

HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – November 16, 2021

Approved

**HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, November 16, 2021-6:00 pm.
David R. Cawley Middle School Media Center**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Martakos called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE

Greg Martakos, Chair, Jill Godbout, Wayne Goertel, Lindsey Laliberte, Jim Sullivan, and Amy Tremblay
Excused: Jason Hyde
Superintendent William Rearick, Assistant Superintendent Marge Polak, Business Administrator, Amy Ransom, and Principals and Directors

PROOF OF POSTING

William Rearick, Superintendent of Schools provided proof of posting.

LIAISON-Aiden Gravina provided a brief report on Pinkerton.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of October 19, 2021 Board Budget Workshop Minutes

*W. Goertel motioned to approve the minutes of October 19th, 2021 Budget Workshop.
Seconded by J. Godbout.*

Vote unanimously in favor

Approval of October 19, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

*W. Goertel motioned to approve the minutes of October 19th, 2021 Board Meeting. Seconded
by A. Tremblay.*

Vote unanimously in favor

Approval of October 19, 2021 Board Non-Public (sealed) Meeting Minutes

*W. Goertel motioned to approve the non-public minutes of October 19th, 2021. Seconded by J.
Sullivan.*

Vote unanimously in favor

Approval of October 26, 2021 Board Budget Workshop Minutes

*W. Goertel motioned to approve the minutes of October 26th, 2021 Board Meeting. Seconded
by A. Tremblay.*

Vote unanimously in favor

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Approval of November 4, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

W. Goertel motioned to approve the minutes of November 4th, 2021. Seconded by A. Tremblay. Vote unanimously in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Mike Kowack, 7 Grandview Drive: I understand you are going to be talking about a mask mandate. I would like facts to drive the decision. According to COVID19.NH.Gov there have been zero deaths in anyone ages 0-20. Also, looking at studies done by the EPA on the effectiveness of masks. They are about 38% effective with the nylon woven masks and cloth masks are about 26.5%. That is on adults wearing masks. With zero children dying in NH, what are we looking to accomplish. Are we teaching our kids; that this will save them because its not. And it is not scientific to make them wear masks.

G. Martakos stated that there is nothing on the agenda addressing mask mandates.

Dave Levesque, 29 Morrill Road: Do we have any statistics on if the numbers went down since the mask mandate at Memorial School. I am not here today to talk about masks; I am here to talk about the budget process. I am torn with the process that I observed online, and about the minutes that I have read. I am sure you know that I am a teacher and spent 21 years in the classroom. I have forever championed the education in Hooksett. Always spoke for the budget, tried to increase the budget, make resources available for our children constantly. When my own children came through the system, we fought really hard to try and get a high school built so we didn't have to rely on other areas to educate our children. When that failed I advocated for my own children and those in Hooksett to remove our agreement with Manchester Schools for the lack of resources and the value of our tuition dollars; what we were getting in return. Now I am fully aware that we have to pay for our K-12 student population. I am aware that we have a competitive tuition rate for the quality of education that our students receive. I am also aware that this option is less expensive than building our own high school. However, I now sit before you today and share my frustration with you, that our high school of record is getting the first bite of the apple once again. With the proposed 5% increase that Pinkerton is suggesting, this Board is looking at ways to cut the K-8 budget. Why, because it is the only budget we can control. Pinkerton sets the rate; we pay the bill. This is the second time that I hear this. Where I work, this is also what happens. So the K-8 population is left with a budget that maybe doesn't reach its goals. The K-8 population has to make all the sacrifices and difficult decisions to lower budgets and resources available to our children so the town can approve a budget. I get that; I understand that. But this is where I am really torn. The community has been discussing all day Kindergarten for several years. Although I personally believe this town should have all day kindergarten, this town voted down the construction of this project twice. I think the voters, in fact have spoken and do not support the added cost of all day kindergarten, similar to when many of us were trying to build a high school in this town. However, now you are looking at reallocating and shifting staff in to a model in order to make all day kindergarten happen. You are looking at spreading out limited resources to include more responsibilities without adding additional funding. That is the reality of it. We're talking about default budget at 6%; regular

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budget 7%. If this is the way the Board is going to proceed, I would ask you if you are going to make any cuts, any reductions in staff, whether it be by attrition or people resigning, that you begin reducing staff that do not have a direct hands on experience. I saw discussions on cutting out ALPS and other programming; I have yet to hear or see any discussion on cuts in Administration. It is my understanding that we have 6 building administrators, 6 administrators at the SAU. I haven't heard one discussion on looking at those items. The current population this year and next year is very disproportionate when you look at ED603:17 which is the State's recommended class size. The K-2 population they try for 25 or less with the 20 or fewer per teacher which is the guideline that the State sets. Grades 3-5 it is 30 or fewer and strive for 25 or less. Grades 6-8 it is 30 or fewer. In closing I want to thank you for all you do for our community. These are some difficult decisions. As a community I hope we continue to support education in this town and everyone understands the process. High School budget is set first; everything else comes after. I think that is the process that is going on and what we are seeing this Board has to struggle with.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATES*- Bill Rearick

A call was received from Commissioner Edelblut in response to a letter which was sent regarding transportation issues. The Commissioner stated that on two (2) separate occasions he brought the issue to the Governor and asked if they would utilize the National Guard to help with the buses. The Governor denied the request because he was concerned if they provided National Guard assistance, other agencies would request assistance as well.

On October 22nd I held a meeting with the SAU 15 principals. The following topics were discussed. I ask if

Status update on the implementation of the COVID-19 symptomatic testing program at each of the five schools in the SAU. Once we receive the doctor's order, parents will receive notification of this voluntary program detailing the testing protocols. Permission slips will also be included.

Each of the principals discussed the challenges caused by the lack of substitute teachers and bus drivers.

In an effort to improve communication with our parents regarding how COVID-19 is impacting our schools, the Hooksett COVID-19 Dashboard was activated on our website. Parents can now see the number of positive cases at each school, the number of students who are sent home with COVID like symptoms, and the total number of students who are absent from school on a daily basis.

We have received the contract from Convenient MD for asymptomatic testing. The contract is being reviewed by our attorneys. We are still trying to hire an LPN or RN to administer the COVID-19 test for symptomatic students and staff. The RN we were going to hire took a position at a local hospital.

A survey has been sent to parents to gauge their interest in providing a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for children ages 5-11.

On November 1st I held a meeting with the Memorial teachers to answer any questions they had regarding school related issues. I met with the Underhill and Cawley teachers on November 10th. These meetings allow me an opportunity to gain a better understanding of teacher's concerns.

On November 4th, I met with the principals to discuss our response to the bus accident that occurred the day before on Rt. 3. I want to recognize Ben, Brad, and Cindy Libby, who is the

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nurse at Underhill, for the level of professionalism displayed once they arrived at the scene of the accident.

A clinic was held after school on November 12th for teachers to receive their COVID-19 booster vaccine. The clinic was sponsored in collaboration with the Manchester Health Department and was held in the Cawley gym.

Report of Administrators

G. Martakos motioned to add the before and after school support for reading and math to the agenda under new business. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

G. Martakos: I would like to talk about it and approve it if it is something that has been successful.

Vote unanimously in favor

Mr. Rearick thanked, Dan, Brad and Cindy Libby for their action in the bus accident on Route 3. They did a great job coordinating with police and fire and transporting and contacting parents. Great Job!

Reports of Sub-Committees

J. Sullivan reported that the Policy Committee met and there should be four (4) policies forthcoming for review.

W. Goertel: There was a meeting with Pinkerton Board of Trustees and there is a possible drop in enrollment. We may have more information forthcoming.

FINANCE

Manifest Approvals

A. Tremblay motioned to approve the manifest from October 18th, 2021 to November 5th, 2021 in the amount of \$874,320.07. Seconded by J. Sullivan.

Roll Call Vote

J. Sullivan Yes

W. Goertel Yes

J. Godbout Yes

L. Laliberte Yes

A. Tremblay Yes

G. Martakos Yes

Vote unanimously in favor

J. Hyde motioned to approve the manifest from November 8th, 2021 to November 12, 2021 in the amount of \$1,861,515.46. Seconded by J. Sullivan

Roll Call Vote

J. Sullivan Yes

W. Goertel Yes

J. Godbout Yes

L. Laliberte Yes

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A. Tremblay Yes

G. Martakos Yes

Vote unanimously in favor

NEW BUSINESS

Results of Voluntary Vaccine Clinic Survey

W. Rearick provided the results of the survey: 168 yes and 173 no. The Manchester Health said the 168 would be enough to sponsor a clinic.

J. Sullivan motioned that we provide, as a public service, a location for a voluntary clinic for those that choose to have their child inoculated. Seconded by A. Tremblay

W. Rearick stated that it was the recommendation that it be done in the classroom at Underhill.

Vote 4:2 motion carried

Warrant Articles

A. Ransom recommended continuing to put money into the Special Education Trust Fund which currently has \$295,000 and the Technology Trust which has \$100,000. The recommendation is to put \$100,000 in each. The Maintenance is the same and has only \$100,000.

W. Goertel stated that they were leaning toward \$175,000 for facilities and \$175,000 for Special Ed with lesser to Technology.

J. Sullivan asked if the wording for the Special Ed Trust Fund can be changed.

A. Ransom stated you can change the purpose of an expendable fund but you need a super majority. You can ask to change the purpose or dissolve and set a new fund.

J. Sullivan would like to consider trust funds for textbooks and transportation as well as funding through fund balance.

The Board discussed the wording for the district to retain fund balance and propose a new warrant article based on a warrant article passed by Londonderry. If this language is not passed, the Board would still have the existing option to retain funds. The new language for the warrant article was drafted by the attorney.

J. Sullivan motioned that we request Administration prepare for approval before the School Board at the next meeting a warrant article for adding funds into the currently existing Special Education account as well as one for the Technology account and Building Maintenance Fund with \$100,000 as the initial amount. Seconded by W. Goertel.

W. Goertel amended the motion to \$175,000 for Special Ed, \$175,000 for maintenance and \$50,000 for technology. Seconded by J. Sullivan

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Roll Call Vote on amendment

J. Sullivan *Yes*
W. Goertel *Yes*
J. Godbout *Yes*
L. Laliberte *Yes*
A. Tremblay *Yes*
G. Martakos *Yes*

Unanimously in favor

Roll Call Vote on amended motion

J. Sullivan *Yes*
W. Goertel *Yes*
J. Godbout *Yes*
L. Laliberte *Yes*
A. Tremblay *Yes*
G. Martakos *Yes*

Unanimously in favor

J. Sullivan motioned to request the Administration prepare a warrant article for discussion regarding changing the wording on the 2.5% retainage and presenting the wording used by the Londonderry School District.

Seconded by W. Goertel.

Vote unanimously in favor

A. Ransom: RSA198 says opening new trust fund for retirement and adding to it. I think that is a good idea. You must fund it first before you draw down on it. You can't put \$40,000 in and withdraw \$40,000. There is no limit on the number of retirements per year. We had eight (8) this year. It is \$35,000-\$40,000 for one retirement. You would need \$100,000 before you could start drawing down on it. It would be whatever the Board and the public are comfortable with.

W. Goertel motioned to create a warrant article for retirements in the amount of \$150,000 from fund balance as the last warrant article. Seconded by J. Godbout.

J. Sullivan stated that these item reflect \$600,000. This may raise the question that the School Board already knows they will have at least \$650,000 left as fund balance. That is my concern.

Vote unanimously in favor

The Board discuss how the tax rate would be reflected on the ballot. The Town shows the total tax impact per warrant article and the School shows the increase only.

B. Soucy stated that the town shows the reflected rate of the whole tax rate impact not just the increase. The school shows only the increase in the tax rate over last year.

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The Board took no action.

OLD BUSINESS

Before school support

G. Martakos motioned to support a \$50.00/hr stipend for teachers to support the before and after school support in math and reading. Seconded by A. Tremblay

W. Goertel motioned to amend the amount to \$40/hr. Seconded by G. Martakos.

Roll Call Vote on amended

J. Sullivan No

W. Goertel Yes

J. Godbout Yes

L. Laliberte Yes

A. Tremblay No

G. Martakos Yes

Vote 4:2 amended carries

Vote on amended motion

J. Sullivan Abstain

W. Goertel Yes

J. Godbout Yes

L. Laliberte Yes

A. Tremblay Yes

G. Martakos Yes

Vote 5:0:1 on amended motion carries

Goals

2022/2023 Budget Updates

A. Ransom stated that since the budget books were delivered to the Budget Committee, there has been changes. The insurance numbers came in at a 5.2% increase. We had put in a place card holder of 10%. At the request of Mr. Hyde, we level funded that in the budget so it went down so now it will need to go back up. We had put in a 5% place card holder for Pinkerton and the rate came in at 3.94%. An adjustment was made based on the number of students as of November 1st and there was a savings of \$128,427. That also reflected a change in Special Education at Pinkerton, but there were changes in placement and the net decrease was \$23,553. There was also some changes in health coverage by staff. We reduced the Default Budget from version III to version IV \$119,666 reduced the request \$2,891 the net reduction is \$122,557. I will review this with the Budget Committee on Thursday.

W. Goertel motioned to accept the Version IV Operating Budget of \$37,921,081. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

J. Sullivan Yes

W. Goertel Yes

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J. Godbout Yes

L. Laliberte Yes

A. Tremblay Yes

G. Martakos Yes

Vote unanimously in favor

PERSONNEL

Resignations

Valerie Tetrault Special Education Teacher 11/23/21

W. Goertel motioned to accept the resignation of Valerie Tetrault, Special Education Teacher.

Seconded by J. Godbout.

Vote unanimously in favor

Co-Curricular Nominations

Derek Clark- Volleyball Coach

J. Godbout motioned to approve the Co-curricular nomination of Derek Clark as presented.

Seconded by W. Goertel.

Vote unanimously in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No comments

ADJOURNMENT

W. Goertel motioned to adjourn. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

Vote unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan