colds or not feeling well for a day, stay home and then come back in the next day. Mrs. Gelinis asked if the younger and older kids will be separate. The drivers feel assigned seats would be good. This could help with contact tracing. They haven't worked this out yet. If a child has a cold or is running a fever, they will stay home just like they always have.

The school will not be offering remote learning for children that stay home because they are not feeling well or have a cold. Parents still have the option to keep their kids home and utilize remote learning and at half-year mark may decide to have their child return to school. That will be the only option. At the half-year mark parents will not have the option for their in-school child to go to remote learning. They will not be able to go back and forth. She said currently we have no COVID cases in Wakefield. The Board tabled their decision until the next meeting. They will let families know how re-entry will happen. Mrs. Robbins went through the survey. She said the majority feel that mask wearing should be optional not mandated. And she agrees.

Sub Committee Updates

There will be a policy meeting tomorrow. Mr. Fogg would like there to be a schedule for all meetings. There will be a curriculum meeting via Zoom on Thursday, August 12th at 6:00pm. There will be a Transportation meeting August 10th at 9:30. Mrs. Stiles said she has a list of all the committees and asked if the Board can take some time at the next meeting to decide on meeting days and times.

Other Business

Mr. Ouellette asked Mr. Fogg if he had any more information about the Judith Nason Memorial Bridge. Mrs. Stiles said Mr. Williams had spoken to someone. Mr. Fogg said Mr. Dube from the Planning Board wanted to see the schematic of the plan to make sure it is structurally sound. Mr. Fogg said he will reach out to Mr. Wolfe.

Public Comment

Mrs. Soars asked about the tree cutting. Mr. Fogg said he has not seen the owners of the adjoining land. He said the cutting hasn't yet begun on the school property. Mrs. Colbath asked if the grant funded positions will have a clause that says when the grant ends the position ends. Mrs. Stiles said yes, it will be just like Title I with the same language.

Resignations/Nominations

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gelinas, to accept the resignation of Heidi Smith with regret. (Vote 4-1)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gelinas, to approve the new hire recommendations. (Vote 5-0) (Christopher Gallant for PE and Julianna Purvis for Grade 3)

The next meeting is August 3rd. in the SAU Conference Room. Mrs. Soars said there were 13 people watching live via Facebook and are complaining because there was no Zoom link and can't comment. Mr. Fogg asked if the Board wanted to continue Zoom meetings. Mrs. Robbins and Mrs. Collins both feel that they can still watch the meeting live and if they wish to speak, they can attend the meeting. Mr. Ouellette said the difficult part was to establish a host for Zoom and there were glitches throughout the process. Mrs. Robbins said that the last few meetings people were watching but there were no comments. By consensus the Board decided there would be no Zoom meetings at least through the summer.

Adjournment

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gelinas, to adjourn the meeting at 7:49. (Vote 5-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
School Board Secretary