

HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – February 23, 2021

Approved

HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

TUESDAY, February 23, 2021 6:00 pm.
David R. Cawley Middle School Media Center

CALL TO ORDER

Phil Denbow, Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE

Chair P. Denbow, J. Godbout, W. Goertel, G. Martakos, K. Salvas, J. Sullivan
Superintendent William Rearick and Assistant Superintendent Marge Polak

PROOF OF POSTING –

William Rearick, Superintendent of Schools provided proof of posting.

MINUTES

Approval of January 19, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

J. Godbout motioned to approve the minutes of January 19, 2021 as written. Seconded by G. Martakos.

Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

Approval of February 5, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

G. Martakos motioned to approve the minutes of February 5, 2021 as written. Seconded by J. Godbout.

Insert reconsideration amount of article.

Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

NO comments

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATES*- Bill Rearick

On January 13 and February 2nd, I met virtually with Kara and Kathy Bobay to discuss the protocols that would be followed at the school department's Deliberative Session. We reviewed how the communication procedures between the cafeteria, chorus classroom, and gym.

On January 15th, the South Central Superintendents held a virtual meeting. While I was not able to attend, I submitted a question in advance of the meeting regarding the state's plans to provide support to districts for the loss in Adequacy Funding as a result of decrease in student enrollment. These decreases can be attributed to an increase in the number of home-schooled students and students transferring to private schools.

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Caitlin Davis from the NHDOE reported that there is no plan in place to change adequacy regarding home-schooled kids. She did say that it would be best, if possible, to keep students enrolled and to monitor VLACS if that is the path that a parent is going to take. School districts can get 15% of adequacy per class for any high school student who is home schooled and taking some classes. This is contingent on there being excess adequacy at the end of the year. This apparently hasn't happened often in recent years, but it may be the case this year. On January 20th, I attended meeting of the Route 3 Working Group. The focus of the meeting was examining the three intersections which have traffic lights along Rt. 3, from Alice Ave. to Martins Ferry Road. Members of the group reviewed current and future traffic use. This data served as the basis for increasing the number of turn lanes at all three intersections.

On January 22nd and January 29th I met with Don Riley, Todd Rainier, and Andre Garon, Hooksett's town moderator, clerk, and administrator, respectively, to discuss the set up for both Deliberative Sessions. Dan, Dean, and Matt also attend these meetings. These meetings were very collaborative and productive. Both Deliberative Sessions ran smoothly as a result of all the pre-planning that took place. Serving the School Districts of Auburn, Candia, and Hooksett Equal Opportunity Employer - Equal Educational Opportunities

On January 28th I attended attend the Pinkerton Board of Trustees Winter Meeting. We received an update on how COVID-19 is impacting the school. Pinkerton was recently in full Remote Learning as a result of a number of positive cases and reported close contacts. We also received an update on the graduation rate, SAT and Advanced Placement Results, and a breakdown of the number of graduates who go on to college upon graduation. Dr. Nevious reported that he is working with another Trustee on trying to provide districts with a placeholder for insurance increases which will be used for the 2022-23 budget. Fremont is considering sending their high school students to Pinkerton.

I held virtual meetings with my administrators on January 14th, 27th, and February 8th. At these meetings we discussed the following: - staffing updates - testing schedules - PD requests from teachers - status updates on the distribution of microphones and cameras to our teachers - planning updates for the Deliberative Session

K. Salvas asked about the updates received from the Governor regarding the return to school.

W. Rearick stated that the district is in compliance as we have in person learning

REPORTS

Reports of Administrators

M. Polak explained NEW - ESSER II Funds

As part of the Corona virus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021, Congress authorized the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II (ESSER II) to help schools in the response to COVID-19. These funds are available to districts through September 30, 2023. The preliminary allocation for the Hooksett School District is \$685,362. These funds are similar to the original CARES funds and will be administered through the online grant management system. In addition to specific COVID expenses, districts are encouraged to target funding on activities that support remote learning, Title grant activities, wellness/mental health activities, and summer and supplemental learning.

In the most recent funds which were the relief funds which were \$380,000 which was \$200/per student k-12. Our high school students were included in that. Recently we got a

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request from Pinkerton to share those funds with them because they have the high school students. The DOE is encouraging that but not requiring school districts to do that. WE have to make the decision about what we want to do. Based on the 10/1/19 enrollment is 404 students which is \$80,800. If the Board wants to do that or any portion of that we will take the money allocated of the \$380,000 and either have the \$80,000 out of the general fund this or apply it to the new money we will be getting in a few weeks.

W. Rearick: We can get an invoice from Pinkerton and then apply the money.

J. Sullivan: It is meant for the individual students so it makes sense to send it. Should we also consider Londonderry and the other MOU's?

W. Rearick: Pinkerton is our school of record.

J. Sullivan motioned that the HSD send a portion of the Supplement School Response Fund in the amount of \$80,800 to Pinkerton. Seconded by G. Martakos. Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

Reports of Sub-Committees

W. Rearick: We received an email from Christine Soucie stating they are reconvening the CIP Committee and they are looking for at least one or possibly two members.

P. Denbow suggested waiting until the new School Board is in place after March 9th.

W. Goertel: The Pinkerton contract came to two technical updates. One recommendation was regarding student support. At the SAU 15 meeting, they suggested we reconvene. The topic will be discussed in non-public session. NHSBA held their annual meeting.

PRESENTATION – Matt Benson-Washington DC trip planned for April 20-23, 2021.

There are questions regarding health and safety protocols. We have 50 per bus and the dorms are 4 student per room. Protocols work for school but they won't work for a different state. If we have to quarantine, do they have to stay there. What is the procedure.

I can't come up with the answers. I talked to the travel agent. Additional buses and rooms will cost significant money. In school now, we send students home if they are sick with colds or stomach aches. Those symptoms start in the beginning of travel, sometimes on the bus on the way down. There are too many moving parts. We currently have 7 staff members and we don't know if they will all be vaccinated by then. If the travel quarantine is still in effect, we will have to quarantine staff as well. This will cause the entire school community go remotely. Every family member will receive a full refund in the event the trip is canceled. The check will be sent within 5-10 days. If we cancel tonight, parents will get their money in 5-10 days. If we reschedule, it gives false hope. Many museums are scheduled to open in April but that could also get pushed back.

I just don't have the answers for how to handle quarantine. I have other events planned for students this year. We try and put students and staff in successful positions. I am not comfortable with this trip with students being in closed quarters.

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W. Rearick: Matt summarized the challenges. There are many moving parts, the largest is 7 teachers willing to go but we can't be sure everyone will be vaccinated. I recommend the Board cancel the trip.

M. Benson: All other school districts have canceled their trip which is why we are able to move to any date.

J. Godbout: People will be spending money for this trip and everything could be closed.

G. Martakos motioned to cancel the Washington DC trip for April 2021. Seconded by J. Godbout.

Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

Winter Sports -M. Benson

Congratulated all the teams for a wonderful job this season and following protocol including coaches, students and parents. Big thank you to the bus company. Cheerleaders did a virtual competition for their parents. The girls and boys basketball team made it to the Division II finals. We are very proud of them. We hope the Board approves the Spring sports; golf, track, baseball, softball and boys and girls lacrosse. We have had two very successful season. Dean Farmer and the custodial crew did a great job following the protocols.

J. Sullivan stated there was request for Walnut Hill off Goffstown Road for a bus stop. The road has not yet been approved by the town. Our policy precludes us from going onto non-approved roads. We looked at a number of solution but due to the turn around, nothing worked. We had to deny the request.

FINANCE

Manifest Approval

J. Godbout motioned to approve the manifest for January 22, 2021 in the amount of \$804,558.41. Seconded J. Sullivan.

Vote unanimously in favor

J. Godbout motioned to approve the manifest for January 25, 2021 in the amount of \$2,829,554.34. Seconded by J. Sullivan

Vote unanimously in favor

J. Godbout motioned to approve the manifest for February 19, 2021 in the amount of \$1,201,453.89. Seconded by J. Sullivan.

Vote unanimously in favor.

J. Godbout motion to approve the transfer of \$3,000,000 to a new bank. Seconded by J. Sullivan.

Vote unanimously in favor

OLD BUSINESS

Goals -W. Rearick

The following items were updated:

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Mental Health and Social Wellness
Student Wellness
Technology and remote learning

February Vacation-Quarantined Students

In January, a letter was sent to parents that if they went on vacation in February, they need to quarantine per the CDC guidelines and student would get their work. I did not have them placed in the room in zoom since we have the 25% cap. I didn't think it would be fair to the students that didn't travel to have to go remote for 2 weeks. Subsequently, I received a communication from HEA on February 16 which said they would support the Board waiving the 25% rule to accommodate those students that travel during February.

G. Martakos asked if we would do the same in April?

W. Rearick: It is possible we will be in a similar spot in April. Let's deal with February and worry about April later. We need a threshold that is sound. To go above 25%, it is difficult for students in class and remote.

W. Rearick: This would just be for two (2) weeks; then we will go back to our policy. I made two proposals to the HEA that didn't infringe on the room and zoom. They didn't like either and they sent the email.

The Board entered into a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of increasing the 25% cap for room and zoom as well as the impact of the decision for April vacation.

The Board took no action to change the position of the Superintendent and the District regarding Quarantine for travel during February vacation.

NEW BUSINESS

Spring Sports – move up on agenda to report of administrators
8th Grade Trip to Washington DC – moved up on the agenda to report of administrators

Teacher Appreciation

J. Godbout asked the Board to form a sub-committee to organize Teacher Appreciation during the 2nd week in April.

This committee assignment will be added to committees for 2021.

Draft Calendar

W. Rearick: Our original calendar was synced to the Pinkerton calendar. Last week, they changed to the State recommended calendar which is what Massachusetts is doing next year which is to take February 28th to March 4th off. We send our kids to Pinkerton as a school of record. I ask the Board to change our calendar to be closer to their calendar.

*G. Martakos motioned to adopt the calendar for 2021-2022 with a February break change from February 28th to March 4th. Seconded by J. Sullivan.
Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor.*

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Hooksett School District Contingency Fund-discussion

W. Goertel stated that some Community members and Budget members were questioning the contingency fund. We had allocated \$700,000. At the end of the year, we had a lower than average fund balance and we made the decision due to the pandemic to tuck away \$200,000. At the end of year, we put the remainder of the fund balance which was \$660,000 in the contingency fund. Prior to the election, I want to be sensitive to whether that was the right amount for the contingency fund. The Board can make a decision after a public hearing to release those funds. If I was told in June that we had the chance to put \$600,000 away I might have made a different decision. How does the Board feel about releasing those funds to offset the tax rate in June.

G. Martakos: I also thought it was \$200,000. I would not have voted to put \$600,000 away.

W. Rearick: The vote was to put up to 2.5% and we didn't know what that number would be. We had not closed everything out. We also discussed if we didn't need it, we would give it back. Sometime in the spring we can take up that discussion.

J. Sullivan: I think we made an appropriate decision.

MOU with HEA

1. Technology - agreed we would re-institute our committees at the 3 schools
2. Agreed on specific amount of time for live instruction
3. 25% cap for zoom

J. Sullivan motioned to approve the MOU with the HEA. Seconded by G. Martakos. Roll Call vote unanimously in favor.

PERSONNEL

Co-Curricular Nominations

G. Martakos motioned to approve the co-curricular nominations as presented. Seconded by W. Goertel.

Vote unanimously in favor.

POLICIES

Second Reading

JLCJ Concussions and Head Injuries - add title

K. Salvas requested the following changes:

Page 1 paragraph 5 & 6. It says purposed should be purpose.

Page 2 paragraph 4 3rd line. Athlete from play

CFB Building Principals/Special Education Director Evaluation - remove a coma

K. Salvas requested the following changes: Last sentence - area of improvement ON Directors of Maintenance Media on their skills

J. Sullivan motioned to approve the 2nd reading with the above changes. Seconded by G. Martakos.

Vote unanimously in favor.

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First Reading

Social Media and the Board

K. Salvas requested the following changes:

#2 - Replace wanting with requesting #2

#7- Board members are encouraged...wording should be stronger.

Add when communicating district business.

#8 - If there is a situation on social media, can we redirect to the handbook. There is a disconnect.

#9 - SB reps should refrain from commenting on other social media sites to not contradict or make quorum.

EEAB Video and Audio Recording for Instructional Purposes

W. Rearick suggested tabling the 1st reading until the first meeting of the new Board.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Amy Tremblay, 1 Laurel Road: I had a question about the room and zoom as well as the fund balance. To clarify, is room and zoom with both live and streaming at the same time? As an educator that has done that, and as a parent of remote students, given options on handling kids in and out of classroom, that would be last. It is not effective. It is equivalent to standing in a doorway and teaching on both sides. It is not effective for kids streaming in and you are short changing both sets of students. For students going on vacation, I would appreciate a Board making a decision and sticking to it. You could handle it as you would a child missing school for other reasons. It would include sending work home. I would not be in favor of doing both. My second question is the fund balance; is that a supplementary fund that if not used goes back to the taxpayers. My comment, if that is the case, it doesn't matter how much is in there. I would rather more than less if the money goes back to the taxpayer anyway.

K. Salvas: Being my last meeting, I am in Maine for a few days. I want to take the opportunity to say thank you. It has been an awesome opportunity to serve the community. We did an awesome job. In past years, we had to focus on high school. It has been good to get back to the work of K-8. I have learned a ton and even if we haven't agreed on everything, I feel the votes I made in the past 6 years were in the best interest of kids and I am very proud of that.

G. Martakos presented gifts of appreciation to both Phil Denbow and Kara Salvas and thanked them for their service.

P. Denbow stated that he enjoyed his time on the Board serving with two Superintendents. Thanked the Administration and fellow Board members.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 Section II (a-k)

G. Martakos motioned to enter into non-public per RSA91-A:3 Section II (c) Seconded by J. Godbout.

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ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Hooksett School Board is Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm. at the David R. Cawley Middle School Media Center.