

# OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road  
Peterborough, New Hampshire

## CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

### Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 20, 2019

7:00 p.m.

SAU #1

### Minutes

**Present:** John Jordan (Hancock), Bob Marshall (Greenfield), Bob Edwards (Antrim), Tim Theberge (Hancock), Fred Woodhouse (Sharon), Karen Hatcher (Peterborough), George Willard (Temple), and Alan Edelkind

**John Jordan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**

#### **1. Accept Minutes of May 23, 2019**

**Karen Hatcher moved to accept the minutes of May 23, 2019. John Jordan second. Unanimous.**

#### **2. Town to Town Cooperation**

Karen Hatcher reported that the Selectmen's Advisory Committee (SAC) has begun discussion about opportunities for the towns to work together on things that affect education. Broadband came up early in the discussion. Recently, positive results came about when working together to change education funding with the State.

John Jordan reported that at one point the Public Works Departments across towns formed a group for this same purpose; cooperative efforts to take advantage of resources and pricing.

Tim Theberge said that municipal items that might overlap would include libraries and recreation.

Discussion took place, in brief, about hiring of police and other staff across towns.

Dr. Kimberly Saunders reported that the Superintendents have a "Gentlemen's Agreement" where they call each other to let each other know that they are interviewing one of their staff members to work out an amenable transition should the hire take place.

#### **3. ConVal Broadband Committee**

Tim Theberge reported that Chesterfield has a broadband model. Broadband is lacking in this district so the State passed a law that allowed towns to bond for broadband expansion. Chesterfield put out an RFP and created an agreement. Chesterfield is small. Proof that broadband will increase the value of property must be apparent. Essentially, quotes have resulted in the cost of \$3 million per town. It is not feasible for towns so collaborating on a purchase came as a result.

A regional perspective is thought to give the district a better chance at broadband. There could be benefits to this, the trick is how to move this forward.

Towns were tasked to identify one person to represent them in a discussion for this purpose. A meeting needs to be scheduled as the next step. Presenters would be requested to attend.

A first meeting would be just the committee to organize before presenters are brought in.

September 11<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> was suggested as the date for this meeting with a 6:00 start time.

It is an invitation to the towns, volunteers on committees, staff, and community members. It is a work session meeting. The idea is to have this meeting and go back to towns to report where we are on this topic. Brenda Marschok will be RSVP contact [bmarschok@conval.edu](mailto:bmarschok@conval.edu). The School District can send an invite to the town administrators.

#### **4. ConVal Lawsuit**

Dr. Saunders reported that ConVal won! There has been a motion for reconsideration. ConVal has the largest square footage town-wise in the state. In ConVal, the cost of transporting students to school is about \$900 per child, per year. The State uses an allowance of \$125 per child, per year, in their calculation. The City of Manchester is about \$345 per student per year. Already, before the children are even in the door, ConVal has had to spend \$600 more per student just to get them in the door. It is not equitable or adequate. The judge found that the law that the funding formula is based on is unconstitutional. The judge was very clear to the legislature. His finding is that not only has the State not done their job, they know that they have not done their job. In NH, the bar for attorney fees is high; we were awarded attorney's fees as well. What ConVal has done serves the entire State. We pulled the State's own data on the average cost of education. It costs about \$18,000 on average, to educate a student in NH. As an example, for a teacher, the State bases average salary on the first step, which is for a new inexperienced teacher.

Karen Hatcher reported that SAC initiated a letter writing campaign and wrote one letter from the Select boards and School Board to our legislators and anyone running, saying that it was enough. The district wrote HB678; some testified about the cost of transportation and teachers, and student: teacher ratios. It was sent to committee to die. There was some progress. The bulk of providing an education falls to the local taxpayer.

Karen further said that it is an independent commission and not a legislative commission.

Discussion took place about why the ConVal District was formed; in part to cost share. ConVal is a long-standing cooperative district in the State. Discussion took place about the perceived inequities.

#### **5. State Budget**

Proposed Senate Budget Additional Funding information was shared.

#### **6. 2019-2020 Projected Enrollment**

2019-2020 Projected enrollment was shared.

Kimberly reported out on work done over a number of years on the topic of consolidation historically. People are very attached to their community schools; a vote on consolidation has not passed.

#### **7. ConVal Trust Funds**

ConVal School District Trust Fund Summary information was reviewed. Based on the current budget, ConVal expects to fund the trust funds as voted on the warrant.

#### **8. Estimated ConVal Surplus (If Available)**

The District anticipates returning money to the towns.

#### **9. Summer Meetings**

SAC will not meet in July. Does the committee need to meet in August? SAC will meet on August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

#### **10. Other**

Kimberly Saunders offered SAC Members to participate in a school tour of the eleven schools. It was noted that SAC membership needs updating on the website.

**Karen Hatcher motioned to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. Bob Edwards second. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok