

**HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020**

**Approved**

**HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, December 1, 2020 – 6:00 pm.  
Cawley Middle School**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Denbow called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

**PROOF OF POSTING**

William Rearick provided proof of posting.

**ATTENDANCE**

Chair Phil Denbow, Jillian Godbout, Wayne Goertel, Greg Martakos, Lindsay Laliberte, Kara Salvas, and Jim Sullivan

Staff: William Rearick, Superintendent, Marge Polak, Assistant Superintendent, Amy Ransom, Business Administrator, Principals Ben Loi, Matt Benson, and Steve Harris.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**REVISIT 2021/2022 BUDGET**

K. Salvas reported that they Budget Committee met with the School District on November 12<sup>th</sup> and November 19<sup>th</sup> to review the proposal. Bill Rearick and Amy Ransom were at both meetings and presented the information to the Committee. The Committee felt that the School Board should be more in step with the Town Council that asked their departments to cut their budgets 5%. They asked the School Board to revisit their budget and make adjustments rather than them making cuts.

A. Ransom, Business Administrator, stated that she looked at the budget requests. The Budget Committee asked the School Board to meet them half way.

Pinkerton tuition was an increase of 3.4% in Regular Ed and 21% in Special Ed. As a result, the Default Budget was reduced \$53,461. I left in:

- ▲ Raises for non-union employees and benefits
- ▲ Trash removal
- ▲ Shooter detection system
- ▲ Transportation

The new requests are a total of \$282,738; the old requests was \$502,437 which is a cut of \$219,699. A portion of that cut was Technology which we can be covered with additional federal aid.

W. Goertel asked about the Warrant Articles and what the “All In” number is.

## HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020

A. Ransom stated that the only Warrant Articles at this time are the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Operating Budget and the Technology Trust Fund.

W. Goertel asked about the Special Education Trust Fund.

A. Ransom stated that there is \$288,000 currently in that fund and we should try and keep the cost down for the taxpayers. This may not be the time to add to that fund.

J. Godbout supports not adding any additional warrant articles and the priority should be getting the Operating Budget passed.

A. Ransom stated that the largest cuts were in equipment, the server, and part time technology staff. There is a possibility to get staffing by contracting services.

J. Sullivan stated that the School Board can decide to put some or all of the 2.5% toward the tax rate in June.

A. Ransom: The new net increase is 3.15% for the Operating Budget and 2.33% for the Default Budget. \$805,000 represents contractual increases.

***K. Salvas motioned to approve the Operating Budget in the amount of \$35,625,192.***

***Seconded by G. Martakos.***

***Vote unanimously in favor***

A. Ransom asked for the Board's approval for the following Warrant Articles:

HESPA Contract

Operating Budget

Technology Trust Fund

Maintenance Trust Fund to be closed

***K. Salvas motioned to approve the Warrant Articles as presented. Seconded by G. Martakos.***

***Roll Call Vote***

***W. Goertel Yes***

***J. Godbout Yes***

***P. Denbow Yes***

***G. Martakos Yes***

***K. Salvas Yes***

***L. Laliberte Yes***

***J. Sullivan Yes***

***Vote 7:0 motion carried***

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Parent Requests for Remote Learning 11/30/20 – 1/15/21**

W. Rearick stated that he received a request from a Board member to have families remote in during the time in December when we return to school from December 7<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> because they already have plans. The answer was yes. And we can do that. We have three (3) at

## HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020

Underhill; (5) at Memorial; (7) at Cawley. Those are spread out over their grade spans. There is another issue with students that have to be quarantined. At any given time we have students at home. We've had 17 cases since the end of September at all three (3) schools. So far we have been able to cover it but if we hadn't been close this week we would have had to close. This worked out for us. We have, every morning, we read the daily reports from DHHS. In

Merrimack County – 4.8%

Rockingham County – 5.5%

Hillsborough County – 4.8%

Manchester – 9.9%

That is what is impacting us. People work and people are interacting with people that have it. Numbers are trending up. We are barely keeping it up. We had a close contact where the employee had a negative test on November 20<sup>th</sup> and then finds out yesterday that a PCR test was positive. In the mean time, that teacher interacted with colleagues. Now Matt doesn't have enough teachers to bring 6<sup>th</sup> grade back. We wanted to notify the Board and let parents know tomorrow. Going back to zoom. A lot of our teachers at Cawley are very proficient with the Zoom and technology. Our K-5 teachers are not as proficient. It's not a criticism, they just haven't had a lot experience using it. They have done well using the See Saw Apps at K-2 and at Memorial 3-5. As we quarantine more kids, it puts more pressure on teachers. I spoke to a teacher yesterday that had 9 kids in front and 9 online. That is too much. One or two online is a lot different. Our teachers are under a lot of stress. They are called essential workers. At some point we are going to get a negative return. We are doing our best to stay open and I want to thank the teachers for all they are doing. Teachers are stepping up and doing everything we ask but at some point it will be a negative return. We will use the positivity rate to determine closure.

We are getting to a point where I think we should consider closing down.

Currently at Underhill there are five (5) teachers out. There are 21 classes with some remote; Memorial there are six (6) teachers out and 2 will be back December 7<sup>th</sup>; Cawley has five (5) teachers out.

L. Laliberte: I'm concerned is up until now they have been out for quarantine or in contact with someone positive. But if we keep wearing our teachers down and they will be sick from the flu and colds. They are employees and have benefits and if they are sick they are sick and have to stay home. If we go remote, we may not have enough healthy teachers to teach remotely. We may be looking at 17 class days but it could turn into months.

G. Martakos: I think we are at a point where we need to add a meeting this week and make some decisions.

P. Denbow: I'm not a fan of yoyoing back and forth. I've worked for 40 years and have taken five (5) sick days in my life. I feel worn down and I still show up for work.

K. Salvas stated that she is concerned on how the 20 consecutive days are calculated for substitute teachers. Specifically, whether you sub as a teacher or a para or other it is still counted as a day. Would like to know who has met the 20 day threshold and if they have not, why. Also it should be counted based on the school year, not a calendar year.

## HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020

W. Rearick will check into it and report back to the Board.

A. Ransom: There was training on the payroll system and they can now run a report for days worked so there is a better tracking system. In the past it was done manually.

W. Goertel asked about marketing and advertising for substitutes.

M. Polak stated they have actually hired more subs in the past six (6) weeks than they have in a whole year.

The Board entered into a discussion to hold a meeting to make a decision on remote learning and whether a meeting should be scheduled and posted for later this week.

**A School Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm live at Cawley.**

B. Rearick: The Governor's order regarding face masks leaves wiggle room. There are seven (7) exceptions of which one is school. I think if we do decide to stay open we should consider wearing face masks in K-1 as well.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Dave Levesque, 29 Morrill Rd.: I am a teacher and my wife is a teacher in the district. I am here on my own volition. The conversation tonight is different than the last two (2) meetings. I was quarantined the last few weeks, watching the meetings from home. We talk about subs. There are no subs in my district as well. Teaching is a highly skilled profession. There are teachers that have been teaching for 20-30 years. There are a lot of teachers that go to school sick. There are not enough teachers and the entire State needs to realize that. When all these teachers retire, it will be a difficult situation. Talking about teachers being out sick; understand a teacher that stays home sick spends the day preparing for the day they are not going to be in school. It is harder to put a sub-plan together than being in school. I am my wife are both teachers. I heard today that Cawley, Underhill, and Memorial had total of 15 students that changed to doing "room and zoom" because this Board had a meeting, decided one thing, came together a week later and changed their decision and it impacted 15 students. That change in this Board's decision now impact 15 classrooms if those kids are in different classrooms. Now those teachers have to do "room and zoom" because this Board changed it's mine. That was a result of this Board changing it's mind. I applaud this Board for taking a stand and not taking a vote tonight. I recommend you move this meeting to a larger space because there is not enough room in here for a larger crowd. You need to accommodate a larger space for people to social distance. If the technology is an issue, you need to make those accommodations.

While I was home quarantining and couldn't be here... I am concerned with the demeanor some of the Board members that have been taking to the teachers in this district during the last few meetings. Some comments have been made that are not helpful to the cause. An unfairly painted target on the backs of teachers. One was traveling. We sacrifice every single day. There was a bull's eye on every teacher; where are you going, where are you traveling to, how long are you going to be gone. I heard if you need something done give it to a busy

## HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020

person and they will get it done. Hours, 10 hours Saturday and Sunday getting ready for Monday through Friday. It is demeaning and not appropriate. The Union leadership has not been cooperative; teachers should have to disclose where they are going and for how long. It is not appropriate. I needed members of this Board to remember that you are voted by the people to be a community leader. You may disagree with the process, and the collective bargaining agreement but what you say matters and how you persuade teachers in this meeting matters. You are voting representing your constituents but you also represent teachers as well. Nine (9) months ago teacher stopped on a dime and pulled off an education miracle by changing everything they knew about education and teaching trying to be the best teacher they could be and never feeling they were good enough. You say don't put it on Social Media but that is where they see it. There have been many countless hours spent on relearning how to be a teacher during a pandemic. Why can't you get subs? Who wants to do this job for \$70 or \$80. That is a separate issue. This community needs to be reminded of all the work teachers continue to do on a daily basis, what they have done in the past and today to make it last as long as it did. I ask this group look into the tele-presence model for "room and zoom". I am a computer teacher. In my district we are looking at "room and zoom" as well. With my experience, I am going to struggle with 15 in front of me and 15 at home and I'm trained in technology. I urge this group to think long and hard and hear from the teachers, because this model is not a sustainable model. It is a line in the DOE's opening report (page 21). States that doing double duty is not a sustainable model. I leave you with the understanding and hope that you see the teachers in a positive light regardless of the frustration. I know it is not easy and the comments should be careful. We need to keep teachers as valuable members of the community.

### NON PUBLIC SESSION

*G. Martakos motioned to enter into non-public session per RSA 91AII(c) at 7:40 pm.*

*Seconded by W. Goertel.*

<i>Chair Phil Denbow</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jillian Godbout</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Kara Salvas</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Wayne Goertel</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Lindsay Laliberte</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Greg Martakos</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jim Sullivan</i>	<i>Yes</i>

*Vote unanimously in favor*

The Board re entered public session at 7:50 pm

*W. Goertel motioned to seal the non-public minutes in perpetuity. Seconded by G. Martakos.*

<i>Chair Phil Denbow</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jillian Godbout</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Kara Salvas</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Wayne Goertel</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Lindsay Laliberte</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Greg Martakos</i>	<i>Yes</i>

**HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2020**

*Jim Sullivan*                      *Yes*  
*Vote unanimously in favor*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*G. Martakos motioned to adjourn at 7:00 pm. Seconded by K. Salvas.*

***Roll Call***

*Chair Phil Denbow*              *Yes*  
*Jillian Godbout*                *Yes*  
*Kara Salvas*                      *Yes*  
*Wayne Goertel*                 *Yes*  
*Lindsay Laliberte*              *Yes*  
*Greg Martakos*                 *Yes*  
*Jim Sullivan*                    *Yes*

*Vote unanimously in favor*

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan