

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Rd.
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

School Board Meeting

6:00 p.m.

Physical Location: ConVal High School Library
184 Hancock Rd.
Peterborough, NH

Virtual Location:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83807181135?pwd=TVRORWtuWjljaFF1bEF2K3lhQktEUT09>

Meeting ID: 838 0718 1135

Passcode: VVshU9

Phone: +1 646 558 8656 US

Meeting ID: 838 0718 1135

Passcode: 374883

MINUTES

BOARD

Rich Cahoon, Richard Dunning,
Alan Edelkind, Jim Fredrickson (6:40pm)
Katherine Heck (6:11pm), Janine Lesser,
Niki McGettigan, Kevin Pobst,
Robert Short, Jr., Tim Theberge,
Stephen Ullman, Jerome Wilson

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.
Lori Schmidt, B.A.
Carrie James, H.R.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Rich Cahoon called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call attendance was taken.

2. Right to Know for Public Meeting Emergency Declaration

Rich Cahoon read the *Right to Know for Public Meeting Emergency Declaration*.

Tim Theberge moved to exit non-public session at 6:44 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.

Tim Theberge moved to seal the minutes of non-public session for a period of 10 years. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

3. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes (Board Vote Required)

a. November 3, 2020

Dick Dunning moved to accept the minutes of November 3, 2020. Jerry Wilson second.

Stephen Ullman suggested removing the word "looking" under 8c.

Niki McGettigan and Kevin Pobst abstained. All others in favor. Motion carried.

4. Points of Pride

Kimberly Saunders reported on the first virtual open house. She also shared that on November 10th, the Monadnock Ledger Transcript highlighted a unique learning partnership between Monadnock Community Hospital and ConVal High School that Kristin Knarr developed. Now that they are doing this, people from around the region and country have been involved.

Dublin Consolidated School (DCS) students recently held a whole school morning meeting on the basketball court. They enjoyed a variety of activities and celebrated birthdays as well as honored veterans. Dick Dunning shared having received a note from a DCS student thanking him for his service.

5. Public Comment

None.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Personnel

Carrie James referenced the nomination of Amy Hatmaker, Community Preschool Case Manager.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the nomination. Stephen Ullman second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Kimberly Saunders referenced a list of co-curriculars that have been able to begin for the current school year.

7. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. Monthly Events Calendar

The monthly School Board and subcommittee meeting schedule for November and December were reviewed.

b. ConVal School District Reopening Update & Local COVID Data Update

Kimberly Saunders reported that the Chromebooks have arrived and configuration is underway.

As we get ready to transition to remote, all students will be remote. The first two days, November 30th and December 1st, will allow the technology pieces to be worked through.

There is a team that was put together to look at the reopening of the schools at the middle school level. A survey was conducted. The goal is to look at potential changes at the end of January. Kimberly said that we are beginning to start the COVID Campaign. The Public Service Announcement that was developed encouraging mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing was shared.

The Peterborough Fire Department has already taken the pledge. The goal is for others to as well so that we can return to school in person in January.

Board members took the pledge to wear masks, socially distance, and wash hands as well.

8. Reports

a. Teacher Representative

Rich Cahoon said that the board will be receiving a report but will not be in a position to respond.

Victoria Burnham thanked the board for their work to bring education to students. She referenced an email and supplemental materials she previously sent to the board. She said that a flex day is sought for middle school staff. She cited reasons why. The request, she said, aligns with the high school and allows grade level PLC's to meet and time to focus on better quality lessons. It would also allow them to meet with struggling students.

Brendan Mayo shared the struggles that middle school teachers face. They include the need for more time for middle school teachers to do what they need. Teachers fall behind. He spoke about the challenges of special education educators. He said that a flex day would allow more time to assess student learning, provide time to develop engaging lessons, help to provide equitable instruction, and prepare teachers to be the expert in the classroom.

Rich Cahoon said that the board has heard the comments and is not in the position to respond. Concerns can be brought to the committee who will bring recommendations to the board. Or, the CVEA rep can renegotiate the terms and conditions. The board cannot negotiate to address concerns at this point in time.

b. Policy Committee – Janine Lesser

Janine Lesser reported that Policy Committee met today and reviewed policies that will return to legal. EBCH was reviewed and will await feedback from content experts. Related policy JLCG was reviewed and will go to the board for a first read in December.

c. Budget & Property Committee – Jim Fredrickson

Jim Fredrickson reported that the Capital Improvement Plan was discussed and will be brought to the December 5th meeting for budget considerations. A placeholder in the trust fund for the use of pavilions was placed. A sense of the board that pavilions should be pursued will be asked.

Tim Theberge said that pavilions are a great idea, even outside of COVID.

Dick Dunning said that his concern is that we place something that is not directly connected to curriculum outputs. When looking at other needs, he is unsure. Projects that are built or advocated for are great as long as those individuals are there. He would look for something to come out of Education Committee that would detail how the spaces would be used to justify the cost. We have a lot of tents that could be set up outside if someone wants to use them.

Kevin Pobst said that there is a Strategic Plan Committee. The committee could work with the Governance Committee to look at the recovery phase. It will imagine what the school system ought to look at. Kevin said that he would like to see a well-developed plan, including research, and a detailed envisioning about what instruction would look like before we invest heavily. Too early to sign on at this time.

d. Strategic Plan Committee – Tim Theberge

Tim Theberge reported that they are looking at working in pieces; recovery, resiliency, and having governance connect with them. They will look at academics, mental health, facilities, personnel, co-curricular activities, community, and finance to name a few.

e. Communication Committee – Janine Lesser

Janine Lesser reported that discussion on financial update articles took place to help the general public know what is happening with the school budget and how COVID affects the process. A process of developing a schedule to inform the public was discussed. Guilfoil will be worked with. Posting information of detail on the webpages was discussed.

9. Old Business

a. Unanticipated Costs Due to COVID-19

Lori Schmidt asked that reporting be held off on unanticipated costs. \$413K was received from the State. Application for round two is due by December 1st.

b. Winter Sports Policy

Rich Cahoon referenced an email from Kevin Pobst that outlined proposed changes to the Winter Sports Policy from Kevin Pobst and Alan Edelkind.

Kevin Pobst moved to reconsider the winter sports plan. Alan Edelkind second.

In favor: Kevin Pobst, Robert Short, Jr., Stephen Ullman, Katherine Heck, Jim Fredrickson, Alan Edelkind.

Opposed: Jerry Wilson, Janine Lesser, Dick Dunning, Tim Theberge

Niki McGettigan abstained.

Motion carried.

Alan Edelkind said that the athletic proposal outlines three important items; athletes will be remote, so will their siblings, and the remote period will be the duration of sport plus two weeks. The start of winter athletics will be during the remote period. Athletes will be isolated from two high school cohorts. All schools are essentially being isolated. The amendment was to adopt the recommendation with the exception of interscholastic sports. This amendment will have the potential to expose a cohort more if an athlete is positive. The amendment may protect athletes but will allow for exposure of greater populations. Focusing on one outside activity is the thought. This amendment does not belong in the athletic proposal. How far does the ConVal School District reach to control student activity? Other clubs could have the same impact. Alan Edelkind said that the amendment should be withdrawn.

Alan Edelkind moved to delete this amendment from the athletic proposal. Kevin Pobst second.

A “Yes” vote removes the amendment offered in the last meeting and leaves as proposed by John Reitnauer and Heather McKillop.

A “No” vote keeps it in place.

In favor: Kevin Pobst, Robert Short, Jr., Stephen Ullman, Katherine Heck, Jim Fredrickson, Alan Edelkind.

Opposed: Jerry Wilson, Janine Lesser, Dick Dunning, Tim Theberge

Abstained: Niki McGettigan

Kevin Pobst said that last time around, he suggested that we could not have wrestling and Linda Quintanilha said that we are getting into administrative decision making. Instead of having a one size fits all, four requirements would be in place regardless of the sport.

Kevin Pobst said that high school administration may require any or all any or all of the four requirements but they are permitted to make decisions based on their assessment of the virus and risk level. Kevin further said that he wants the option to look at the way sports are conducted and how students are transported and make decisions based on that.

Kevin Pobst moved to change the language to add that they may require those requirements MOTION to modify policy adopted on October 27 as follows:

It is the recommendation of the administration to follow the NHIAA Council's timeline. During our remote period, members of the Blue and Gold Cohorts will be allowed to combine and form teams.

All ConVal High School winter sports programs would participate in a competitive limited regional NHIAA sanctioned schedule.

(change of language) The ConVal High School Administration may require, based on NHIAA defined risk levels and guidelines, that athletes who participate in interscholastic winter sports (1) learn remotely until after their final competition, and that (2) the athlete's siblings attending ConVal schools to learn remotely, (3) the athlete's household members who are employed by the ConVal school district to work remotely, and (4) the athlete and household quarantine for 14 days after their final competition before returning to in-person learning. ConVal High School Administration may differentiate the application of these requirements based on their assessment of the virus transmission risk level given the conduct of practices, transportation, and competition for each sport.

Dick Dunning second.

Kimberly Saunders said that when the decision of a board will put undue pressure she speaks up. Telling the general population that it is up to John Reitnauer and Heather McKillop to pick and choose, will put them in a position. They are trying to be fair to all.

Stephen Ullman asked the other arguments against Kevin's proposal.

Niki McGettigan said that she worries that you are putting a responsibility on those individuals that is very heavy. They are not expert enough on transmission of the virus. She worried about doing what is right for one person.

Tim Theberge said that as an elected official, these are the types of decisions that the board should make. In this environment, this is a call of the board and not administrators.

Dick Dunning said that he seconded the motion for the discussion but he does not support the motion.

Janine Lesser asked where this leaves us. Tim said that it leaves us as originally submitted.

Rich Cahoon said that our policy for the last three weeks is that with the amendment there would be no club sports. That is gone. This would now place the discretion for consideration to administration.

Rich said that if we vote this motion down, we will have the policy as originally presented. It says nothing about club sports.

Kevin Pobst said that the reason that he chose to put this language forward is to avoid saying no wrestling, no way, and that skiing and hockey should be here, and so on. It is administrative procedure. He sees that this appears to place a burden. However, it is not only about how administrators are served by the board, but also how parents and students are served by the board. He is trying to provide the option for administration to exercise their leadership.

Kimberly Saunders said that she is not just worried about the burden, they are capable of leading. But, they are being asked to decide in a vacuum. Skiing sounds great because it is outdoors, but what about the bathrooms or the lodge? Mitigation strategies at specific locations are of concern. It is no longer a reasonable time to make that call.

In favor: Alan Edelkind, Kevin Pobst, Katherine Heck, Jim Fredrickson

Opposed: Jerry Wilson, Janine Lesser, Dick Dunning, Tim Theberge, Robert Short, Stephen Ullman, Niki McGettigan

Motion failed.

10. New Business

a. Requisition Approvals (Board Vote Required) – Lori Schmidt

Lori Schmidt referenced requisitions totaling \$184,892.59.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the requisitions as presented. Janine Lesser second.

Robert Short, Jr. asked if we go out to bid for plowing. Confirmed. These are "up to" amounts.

Unanimous on a roll call vote.

b. Expenditure and Encumbrance Report - Lori Schmidt

Lori Schmidt said that the difference is in the payroll manifest and anything approved at past board meetings. Adjustments for expenses applying against the \$1.6M encumbrance and expenses have been removed to apply toward the encumbrance. We cannot journal entry out the encumbrance. We will pay the obligation and do a journal entry to move expenses out. In December, we should see a difference in the report and rule out anything being funded by the ESSR Grant.

Dick Dunning moved to approve expenditures and encumbrances therein. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

11. Public Comment

None.

12. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Lori Schmidt certified that manifests totaling \$632,966.23 and Payroll totaling \$950,049.64 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 presented. Jim Fredrickson second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Jim Fredrickson asked where the district is in terms of providing information to the towns to set tax rates. Lori Schmidt said that information has been sent to the State. Katherine said that most towns have sent tax bills out.

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

a. Negotiations

b. Personnel

Dick Dunning motioned to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Robert Short, Jr. second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok