

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Communication Committee Meeting

SAU #1 Board Room

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

5:30 p.m.

Minutes

Committee Members:

- Niki McGettigan, Chair
- Alan Edelkind
- Katherine Heck
- Janine Lesser
- Kristen Reilly

Present: Niki McGettigan, Alan Edelkind, Katherine Heck, Janine Lesser, Kristen Reilly,
Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Jim Fredrickson, Stephan Morrissey (6:02 p.m.)

1. Call to order

Niki McGettigan called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

2. Accept minutes of December 10, 2019

Janine Lesser moved to accept the minutes of December 10, 2019. Alan Edelkind second. Kristen Reilly abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.

3. Review Assignments/New Website Posts – Niki McGettigan

Niki McGettigan shared updates that are currently posted on the ConVal website. It included information about the budget approval process, information on the Budget Hearing, etc.

4. Communication Person Update/Feedback – Kimberly Saunders

Kimberly Saunders referenced information that she had previously sent out about a communication person and said that she is looking for direction. This would be a contracted service person. There are services out there that work directly with school districts. Niki reported that she created a shared drive for Communication Committee work. Everything will be in one place.

Should an RFP or RFQ be put together for communication services?

Katherine Heck said that she feels that a part-time person is a great place to start.

The first five points on Kimberly's document were seen as useful as a starting point.

The "Professional Services" line in the budget would fund this service.

5. Review “In the works, completed, or already determined to be needed” – Committee
Deliberative Session and State Mandates are next. Directing the community to resources about Deliberative Session is important. “Why does the district keep talking about consolidation?” is a valuable communication.

A summary on “Trends in NH Population” was cited as important to keep in the forefront.

Responses to the Frankestown Elementary School reassignment discussion needs to be communicated. “FES Forum Response” information was discussed.

Niki asked committee members if anyone wants to take the response information and formalize it. “Here is why we are asking these questions.....” should be shared.

A “View Point” segment was suggested for the newspaper.

Katherine Heck referenced information from the State of California Department of Education that outlines “How to Close a School”. It might be a reference in the future should the district go that route.

Alan Edelkind said that the board committed to answering the questions, we need to do that at least. If we go too far, we are committing ourselves to doing something that we have not decided.

Stephan Morrissey said that we are trying to promote “We Are ConVal”. Only the elementary schools are identified in name by the town they are located i.e. Frankestown Elementary School, Peterborough Elementary School. The middle schools and high school are not.

Niki, Alan, and Katherine agreed to work on this response.

School Highlights – linking information to push it forward is a positive option.

Letters to the Editor – does this committee want to make any corrections? Alan Edelkind shared his opinion on why the board should respond to correct the inaccuracies printed recently about the proposed budget. Printing a retraction was another suggestion.

Jim Fredrickson shared a “View Point” draft that he produced on the topic of the budget.

Discussion took place about presenting the Proposed Budget at Deliberative Session.

Jim’s viewpoint was seen as valuable for the newspaper on this topic (See Attached).

Alan Edelkind suggested both a View Point and a Letter to the Editor to capture multiple audiences who might only read one.

A Letter to the Editor should not look like a viewpoint; it can say the same thing but must look different.

Kimberly Saunders asked that the communication include a correction about the CVEA comment printed in the paper. It is inaccurate.

6. Review what communication is needed for budget and more/assign work, due dates, posting dates, readers, etc. - Committee

Jim Fredrickson will share his writing to the committee for input on flow.

Having copies of the Budget Primer available in the towns was seen as beneficial. People feel that the district was trying to share information.

Strategic Plan Accomplishments – After Deliberative Session but before voting, the board should communicate accomplishments.

Stephan Morrissey asked the committee for information that he might tie into the School Board segment for the District Annual Report. Niki suggested that Stephan review the Strategic Plan to pull information. Celebrating student success could be a focus.

Warrant Articles that need communication? Lawsuit?

Niki recapped writings due, timelines, and who is responsible.

7. Determine if additional meetings are needed or work session by subgroup to meet deadlines – Committee

Will be discussed at the board meeting.

8. Other

None.

Niki McGettigan motioned to adjourn at 6:48 p.m. Kristen Reilly second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok

Budget & Property Committee Report

The ongoing challenges associated with minimizing increases in our operating budget and providing a quality education show no signs of abating. These include, but are not limited to: unfunded federal and state mandates, inadequate state funding for education, aging infrastructure, and well deserved increases in staff salaries and benefits.

These challenges are in addition to our slow but steady decline in enrollment – which raises the following perennial questions: why isn't the budget going down instead of up? How long can the District maintain our current "one high school, two middle schools, and eight elementary schools" model? When is "small too small"? The answers are not easy and are beyond the scope of this report, but the questions remain valid and will continue to be discussed for the foreseeable future.

Of more immediate concern is the need to address our aging infrastructure. We're working on a long range plan that will likely include a proposed infrastructure bond for your consideration next year and, hopefully, compensation through NH state "Building Aid" for which we recently submitted an application.

The '20-'21 Capital Improvement Plan includes \$1.76M worth of projects. We're proposing several options to fund these: the operating budget (\$0.08M), more aggressive use of our Capital and Athletic Trust Funds (\$1.14M), and additional appropriations (the \$0.54M "paving" Warrant Article).

We've also proposed a new long-term Solar power project for installation on the high school roof. While the savings expected to be achieved won't solve the larger District issues mentioned above, your approval of this project will allow the broader CONVAL community to demonstrate our commitment to the broader global challenge associated with climate change.

The Budget & Property Committee will continue to work to support other committees and the full Board as we all strive to deliver a quality education at reasonable cost.

Respectfully

Jim Fredrickson, Budget & Property Committee Chairman

Ledger-Transcript “ViewPoint”

The ConVal School District Administration began the process to develop the 2020-21 School Budget last summer. The proposed budget was approved by the School Board on January 7th. The Deliberative Session Part I is scheduled for 6:00 pm on February 4th at the ConVal High School gym. Part II (voting) will be conducted on March 10 in the respective Town Halls.

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These challenges are in addition to our slow but steady decline in enrollment – which raises the following perennial questions: why isn’t the budget going down instead of up? How long can the District maintain our current “one high school, two middle schools, and eight elementary schools” model? When is “small too small”? The answers are not easy and are beyond the scope of this article, but the questions remain valid and will continue to be discussed for the foreseeable future.

Of more immediate concern is the need to address our aging infrastructure. We’re working on a long-range plan that will likely include a proposed infrastructure bond for voter consideration next year and, hopefully, subsequent partial compensation through NH state “Building Aid” for which we recently submitted an application.

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The Board and Administration will continue to work to deliver a quality education at reasonable cost. We encourage your participation in both the discussions at the Deliberative Session Part I and voting in II

Respectfully

Jim Fredrickson

ConVal School Board

Budget & Property Committee Chairman