

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

School Board Meeting

7:00 p.m.

SAU #1 Board Room

BOARD

Stewart Brock, Rich Cahoon,
Matthew Craig, Butch Estey,
Joel Green, David Martz,
Linda Quintanilha, Pierce Rigrod,
Myron Steere, Erik Thibault,
Fiona Tibbetts

Gil Morris, CVEA

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Brendan Minnihan, Supt.
Kimberly Saunders, Asst. Supt.
Marian Alese, B.A.
Tim Markley, H.R.
Dr. Rick Matte, Student Services
James Elder, GBS
Noreen McAloon, FES/GES/HES
Brian Pickering, CVHS
Ben Loi, PES
Anne O'Bryant, SMS
Ann Allwarden, AES/Pierce

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Butch Estey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Minutes (Board Vote Required)

a. December 3, 2013

**Myron Steere moved to accept the minutes of December 3, 2013. Stewart Brock second. Unanimous
Linda Quintanilha and Joel Green abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.**

3. Points of Pride

CVHS

Joshua Bartsch, CVHS student, recently organized a fundraiser for those affected by the Philippine typhoon. Josh organized a "Lift-a-thon" with a goal for members of the CVHS football team to each get five people to pledge a penny per pound. The event raised \$667.00 which went to Kids International Ministries, a non-profit organization involved in typhoon recovery in the Philippines.

District

Just before Christmas vacation, ConVal staff was made aware of the need to raise an estimated \$1,500 to help 8 families, including 17 children, have presents under their tree. Dr. Minnihan reported that he is proud to report that the call for help was sent out to ConVal staff and within two days, \$3,055.00 was raised. Outside organizations like the Temple Church, various Lion's Clubs, the CVEA, and some of our local police departments contributed as well. ConVal really is a really special community.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Consent Agenda

a. Personnel

Tim Markley referenced an addendum to the Personnel page.

Myron Steere moved to accept the retiree list as read which included Kathleen Bigford, Barbara Black, Sylvia Shea, Sally Keller, and Jerrell Moodie to retire in June 2015. Joel Green second. Unanimous.

MISSION STATEMENT

The ConVal Regional School District, in partnership with its member communities, will inspire all learners to achieve academically, contribute to the global community, and thrive as independent and productive citizens.

6. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. January 1, 2014 Enrollment

Tim Markley pointed out BES enrollment that reflects the removal of a para due to a 1:1 student need that moved out of district. This para was placed elsewhere in the district.

b. Monthly Events Calendar

The District Study Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 16th was cancelled.
The School Board Induction on Curriculum was scheduled for Tuesday, January 21st at 5:30 p.m. at the SAU.
The Education Committee set two meetings for Monday, January 27th and February 17th at 6:00 pm. at the SAU.

c. Accept Gift/Donation (Board Vote Required)

- 1) Peterborough Elementary School requests the authorization to accept a gift/donation totaling \$500.00 from Mr. Mike's Mobil and the Exxon Mobil Alliance Program, Peterborough, NH, for the purpose of supporting Mathematics and/or Science.

Stewart Brock moved to accept the gift/donation as read. Matthew Craig second. Unanimous.

- 2) Great Brook School requests the authorization to accept a gift/donation totaling \$500.00 from Holly and Fletcher Wilson for the purpose of funding a student for the Washington, D.C. trip.

Myron Steere moved to accept the gift/donation as read. David Martz second. Unanimous.

7. Reports

a. Student Representative – Zach Letourneau

Zach Letourneau reported that the high school parking lot and walkways were safe and clear today as a result of Tim Grossi and facilities staff. Leaking pipes at the high school resulted in evacuation of students to other rooms; now repaired. Student Council contest called "Mr. ConVal" scheduled to take place in February based on talent and school spirit.

Mr. Estey asked if a "Ms. ConVal" contest would occur as well. Mr. Letourneau was not aware of it.

b. Teacher Representative – Gil Morris

Mr. Morris reported that everyone is settling back from the extended vacation. He reported the positive feedback for Dr. Minnihan's early call for cancelling school. Lastly, Mr. Morris reported that two and a half weeks in the semester remain.

c. Budget & Property Committee – Matthew Craig

Matthew Craig reported:

The Committee discussed policies and procedures used by the SAU to bid out items. Marian Alese committed to writing up the various in-place policies and suggested policies and bringing them back to the committee for discussion and future forwarding on to the policy committee.

- Purchasing authority

We also discussed purchasing authority, including when the board should be consulted for approval of bid items and at what level, including change orders. Marian Alese agreed to research other districts for a policy template to be brought back for discussion.

- Communications plan

The committee discussed how to communicate the 2014-2015 budget, and came to the info, and recommended that each school board member present a budget info to their towns at the towns' budget public hearings before the deliberative sessions, if the town select boards were amenable. This would increase participation and audience, as opposed to holding the two road show briefings we've had after the Deliberative Session (DS) last year.

Mr. Craig reported that he looked up when a few of the towns had their budget public hearings last year to make sure they happened before the ConVal DS, which last year was on 2/6/2013. Antrim and Sharon had their budget public hearings on 2/4/2013 and 2/5/2013, and Greenfield had theirs on 2/7/2013. So, if the same schedule is repeated, we really won't have feedback from the towns before the DS (or, before the School Board meeting normally held the day before the DS).

Budget & Property would still like to press forward and have each board member coordinate a short presentation with their town before the ConVal Deliberative Session, whether it's part of the town's public hearing on the budget, part of a regular selectmen's meeting, or something different. A team of two board members and one SAU person was suggested to keep it manageable. Not too big, but enough to answer most of the questions and absorb the feedback.

- You may choose to arm yourself with a variety of documents that summarize the 2014-2015 budget:

-- If you prefer bullets or text summaries, there are two documents on the ConVal website: "General Information About The Budget Process" is a narrative that includes assumptions, key contributors to the budget, major changes, and warrant article summaries. "Speaker Notes" gives additional detail about priorities and budget contributors, and although it accompanies the slides also works as a standalone document.

-- If you prefer slides, you can present "Proposed 2014-15 Budget Slideshow" or tailor it as you see fit.

-- For the accountant types, there is a pdf titled "Proposed Budget for 2014-15" that has the budget by line item to compare the proposed budget to both the default budget and last year's approved budget.

Obviously, this isn't directive in nature, but the committee felt that meeting directly with the towns would go farther than the centralized road shows we tried last year after the deliberative sessions. I heartily encourage you to get with a fellow board member and someone from the SAU, schedule a presentation with your town, and communicate it heavily to make sure the folks in your town hear it from multiple sources that you'll be there to give an outline of the budget and answer questions.

A board member asked me a good question: What will we do with the feedback? My answer was, it depends on the feedback. We'll listen to any and all feedback regarding the process, our priorities and our performance in educating our kids. If there are specific budgetary suggestions that both line up with our board goals and are executable, we can attempt to discuss them at the final board meeting before the DS. The decentralized approach we're trying isn't perfect, but it should be a good step towards closer communication with the voters. We appreciate your help communicating this to the voters in our towns and believe it will help them better understand the "what" and "why" behind the numbers.

Mr. Craig referenced a list of budget priorities put together by John Kieley which Mr. Craig distributed. Mr. Kieley said that there is a list of capital expenditures in which he reconciled back to the latest budget. The information attempts to identify facility and IT capital items by location and type. The list is not perfect; some items are lumped together and use different terminology. Mr. Kieley reported that he went back to the Strategic Plan from 2012 which included \$398,000. Today's list totals \$1.6M. This is a dramatic increase over 2012. The IT items are difficult to breakdown. Mr. Kieley said that he is a big supporter of IT and he understands the benefits. He is also a believer in going through a process of prioritizing the money we propose to spend. Mr. Kieley noted a generator in the Strategic Plan for Temple Elementary School. The generator was taken out in favor of replacing a cement walkway. Mr. Kieley spoke about the need to protect the asset and have power. He asked if the money is being spent in the right areas.

Butch Estey spoke about the attempt to get a generator for SMS and it got shot down. Some felt that the towns should pay for the generator rather than the schools. Linda Quintanilha suggested that grant funding might be sought.

Marian Alese agreed to find out why it came out of the plan.

Rich Cahoon reported that other comparisons such as the generator/sidewalk occur in other schools. Mr. Cahoon said that he is having difficulty with items being proposed that did not first make the Priority 1 list. Pierce Rigrod said that the priorities may have changed as other items rose above in terms of importance. Myron Steere agreed that the old priorities might not be the same. He suggested reprioritizing the need. Butch Estey suggested that this should be left to the district administration so as not to micromanage. Marian Alese said that we are in the middle of revising the Strategic Plan right now; some items were able to be accomplished while other put off. The list will look very different.

Ms. Alese reminded the Board that we receive .55 cents on the dollar for building aid for some items.

Butch Estey asked Marian Alese when during the course of the year is the plan reviewed. Ms. Alese reported that it is reviewed every year; depending on what happens with the proposed budget.

Mr. Estey asked that a presentation on the revised Strategic Plan be shared with the Board in the fall.

Stewart Brock asked the possibility if a budget item comes out of the Strategic Plan that it be noted in the budget.

Rich Cahoon suggested that the purpose of a three year plan is to bring about an awareness that something is starting to deteriorate before it's gone.

Matthew Craig urged School Board members to meet with their towns.

Pierce Rigrod asked for cliff notes on big ticket items so board members can share why it is proposed.

Send questions for big ticket item questions to Stewart Brock who will funnel to the Superintendent.

Myron Steere asked if the impact of the assessment for individual towns can be provided for board members to share in the towns. Marian Alese confirmed.

d. District Study Committee – Rich Cahoon

Rich Cahoon reported that a brief meeting took place with no Selectmen present. The January meeting was cancelled until SAC can be met with.

8. Old Business

a. Expenditure Report – M. Alese

Marian Alese shared the November 2013 expense report. She highlighted several lines. She will share the update through mid January at the next meeting in January.

b. Grants Report – M. Alese

Ms. Alese highlighted a project estimate included in the document. More information to come.

c. Budget +/- Report – M. Alese

This report reflects annual expenses anticipated through 2014.

d. 2014/2015 Budget Update

Marian Alese referenced Version 4 voted on December 19th. The operating budget is up .98%. The district assessment is at 3.32%; not including potential warrant articles.

Fiona Tibbetts shared information under the teacher expenditure line. Actual spend was \$700K different than proposed. Ms. Tibbetts asked why the new OT or extra para or 3% administrator raises are in that line. Ms. Tibbetts asked about the money in the budget for an extra teacher and extra para. Why is this money there?

Marian Alese reported that those items are in the 110 line because all of the salaries are in the same line. It has been where those items (buyback, lane changes, extra para, and extra teacher) have been carried. Ms. Alese said that she can separate it out. She could move the para line to a general para line and move the admin merit pool to a district admin line.

Ms. Tibbetts asked for justification for some of the numbers; such as lane changes. Ms. Alese said that there is an actual list of people who have notified us that they will be moving along the scale.

Rich Cahoon said that it would be helpful to get the budget in a format that could be sorted. Marian Alese reported that she can get a summary without the narrative. She agreed to run the 300 pages without the detail and dump it into an excel document.

Fiona Tibbett asked if we need to budget 13.6 for a 12.9 spend. Marian reported that the budget was developing with existing staff and where they are on the scale as well as the extra teacher and extra para position.

Myron Steere reported that it is helpful to have the actual expended for each line item. When we get to the end of the budget for 12/13; there was \$900K surplus. He expected there to be another \$900K remaining in this budget. Discussion took place.

Rich Cahoon said that we consistently budget approximately \$600K above what is actually used. Can we tighten this up?

Myron Steere said that we are \$424K over last year's budget.

Myron Steere moved to reduce the proposed budget by \$425,000 so that our budget comes in at less than last year's. Fiona Tibbetts second.

Butch Estey said that would take the budget approved on the 19th and reduce it by \$425K. Myron Steere confirmed.

Matthew Craig asked Mr. Steere how he based the \$425K reduction would gain more votes.

Mr. Steere said that he wants to sell the budget. This would not cut program.

Mr. Craig disagreed that this would not impact program. Mr. Steere said that based on last year's surplus and other years; by reducing the proposed budget by \$425K there should be remaining money to cover costs.

Joel Green asked if the \$600-\$700K is a given. The reply was that it is not a given. If the budget meets the needs of the district and the children that should be proposed and the voters can choose to support it or not.

Marian Alese said that the assumption that there will be a \$425K surplus and the budget is cut, the district assessment is down \$800K from what is here. The assessment is proposed at \$1.1M. Ms. Alese asked Mr. Steere if the proposal is to use the surplus that we don't have yet to cut the budget. We would be assuming that there will be a \$425K surplus to apply next year. Mr. Steere confirmed.

Rich Cahoon said that he believes that Mr. Steere is saying that historically we have had a surplus and that he is willing to budget more tightly to reduce the proposed budget.

Dr. Minnihan said that we can't just say that we are going to cut the budget by \$425K without cutting specific things. Depending on what line is cut; decisions will be made.

Butch Estey asked Mr. Steere where he would like to cut \$425K. Mr. Steere said that he would need to see the actual expenditures to determine cuts. Ms. Alese and Linda Quintanilha said that you can't line up last year's budget with this year's because conditions change; special education was cited as one area.

Rich Cahoon said that the teacher hiring is the other delta area. Based on recent past experience we might project that there might be a hiring delta that is in a certain range. Ms. Alese confirmed. Mr. Cahoon said that we might take a chance in this line. Ms. Alese confirmed that was a fair statement.

The athletic transportation line was discussed.

Linda Quintanilha said that she is uncomfortable with not budgeting for the extra teacher and para position and worry teachers.

Rich Cahoon said that what is being asked is a balancing of risks.

Butch Estey asked if we reduce ourselves to the point of placing ourselves in a liability situation.

Stewart Brock said that he needs to balance the risks; if the decision is not to cut a program, he would like to know what would be cut if the elasticity was not in place.

Matthew Craig said that this motion is based upon an assumption. It is about how much risk we are going to accept. We should return the money to the taxpayers if it is not used. ConVal has experienced a 1.07% average budget increase over the last seven years.

Pierce Rigrod agreed that this was difficult to support without the back up. Second, budget assumptions were discussed in the beginning. That would have been the time to share the delta that we are comfortable with rather than now.

Myron Steere said that he brought this up in the beginning and suggested a break even budget. He said that all of the needs should be considered while giving something back to the taxpayers. It is important to tell the taxpayers that we will do everything for the kids and still cut the budget.

Butch Estey said that we are a business but we are in a unique business.

Erik Thibault said that he would hate to get to a point where six teachers leave and we cannot hire excellent replacements because of salary increases. He would rather have the play in the salary line.

Marian Alese reported that last year, unreserved was \$625K with money to capital reserve and special education. She cited data from other years as well. In the last two years, we are exceptionally high.

Default figures were shared.

Linda Quintanilha suspected that the new Superintendent understands what goes on in this budget; she suggested that the proposed budget hurt in some way already.

Rich Cahoon said that this is why we should have had detailed discussion in the beginning. We are running out of time. When we are talking about the black box, the things we can't see, he would like to apply the learning to next year so we aren't in the same place next year.

Butch Estey shared the budget process. The questions have had the opportunity to be asked. He reportedly shared the budget with a town budget administrator who responded saying that we were cutting it too close.

Marian Alese reported that we are currently in a place as a result of board decisions; increases in some lines and decreases in others. Other items were considered that would be nice to have and are important. Outside agencies made requests. We are here because of decisions that were made after a budget was proposed that represented our priorities.

Butch Estey called the question:

In favor: David Martz, Myron Steere, Fiona Tibbetts, Rich Cahoon

Opposed: Joel Green, Matthew Craig, Linda Quintanilha, Pierce Rigrod, Stewart Brock, Erik Thibault

Motion failed.

Butch Estey asked if there are other questions.

Fiona Tibbetts said that she voted against all of the items that brought the budget to where it is today; she shared her frustration.

Rich Cahoon suggested that future budget processes begin earlier in the year.

Fiona Tibbetts asked if there was a point in making a motion around our actual spend as our baseline.

Butch Estey asked for a motion to accept the final budget finally to go on record.

Joel Green moved to accept the final budget as discussed. Pierce Rigrod second.

Pierce Rigrod had questions about differences in money spent between SMS and GBS. There are differences in ratios for spending.

Dr. Minnihan said that it is helpful to have this post mortem. GBS did not see a need for increases in the same areas as SMS.

Pierce Rigrod asked if there was an equitable distribution of resources.

In favor: Stewart Brock, Joel Green, Linda Quintanilha, Matthew Craig, Pierce Rigrod, Rich Cahoon, Erik Thibault

Opposed: David Martz, Myron Steere, Fiona Tibbetts

Motion carried.

Marian Alese confirmed that we will prepare the warrant with this number and the warrant articles. Butch Estey confirmed.

e. 2nd Read/Adoption Policies (School Board Vote Required)

IGD: Curriculum Adoption – Rescind old IFD

Myron Steere moved to adopt this policy as read. Joel Green second. Unanimous.

Myron Steere moved to rescind policy IFD. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.

IHBB: Student Evaluations: Specific Learning Disability

Myron Steere moved to adopt this policy as read. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.

9. New Business

a. Rescind Policies (School Board Vote Required)

JFBB: Student Activities, Organizations, Performances --- old, incorporated into JJA

Myron Steere moved to rescind JFBB. Stewart Brock second. Unanimous.

b. Amended Policies (School Board Vote Required)

EH: Public Use of School Records

Myron Steere moved to approve as amended. Stewart Brock second. Unanimous.

GBEF: Acceptable Use Policy: Staff

Myron Steere moved to approve GBEF as amended. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.

IJ: Instructional Materials Adoption (also included it the new IJ-R & IGD-R)

Myron Steere moved to approve IJ as amended. Stewart Brock second. Unanimous.

c. 1st Reads

AFB: Evaluation of the Superintendent and Goal Setting

Myron Steere referenced this policy as a first read.

CBI: Evaluation of the Superintendent and Goal Setting (also included in the new CBI-R)

Myron Steere referenced this policy as a first read. Mr. Steere noted that this is the evaluation of the Superintendent procedures and noted that the Vice-Chair conducts the evaluation prior to the Board and brings forward. This may be slightly amended.

Rich Cahoon said that Board Goals should be established prior to June 1 in the future to align with. Confirmed that would be preferable.

EGAD: Copyright Compliance

Myron Steere referenced this policy as a first read.

IGBB: Programs for Gifted Students --- This policy was submitted for a rescind but pulled. It has been edited and is now being submitted for a 1st Read.

Myron Steere referenced this policy as a first read.

10. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Marian Alese certified that manifests 23f14020 through 23f14022 and 45 through 49 totaling \$218,380.68 and manifests 23f14023 through 23f14025 and 50 through 54 totaling \$718,970.53 and payroll 12, 121, and 122

totaling \$1,312,772.27 and 13 and 113 totaling \$1,908,954.53 have been reviewed by her and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and/or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

Stewart Brock moved to accept the manifests as read. Myron Steere second. Unanimous.

11. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II

a. Personnel

Erik Thibault moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of personnel at 8:55 p.m. Unanimous on a roll call vote

Joel Green moved to exit non-public session at 9:30 p.m. Matthew Craig second. Unanimous.

Myron Steere moved to seal the minutes for one year. Erik Thibault second. Unanimous.

Myron Steere moved to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok