

# OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road  
Peterborough, New Hampshire

## CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

### Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 25, 2021  
7:00 p.m.

**Physical Location: None**

**Virtual Location:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82451596349?pwd=bWliL0ZaNFpLUVpDVTkzOTJ0RUlCdz09>

Passcode: xY4br3

Telephone: 1 301 715 8592

ID: 824 5159 6349

Passcode: 168840

### Minutes

**Present:** John Robertson, Jeff Brown, George Willard, Diane Callahan, George Ravalico, Ed Juengst, Kristie LaPlante, Kate Fuller, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Tim Theberge, Stephen Ullman, Janine Lesser

#### 1. Call to Order

John Robertson called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

#### 2. Approve Minutes of February 25, 2021

Diane Callahan amended the minutes of page two to reflect that the Commissioner of Education, and not the Governor, privately educated his children.

Jeff Brown moved to accept as amended. Diane Callahan second. Unanimous.

#### 3. Selectmen's Advisory Chair and Vice-Chair positions

John Robertson asked for a nomination for Chair of Selectmen's Advisory Committee.

Jeff Brown moved to nominate John Robertson as Chairman. Ed Juengst second.

Any other nominations for Chair. None.

Roll Call Vote: Ed Juengst, Jeff Brown, George Willard, George Ravalico, Diane Callahan.

Unanimous.

John Robertson asked for a nomination for Vice-Chair.

Ed Juengst nominated Jeff Brown for Vice-Chair. Second. Unanimous.

#### 4. Where do we go from here?

John Robertson said that he checked in on the Selectmen's meeting after the recount. He understands that money is going to be moved around.

Kimberly Saunders said that in the past, John Jordan used to come to all of the meetings related to the budget and a report back would go to the towns. She asked if one of the things that SAC could do is talk about assigning a member of SAC to that process piece.

John Jordan would attend Budget & Property meetings and also budget preparation meetings. In addition, he attended most School Board meetings. He could talk about the budget to SAC and in turn it would go to the town Select boards.

John Robertson said that he hasn't received any of the logins to any meetings.

John Roberson asked if SAC could be notified of meetings and someone from SAC could be designated to attend. Confirmed.

Discussion took place about hosting SAC meetings in a hybrid form, both in person and remotely.

Kimberly said that her real concern is SAC being aware of the budget and the budget process.

Jeff Brown entertained doing hybrid meetings whenever possible.

Kate Fuller said that she preferred a hybrid model; she is appreciative that she can attend meetings from home.

Janine Lesser said that she heard in the past that some school board members attended select board meetings to provide updates on the budget and other topics of interest.

Tim Theberge said that he has met with the Hancock Select Board on several occasions.

Ed Juengst said that Kimberly Saunders has been placed on the agenda of past Peterborough Select Board meetings and provided a presentation. Ed Juengst said that attending meetings through Zoom has been very worthwhile for him.

John Robertson said that the more that each town can be informed is helpful. He asked Stephen Ullman if he had objection to providing a quarterly report to the Select board.

Stephen Ullman said that it would be an excellent idea for representation of the Select board at the meetings on budget development.

Discussion ensued.

## **5. SAC 2021-2022 Goals**

John Robertson asked for suggestions on how SAC could best contribute to the process.

Tim Theberge said that he has been reading years of ConVal School District Annual Reports. Over the 40 years, this group has gone from varying levels of involvement. The Articles of Agreement make it clear that this is a committee of the select boards on issues at play in the communities, but mostly fiscal.

John Robertson asked how involved should SAC should be with Legislative issues.

Dr. Kimberly Saunders said that this has been an extremely busy year with legislation. She is happy to provide updates. Kimberly said that this group has written letters regarding legislation and had them signed from select boards across the towns. She is happy to add a "Legislative Update" as an agenda item for future meetings.

Kimberly further said that there is significant concern about HB20 and SB130 and the impact it would have on the district. There is a prediction that SB130 will be made part of the biennium budget because there is not support in the House to pass it. There is significant opposition across the State from the general public to this. Over 3,000 have signed in opposition to these bills. HB554 forbids public schools from teaching about systematic racism or systematic sexism. These bills would be legislated through with the budget. Kimberly Saunders said that neither bill has enough support to pass with the House or the Senate alone so they are trying to embed them in the budget because of the bottle neck around the budget. There is such a rush to pass the budget, these would go through.

Diane Callahan asked how it can be prevented to go through with the budget. Contact State Legislators and State Senators and share your opposition if that is your view.

Stephen Ullman said that between \$3,700 and \$8,500 per student would be a significant loss of revenue, meanwhile, the school impacted by the loss of students would still remain intact.

Discussion took place about FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education). When we look at our nine towns and our schools, we could lose 100 students across our schools and not be able

to cut one single staff member. When it comes to school choice, it is important to know that it is not choice until every parent has a choice and this legislation does not do that. If we want to do choice in NH, we have the capacity to do it really well. If we are going to do it, let's put a commission together that helps the State meet its obligation first to public schools and then to Charter Schools. Let's not look at the states in the bottom ten in education that do not do education well.

Tim Theberge shared information from his reading of the District Annual Reports. Diane Callahan asked Tim if in his readings, does he see more involvement since SB2. Tim shared information in the reports about voting, not representative of the number who attended meetings.

## **6. Future SAC Meeting Dates**

Is the fourth Thursday of the month still a viable date whether they are virtual or in person.

George Ravalico said that the days works for him. As a new member, he will listen and learn.

## **7. Other**

Dr. Kimberly Saunders reported that ConVal budgets to the guaranteed maximum rate (GMR) for health insurance. This year it was 4.1% that was budgeted. Next year, the rate came in at a negative 3.1% saving the district \$395,000 in the 21-22 budget

Related to enrollment, many districts have had a decline in their enrollment that has had a significant impact. Many districts did not provide a remote option for students. ConVal did and it allowed us to shift kids and teachers around. We have 500 students, K-12, choosing to attend fully remote. This assured that we would not lose \$1.8M in revenue had those students gone to another option such as VLACS or other.

ConVal was handed a decision on the lawsuit about State funding. It was remanded back to the court. The Supreme Court dismissed the summary judgement and the motion for dismissal. Hard cold facts were asked for. We will be looking for other towns and districts to join in the suit.

Kristie LaPlante said that the ConVal news blog has been phenomenal. She said that this is the time that the district should explain why the money for the remote and savings on insurance cannot be given back. There is a major distrust of the school district right now.

Kimberly said that those dollars are in the 21/22 budget so the earliest they could go back to the towns is June 2022.

Kristie said that if the information is not put right to people, they will not seek it out.

Kate Fuller said that the Dublin Advocate can push information out as well. Education is a key piece. Kate said that she would be happy to put it out on their platforms.

Janine Lesser asked if it would make sense to send the pieces that Jim Fredrickson wrote, one by one, to the towns to share. Tim Theberge said that they would have to be broken down further to allow people to be willing to read them.

Janine Lesser said that the information is not always distilled.

Kristie LaPlante said that she would be more than willing to share the process that she shares with the towns about the tax situation. She said that taking the knowledge and developing it to a shareable piece would be helpful. Kristie further shared a level of distrust because people feel that "ballots were found" during the recount.

**Ed Juengst motioned to adjourn. Diane Callahan second at 8:20 p.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok