

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

**CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Proposed 2019-2020 Budget**

**Tuesday, January 7, 2020**

**SAU #1 Office**

**7:00 PM**

**(Snow Date - January 9, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m. @ SAU)**

Per RSA: 40:13, II-a (c), a public hearing on the proposed budget is required.

**School Board Meeting**

**Immediately Following Public Hearing**

**AGENDA**

**BOARD**

Rich Cahoon, Richard Dunning,  
Alan Edelkind, Jim Fredrickson,  
Katherine Heck, Janine Lesser,  
Niki McGettigan, Stephan Morrissey,  
Linda Quintanilha, Kristen Reilly,  
Tim Theberge, Jerome Wilson

Abby Kamieniecki, Student Rep.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.  
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.  
Tim Markley, H.R.  
Lori Schmidt, B.A.  
Tim Grossi, Facilities  
Cari Christian-Coates, Student Services  
Mark Schaub, Technology  
Michelle Voto, CVHS  
Jim Elder, GBS  
Anne O'Bryant, SMS  
Kathie Morrocco, Pierce School  
Kat Foecking, FES  
Colleen Roy, GES  
Amy Janoch, HES  
Larry Pimental, PES  
Fabi Woods, TES  
Jen Kiley, ATC

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Stephan Morrissey called the School Board meeting to order at 7:50 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**2. Accept School Board Meeting Minutes (Board Vote Required)**

**a. December 19, 2019**

**Dick Dunning moved to accept the minutes of December 19, 2019. Jerry Wilson second. Tim Theberge, Kristen Reilly, Janine Lesser, and Linda Quintanilha abstained. All others in favor. Motion carried.**

**3. Points of Pride**

Kimberly shared various Points of Pride as reported to her by administrators.

**4. Public Comment**

None.

**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.*

## 5. Consent Agenda

### a. January 1, 2020 Enrollment

Tim Markley referenced the current enrollment for January. He noted very little change since December.

### b. Personnel

#### 1. Nomination

Emily Bennett – Title 1 Teacher, Pierce School

**Dick Dunning moved to approve the nomination of Emily Bennett. Janine Lesser second. Unanimous.**

Jill Evelyn - Student Support, CVHS

**Dick Dunning moved to approve the nomination of Jill Evelyn. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.**

#### 2. Resignation

Tim Markley reported the resignation of Robin Kennedy, CVHS

**Dick Dunning moved to accept the resignation of Robin Kennedy. Jerry Wilson second. Linda Quintanilha and Tim Theberge abstained. All others in favor. Motion carried.**

#### 3. Justification for Staffing Increase – South Meadow School Request for 1:1 Paraeducator

**Linda Quintanilha moved to approve the staffing increase as outlined. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

## 6. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

### a. Monthly Events Calendar

Communication Committee will meet at 5:30 on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Budget & Property Committee was cancelled on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Education Committee will meet at 5:00 p.m. on January 16<sup>th</sup>.

### b. Accept Gift/Donations (Board Vote Required)

1. Superintendent's Office requests authorization to accept a gift/donation of 100 chairs, 27 tables, and cabinetry valued at \$9,050.00 from Rivermead, Peterborough for the purpose of outfitting areas throughout the District.

**Dick Dunning moved to accept the donation as shared. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.**

### c. Field Trip Requests (Board Vote Required)

- 1) ConVal High School – grade 10-12 students will travel in April 2021 by air to Italy, to focus on art. This will be a first-hand experience with many art works that are discussed in class, cultural exposure and historical context.

**Tim Theberge moved to approve the trip to Italy as outlined. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.**

### d. Review Answers to Frankestown Community Forum

Kimberly Saunders referenced information related to the questions asked at the Frankestown Community Forum shared with the board. She asked for direction on what the board needs from her in order to formally respond. A member of the audience requested a copy of the document being referred to. Kimberly Saunders replied by saying that it is a working document in draft form and a formal response will be released to the public once it is no longer a draft.

As an example, "what happens to the building if a school is closed?" There is no plan to close a school so it is difficult to address the question specifically.

Rich Cahoon suggested splitting the responses in two. Some pieces are specific to a particular school while others are not. Those that are not specific can be responded to more quickly. The board began to separate the questions out. Linda Quintanilha suggested that Communication Committee respond.

Rich Cahoon suggested releasing the staffing recommendation; seven are required in a school regardless of enrollment at a minimum.

Kimberly Saunders said that her understanding is that the board has asked her to provide the information. The board needs to prioritize the questions. Some questions are broad i.e. what happens to teachers and staff?

Dick Dunning said that some questions can be answered while others cannot. The board could respond.

Rich Cahoon said that the Frankestown specific discussion has been occurring for over a month. This budget contains staffing at a level commensurate with this recommendation. In our budget meeting, staffing to seven at a minimum is required.

Stephan Morrissey suggested that since this is the first time he has seen this documentation that more time be allowed to process.

Jim Fredrickson said that this was an issue that was brought up; "When is a school too small?" He said that we need to bring the volume down and take a look at this at the Communication Committee level. He does not feel that Francestown is a target any more than some others. It is not an immediate threat. Our budget clearly reflects this.

Rich Cahoon said that he disagrees, a specific recommendation came forward about a specific elementary school.

Janine Lesser said that Communication should meet on the 14<sup>th</sup> rather than the 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss further.

Linda Quintanilha said that we are not putting forward a warrant article to close Francestown.

Kevin Pobst Francestown, said that there is no need to scramble to answer these questions in January.

Niki McGettigan said that in order to answer these questions well it will require research and time.

Alan Edelkind said that the board has said that FES reassignment is not on the table this year. The questions are related to consolidation. There is an article proposed that outlines how to deal with consolidation for all of the schools. The questions can be used as a basis for a study.

Stephan Morrissey said that they wanted to be able to respond to Francestown to alleviate their fears. The proposed warrant article will lay out a plan for this conversation.

Rich agreed with Alan's statement. It is important to say that he has read school board minutes from other schools, ours are phenomenal but are not a transcript.

## **7. Reports**

### **a. Student Representative – Lorien Tyne/Abby Kamieniecki**

Abby Kamieniecki reported that student council is planning Spirit Week for the end of April. Student Council members are going to NYC for youth service opportunities. Interact Club has been helping families in need by cutting wood.

### **b. Teacher Representative**

None.

## **8. Old Business**

### **a. 2<sup>nd</sup> Read/Adoption Policies (Board Vote Required)**

- EHAB: Data Governance and Security

**Rich Cahoon moved to adopt policy EHAB as presented. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

### **b. Budget Discussion**

1. Adopt FY'21 Budget

**Tim Theberge moved to adopt Version 5.1 of the FY'21 budget. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.**

2. Default Budget Calculation

Kimberly Saunders said that the default is not a budget, it is a calculation. The difference is \$1,422,486.45 should a default result.

Lori Schmidt noted that the bond should be \$540K even and not \$540,200.00.

If the voters do not support the budget, \$1,422,486.45 would be cut.

Linda Quintanilha asked about one-time expenses. Kimberly clarified that if we repair doors every year, it is not a one-time expense.

Dick Dunning said that we should emphasize the default budget. This entire school district is in the cross hairs. If you want to support what we presently have, we need to get out and vote. We are reaching a point where we cannot continue to do what we are doing unless you can support \$50M. For towns that do not support this budget, they cannot ask for their cake and eat it too.

Jim Fredrickson said that last year the default would have been a cut of \$1.25M. It is even bigger this year.

Katherine Heck said that last year, some of the cuts were provided. At what point does that get shared?

Kimberly Saunders said that she is happy to have that discussion.

Janine Lesser asked about the discussion yearly about contractual items.

Kimberly said that district was receiving advice that the bus contract cannot be in the default. It can because by law, we have to transport students to get to school. Other contracts might not be included in the default calculation. At the end of the day, we will meet obligations that are contractual. We will meet the budget elsewhere.

Katherine Heck said that she would like to know what the cuts would be in the event of a default. It is important for the community to know what cuts would be faced should the budget fail.

Kristen Reilly agreed.

Stephan Morrissey asked the administration to compile this information.

Kimberly reminded the board that if they are going to have administration work to develop and publish a list, that they need to follow through with it. Linda Quintanilha confirmed that if we say that we are going to cut a program and people come forward to support it that we need to stick to it.

Rich Cahoon suggested that positions will be the focus and that can be shared generically.

## **9. New Business**

### **a. Proposed Warrant Article**

Alan Edelkind spoke about a proposed warrant article. It is similar to that proposed last year with changes. The first change is that it is non-advisory. The second is going to use the wording from the DRA and making it a non-lapsing appropriation. The intent is the same as last year. The warrant Mr. Edelkind proposed reads:

Shall the Contoocook School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75,000 for the purpose of contracting with the appropriate services to assist in the completion of a comprehensive analysis and implementation plan detailing the financial, educational and social impacts that any school closure or student redistribution might have on both students and towns. This analysis and implementation plan will be submitted to the ConVal School District prior to proposing to the voters any plan for any school closure or student redistribution in the ConVal School District. This sum to come from the June 30, 2020 fund balance with no additional amount to be raised from taxation. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the analysis is completed or by June 30, 2022 whichever is sooner. The ConVal School Board recommend this appropriation. (Majority Vote Required)

Alan Edelkind said that no action was taken last year. We need a comprehensive plan. We need to know the educational impacts, financial impacts etc. The only way to do this is by a formal study. An outside source might be needed to perform this work. This is an emotional topic. There are not many that understand the facts behind it. The emotion will always be there but the hope is to mitigate it through facts. The analysis must be completed before a proposal can come forward.

### **Alan Edelkind moved to add this warrant article to the warrant. Dick Dunning second.**

Kimberly Saunders asked if this relates only to the Articles of Agreement or to school closure. Redistribution can be made without changes to the Articles of Agreement.

Rich Cahoon said that in order for this to override the authority of the Articles of Agreement, it would have to amend the current Articles of Agreement and require a 2/3's vote.

Linda Quintanilha suggested tabling this for legal consult. Kimberly Saunders said that there is not enough time.

Rich Cahoon said that he is not clear why the School Board would place this on the warrant. The most direct way to do that would be to add \$75,000 to the budget for this. If this fails, we are not spending money on this because "no means no".

Kimberly Saunders said that if the board felt this was what they wanted to proceed with, they could place this in the budget.

Katherine Heck said that she does not know the proper format to ask the board if this is what they want to do and take it off the warrant.

Tim Theberge said that he understands the role of the board and the ConVal District and that of what the town is responsible. It is unclear why the district would be responsible on what the impact is on the town for closing that school. He is unsure he would spend money on learning the impact on a town. Unless there is new research that answers the questions, it sounds like our towns don't look like other towns that have done this type of study.

Stephan Morrissey said that we once tried to conduct this work and were unsuccessful. A board member can bring a warrant forward for consideration. This is very broad. We are not looking at closing a specific school.

Alan Edelkind said that this is not requesting an RFP. This is asking for an outside resource to work within the confines to produce this study. Alan further said that we reference the study from 2018. He agreed that that study should be looked at. Alan wants to put the proposal on the table for a board vote.

Linda Quintanilha said that she does not recall where the board put forward a warrant to change the Articles of Agreement to close a school. When it has, it has come from the public. She does not see the need to spend the money. The board has never proposed closing a school.

Alan Edelkind asked Linda Quintanilha if what we are saying is that we are taking consolidation off the table.

Rich Cahoon said he agrees in theory, but not really. The topic that drew him to the board was school closure. We should be prepared for the discussion of school closure. If schools get too small, we have to have the conversation. As this is listed, there are a diminishing number of consulting firms that will return calls for \$75,000. If you put it in a warrant we have to use it where stated. We might want to focus on only one area or other areas not listed. We can't do the whole study for \$75,000. Flexibility on where to spend the \$75,000 would be necessary.

Katherine Heck said that the warrant is telling the public that the board is going to do something. Dick Dunning said that if this is something that the board wants to do, we should find \$75,000 in the budget and conduct a study.

Alan Edelkind agreed that he sees how it ties the board's hands but that is not necessarily a bad thing. He did not understand the issue of \$75,000. He suggested leaving the money out for the moment, do we want to be able to do this work to satisfy the public that we have an analysis and a study? The money is not the issue.

Linda Quintanilha asked if the board can let it go and when a town comes forward and says that they have had enough, a plan will come forward.

Jerry Wilson suggested a demographic study. Tim Theberge reminded the board that the 2020 census is underway.

Rich Cahoon said that the enrollment numbers are not going to change much. He does not want to tie the board's hands. We have been scraping money out of the middle schools and larger schools to fund the elementary school model. He knows that people don't want to hear it but he knows as a seven year board member that it has been done. Rich Cahoon said that the proposed warrant reads what would otherwise be advisory.

Stephan Morrissey said that a board has proposed a warrant article. Sense of the board?

In favor: Katherine Heck, Alan Edelkind

**Opposed: Rich Cahoon, Linda Quintanilha, Tim Theberge, Janine Lesser, Dick Dunning, Kristen Reilly, Jerry Wilson, Jim Fredrickson, and Niki McGettigan**

**Motion failed.**

Stephan Morrissey said that we would not close a school absent a study.

Rich Cahoon proposed that a demographic study be conducted. He suggested an alternative demographer.

**Rich Cahoon moved to ask the board to have the Superintendent get numbers on what it would cost to get updated numbers. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

#### **b. Trust Funds**

Jim Fredrickson said that the proposal is to use \$542,000 in separate warrant article to do parking lots other than the high school.

Rich Cahoon said that part of the rationale to bundle the parking lots was to get pricing. Are they tied together or do we pay more if we only get half done. The numbers we had were based on bulk pricing. If half gets turned down do we have the money to do the other half at higher pricing?

Rich Cahoon asked the board about the issue with the parking lots several years ago. He asked how solid the number is on the high school parking lot. Tim Grossi said that in the past, we had an estimate without knowing about what lay under the parking lot in terms of stumps etc. Mr. Grossi said that he was given an estimate in 2013 for the whole parking lot and then a plan for A & B. He will know more in the next week about the viability of the estimate.

Rich Cahoon said that field work at PES was a potential trust fund issue. Does it fall under capital or athletic trust fund? The approval to fund it from the athletic trust was confirmed.

#### **c. Draft Warrant**

Kimberly referenced a copy of the draft warrant. Article 3 was moved to become Article 4 and Article 4 to become Article 3.

#### **d. Expenditure and Encumbrance Report (Board Vote Required) – Lori Schmidt**

**Rich Cahoon moved to accept the Expenditure Report and to adopt an encumbrances therein. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.**

### **10. Public Comment**

Kevin Pobst, Frankestown, raised two points. He spoke about if and when there is a community process to discuss when a school is too small. The information Rich mentioned about spending money on the smaller schools by transfer from the larger. This is important information. The community engagement process is very important. The FES issue is a result from three shots; through the minutes that resulted with a motion and a second to reassign the kids from Frankestown. The second shot was to have a forum that the Town of Frankestown did not ask for. There was no point in having that meeting at that time. It undermined the message; have a special meeting in Frankestown with no plan to close it. Mr. Pobst said that it was unnecessary. Thirdly, you don't need to scramble around to get answers to questions unless you are going to reassign or close a school. Don't do it if you have no plan. Get it right if you plan to do something.

Brad Howell, Frankestown, said that the number one thing the board will need is to have the support of people and their understanding along with their trust. Answers were promised but not delivered, trust will be lost. The

board has been dealing with this for years, it is important that the process is transparent. He suggested that if there is a forum, that you answer questions there. Just be honest. There is a better way to proceed.

Steve Chamberlin, Frankestown, said that he thought the board was being thoughtful when trying to address concerns. The comment about it being emotional is disingenuous. The Frankestown community has information in minutes to reassign students at FES. Discussion has taken place that there was no real sense directed at FES but more one for small schools. He asked the administration to address the recommendation that it was not the intent. He asked the board to be thoughtful about parking lots. When talking about funding streams for parking lots, one for the high school and one for the others leaves the impression that schools are being treated differently. Mr. Chamberlin asked for specific information about what led to that administration recommendation but has not heard back yet. In closing, he said that this issue has been brought up and Frankestown was put in a position. Frankestown has always supported the budget. He asked that concerns be recognized with respect. Kimberly Saunders said that she received two requests from FES residents and she outlined the response to those questions. No follow-up questions were received. She reported that show was unaware that there was a feeling that a response was missing.

Rich Cahoon said that we do not have a Right to Know process in this state. We have a public records request process.

Stephan Morrissey said that the process when someone makes a proposal gets motioned and then goes into conversation and then is voted or tabled. Such is that with Frankestown, the motion was tabled. He shared his concern with enrollments. In a down year, we will get a petition from twenty-five voters to close a school.

Rich Cahoon called Point of Order, to close the conversation.

Bob Edwards, Antrim, said that the board should reconsider Public Comment where important things are discussed. Public Comment is not allowed until after important discussions have occurred.

Further, Mr. Edwards said that it is the board's fiduciary responsibility to do a comprehensive study.

#### **11. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)**

Lori Schmidt certified that manifests listed totaling \$752,624.98 and Payroll totaling \$1,630,921.94 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.

**Dick Dunning moved to approve the manifests as read. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.**

#### **12. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II (If Required)**

**a. Negotiations**

**b. Personnel**

**c. Legal**

**Rich Cahoon moved to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 10:01 p.m. for matters of negotiation. Unanimous on a roll call vote.**

**Linda Quintanilha moved to exit non-public session at 10:26 p.m. Second. Unanimous.**

**Dick Dunning motioned to seal the minutes of non-public session for a period of five years. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.**

**Linda Quintanilha motioned to adjourn at 10:26 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok