

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, February 20, 2020

7:00 p.m.

SAU #1

Minutes

Present: John Jordan, Bob Marshall, Karen Hatcher, Dale Gabel, George Willard, Fred Woodhouse, Tim Theberge, Stephan Morrissey, Janine Lesser, Alan Edelkind, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Steve Ullman

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

1. Accept Minutes of January 23, 2020

Karen Hatcher moved to accept the minutes of January 23, 2020. Dale Gabel second. The minutes were amended to add the word "added" in the first sentence under agenda item 3 to read: "Dr. Saunders said that a Power Purchase Agreement was added to the warrant....". Second. Unanimous.

2. Budget

John Jordan said that he wished the proposed school budget was lower. All day preschool is \$400k. Our tax assessment will go up between .75 and .80 cents. People are hurting.

Karen Hatcher agreed and said that pressure needs to be put on the State for funding.

Janine Lesser said that she hopes that people are not looking at the preschool program as a luxury.

Kimberly Saunders reported that when she was the Asst. Superintendent, she knew that if we did one thing that would leverage long-term student growth, it was preschool.

Stephan Morrissey shared his concern about the financial impact, but we need to support young families.

This program helps the children. There will be a sliding fee scale for families. The benefit is the hope that it will grow our economy.

Karen Hatcher said that before preschool, we are seeing daycare centers closing. We have very limited opportunities. If we are going to attract, we have to build program within.

Karen asked how the Board is feeling about the budget and its ability to pass.

Some thought that it is looked at as "this is the way that it is".

Deliberative Session was quiet. Tim Theberge thought that some in attendance may not have known the format for when it was appropriate to ask questions.

3. Warrant Articles

Steve Ullman, Antrim, said that Article 6 was discussed in terms of open bidding. Kimberly said that the policy was waived by the Board to allow sole source for this article.

Steve Ullman said that the thought is that the school system looked favorably on one particular vendor.

Steve further spoke about the value of preschool benefits that are evident through middle school.

Stephan Morrissey outlined how the board arrived at a sole source as a result of information provided to the board that related to the investor and a late December deadline. Meanwhile, it is still in process and may be opened up to other vendors. The board has not had a vendor in mind from the start.

John Jordan asked if the Power Purchase did not pass what would happen to the article to establish an energy efficiency fund. The response was that if Article 5 did not pass and 6 did, a fund would be established. It is in place for energy efficiencies and not directed at solar alone.

Alan Edelkind said that discussion is needed about what types of communications occur to get the word out about District meeting. He said that it begins with a budget work session, interviews in the local paper followed, and then an article on the budget and viewpoint was printed. Three articles were provided that talk about the budget. First, the budget overview has fewer detail. Second, the Budget Primer includes much more detail about the budget and impact on taxes. Thirdly, the Impact of the Default Budget is underway. Most people don't understand that a default budget is serious. These three articles aim to inform. Mr. Edelkind said that the ConVal website has been modified to include a Budget Digest page to make it easy to get to the articles. A banner on the first page allows viewers to get right to the information without searching. In addition, a mailer goes out to every single resident in the ConVal School District outlining the warrant articles and defining what a "no" vote and a "yes" vote would mean. Town newsletters have been sent letters that include links to share this information. Towns have been very receptive and the information is timely. Alan said that he would like to see Selectmen involved to link town websites with this information.

Karen Hatcher also suggested posting on active social media pages.

Steve Ullman said that in Antrim, people get information from the Messenger and the Stonebridge Post. There is also a list serve. If you were to send a readable primer, budget, and default calculations, there would be a number of people that would read it. There is also a publication called the Limerick.

Kimberly Saunders said that the District cannot advocate, when we spend district dollars, one way or the other.

Discussion took place about a sense of the level of support that the Select boards have toward the proposed budget.

Building aid was touched on for work embedded in the Capital Improvement Plan. Over \$600M in aid has been applied for toward the availability of roughly \$40M.

4. Transition

John Jordan reported that this is his last meeting. John Jordan was recognized for his years of service to this committee. John shared how he got involved with it and said that he has found it valuable.

5. Other

None.

Dale Gabel moved that the committee will meet next on April 23rd. Second. Unanimous.

Dale Gabel motioned to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Karen Hatcher second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok

