

# OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road

Peterborough, New Hampshire

## CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

### School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Immediately Following Public Hearing

### Minutes

#### BOARD

Rich Cahoon, Keira Christian,  
Richard Dunning, Alan Edelkind,  
Jim Fredrickson, Katherine Heck,  
Janine Lesser, Kevin Pobst,  
Liz Swan, Tim Theberge,

#### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.  
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.  
Lori Schmidt, B.A.  
Mark Schaub, Tech.  
Tim Grossi, Facilities  
Carrie James, H.R.  
Cari Christian-Coates, Student Serv.  
Ben Moenter, Special Ed.  
Heather McKillop, CVHS

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

Tim Theberge called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

#### 2. Right to Know for Public Meeting Emergency Declaration

The Emergency Declaration was not needed as a result of the Emergency Order having expired.

Tim Theberge asked the Board to move the Public Comment session prior to non-public. Confirmed.

Tim will begin with Zoom community members and then those in present.

There was no public comment from remote participants.

Dr. Kimberly Saunders told those present that if they had comments related to the Reopening Plan that they do so now because the second Public Comment session will be after that agenda item.

Rich Scheinblum, Monadnock Hospital Administrator, said that he understands that there are some that want the mask requirement removed. Mr. Scheinblum shared his experience on the COVID Monitoring Team and other related work. He said that the School Board charged the committee to make recommendations that protect the community at large. Long term effects of COVID are still being studied. The plan for last year was designed to be fluid and could be adjusted. This is the spirit of plan.

**Rich Cahoon moved to allow Mr. Scheinblum additional time for public comment. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous.**

Rich Scheinblum said that removing masks now, out of a minority public opinion, would undermine the work of the committee and signal that safety is not the highest priority.

Christie Harris, AES Parent, said that if masking is still effective why do we still see the results. Masks are being removed as a requirement in other places. Why would we continue when we cannot control what the rest of the communities are doing? Ms. Harris said that she would like reconsideration requiring masking.

Erika, AES parent, reported that she works for Cheshire Medical. She asked if the evidence under consideration is for children and community spread or wider. Long-term care facilities have the majority of cases. In the reopening plan, it says that the plan will be followed but there are still students wearing masks.

Brittany Girard, AES, asked the board to consider eliminating mask requirements. She said that they have an impact on the mental health of children. She said that she feels misled that outside mask breaks would be permitted and it has not happened. She said that she hopes another opinion will be considered in the minority opinion, which is really the majority.

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

a. Legal

b. Negotiations

Janine Lesser moved to enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 6:22 pm for matters of negotiations. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.

**Katherine Heck moved to exit non-public session at 6:56 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Katherine Heck moved that the District be closed for the day on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Janine Lesser second. Keira Christian, Rich Cahoon, and Dick Dunning abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.**

**Janine Lesser moved to accept the three exceptions in retirement notifications. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**Rich Cahoon moved to seal the minutes of non-public session for a period of five years. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous.**

#### **4. Points of Pride**

Dr. Kimberly Saunders shared various points of pride as reported to her from administrators.

#### **5. Public Comment**

None.

#### **6. Consent Agenda**

##### **a. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes**

1) June 1, 2021

##### **b. Personnel**

1) Nominations

2) Co-Curricular Notifications

The Consent Agenda was adopted, as a whole, by the board.

#### **7. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business**

##### **a. School Board Induction Series**

- Facilities/Technology

Mark Schaub, Technology Director, shared the various areas of his department's responsibility. Mr. Schaub shared the Technology Organization Chart which is primarily made up of five individuals. The Technology Plan identifies the vision and is broken out into eight parts supported by the technology team. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment is one focus area. Use of Space and Time tools were shared as well as information about submitting a request for tech support. Making sure that the servers are up and running along with the support of associated backup is another responsibility. Protecting the internet and content is crucial. This department supports 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills through professional development opportunities. Managing the technology budget and resources toward meeting student learning goals is another area that is supported by the technology department. In addition, core systems that are supported include PowerSchool, Infinite Visions, Google, Meals Plus, Follett, Snap Health Center, E-Rate, the development of a Data Governance Plan, and Special Education/Assistive Technology.

Alan Edelkind shared how impressed he is with what Mark and the Technology Department has been able to do to support student learning.

Jim Fredrickson said that when looking at modernizing classrooms in the future it is tied into technology support.

Tim Grossi, Facilities Director, shared the Mission Statement of the District Facilities Team embedded in the Strategic Plan. In summary, his position is responsible for ensuring the smooth running of eleven schools, 600,000 sq. ft. of educational space, 127 acres of land, 140,000 gallons of fuel oil, 19 boilers, 145 HVAC units, 15 acres of athletic fields, 802 parking spaces, 363 faucets, 21 monthly electric bills, and the oversight of all of it. He and his department are responsible for Life Safety i.e. fire safety, elevator inspection, kitchen ventilation and environmental permitting. Compliance with the NH Department of Education, local Fire departments, and insurance company inspections fall under this department. The facilities department budget totals +/- \$4M. Long range planning including a Capital Plan, Maintenance Plan among others falls under Mr. Grossi. Constantly seeking reductions that will result in cost savings are part of Tim's work. Routine repair, preventive maintenance, emergency response, project oversight, purchase order procurement, problem solving, air quality maintenance, and athletic field maintenance and preparation are part of the job.

The Facilities Group is made up of 7 Full-Time ConVal Technicians, 4 Full-time custodians among others which include a master electrician, certified gas pipe fitter, certified playground safety inspector, and emergency response to name a few.

Tim Grossi shared that success does not happen without strong, positive relationships.

Dick Dunning said that both Tim Grossi and Mark Schaub are the finest in what they do for the students and staff of the ConVal School District and he commended their leadership.

##### **b. NESDEC Demographic Information**

Kimberly Saunders reported that NESDEC is offering a reduced rate of one-half off the cost of affiliation. ConVal was a member at one time. NESDEC conducts a demographic study which is part of the membership fee.

Kevin Pobst asked why we are no longer a member. The response was that the board at the time made the decision as a result of a feeling that a high level of service for the fee was not apparent.

Rich Cahoon said that they were used for two purposes; demographic study and recruitment assistance that did not go well. The annual demographic study was more a straight-line projection from one year to the next. The full demographic evaluation was done well.

Rich Cahoon added that the Articles of Agreement require a demographic study every three or so years.

A dollar figure for cost will be brought to the next School Board meeting.

### **c. Unreserved Fund Balance Estimate**

Kimberly Saunders emphasized that “projected” and “unaudited” information is being shared.

Lori Schmidt said that an unrestricted fund balance is projected at \$4,000,000. Revenue Sources and Unexpended Appropriations were outlined. Unexpended Appropriations were outlined as well. An unused retained fund balance in the amount of \$320,764 and then ESSER funds became available allowing this amount to be retained. Unexpended appropriations included savings in salaries and benefits, summer curriculum, athletics, supplies and books, transportation, tuition, health insurance rates, and mileage.

The recommendation is to place \$700,000 in trust funds, reduce the town appropriation schedule and payments by \$1.8M to help town’s cash flow. It is estimated that \$1.4M be returned. This is unaudited.

Kimberly Saunders said that we received significant legal opinion about this. We encumbered these dollars knowing we would have to pay for compensatory services for students related to IEP’s. We were able to encumber those costs last year but we cannot roll it into another year.

Rich Cahoon said that the transportation savings is in large part a result of a staffing shortage at the bus company. Lori Schmidt confirmed that we have not had the manpower to operate the buses that are needed. It was not intentional to save money.

Rich Cahoon said that he would love communications trumpeting this. Confirmed.

Kimberly Saunders said that we will not see these numbers again. We froze the budget quickly at the onset of COVID. The district work that did not take place means that we are behind in those areas. We will be able to tap into ESSER funds to do some of this work. In the area of athletics, we did not run many of the pieces. Other pieces were noted. This caused pain in terms of student participation, social/emotional impact, among others. Getting to this number was not in the best interest of our kids.

Rich Cahoon cautioned that he does not want the double counting of the \$780K both this year and next. This is a one-time opportunity.

### **d. Health Insurance Start Date**

Carrie James shared information about an adjustment for new employees in the area of health insurance start dates. In the past, an employee hired could elect to receive benefits on July 1<sup>st</sup> or August 1<sup>st</sup> of the given year. The exposure for incurring costs in July or August for an employee who will not begin work until September was noted. The first day of work is defined as the first day they will report to work. Employees would have the same benefits on the same day. Carrie reported surveying other districts on this topic. Two offered benefits on a July 1<sup>st</sup> date.

CVEA language permits this.

Carrie James said that she is looking for consistent practice. She said that it does not impact the hiring process.

The recommendation is to use the first day worked and the first contracted day as the date of hire for all insurance and benefits for offering and enrollment for consistency.

Rich Cahoon shared concern with it going against current practice and concerns with hiring.

This was agreed not to be implemented for the upcoming school year and to mull it over for the upcoming year.

### **e. Recommendation for Administrative Structure at HES**

Kimberly Saunders shared the recommendation for Nicole Pease to be appointed to be the principal for both Hancock Elementary School and Dublin Consolidated School.

Dick Dunning asked if this was for one year only. Kimberly Saunders said that this would not be for one year; it would be a permanent assignment. Dick shared his concern with what he has seen in the past.

Kevin Pobst asked what the feedback is on the Pierce and Frankestown Elementary School shared responsibility. Kimberly Saunders said that the principal has felt supported.

Katherine Heck shared Dick’s concern with a shared principal model. Dublin will not have a fifth grade next year; therefore there would not be a need for a teaching principal next year at DCS.

Kimberly said this position would no longer be a teaching principal but rather a principal of both DCS and HES. She added that based on the requirements of principals and the requirements of teachers, the teaching principal model is not always feasible.

Dr. Ann Forrest said that she has not had the experience of being a teaching principal but has been a principal across two schools. It offers the opportunity to further refine your approach to things when working across two schools. There are pro’s to this model.

**Rich Cahoon moved to approve administrations recommendation. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous.**

### **f. Research Project**

Dr. Kimberly Saunders outlined the proposed research project.

**Dick Dunning moved to approve the research project. Liz Swan second. Unanimous.**

## 8. Reports

### a. Teacher Representative

Rachael Heard shared what teachers have done to teach students in the environment over the past year. She said that this is a time to celebrate the year.

### b. Communication Committee – Alan Edelkind/Janine Lesser

Janine Lesser said that the details of the proposed public forums were worked out. They discussed communication for reopening and recovery. Amy Janoch will work with Guilfoil Public Relations on future communications. In addition, policy of communications was discussed and is in the works. It was agreed that the Board will assign pieces to alert the public on what becomes law related to education.

### c. Food Service Committee – Richard Dunning

Last night's meeting was cancelled and will be rescheduled.

### d. Policy Committee – Katherine Heck

Katherine Heck reported that the committee discussed a student discipline policy update that will come to the full board in July. The Financial Policy Review Schedule will be prioritized. JICFA, hazing policy, was reviewed and will go to legal for review. Work continues on the evaluation policy of the Superintendent.

## 9. Old Business

### a. Legislation

Tim Theberge reported that the House ceded to the Senate on divisive content and contains the voucher bills still at this time.

Katherine Heck spoke about funding being tied to enrollment being appropriated to a specific account. Katherine shared other updates as well.

Kimberly Saunders reported that a figure of \$4K was being used for the voucher. It was asked where the \$4K figure was arrived at but went unanswered.

### b. Livestream of Board Meetings

Kimberly Saunders referenced information from Upstream Sound & More related to livestreaming board meetings. Livestreaming would be more efficient and effective over Zoom for those that cannot attend meetings in person. This function could also be used for trainings across other buildings.

Mark Schaub reported that that a fixed camera, microphones, and other equipment was recommended resulting in a quote for \$5,629.58.

Katherine Heck asked if other products have been investigated for this function. Mark Schaub reported reaching out to other vendors but Upstream has been doing work in the district and provided a quote.

Kimberly Saunders said that the amount of audio that we need here with School Board members and administration is an issue. In addition, we said that we would no longer conduct meetings on Zoom after tonight's meeting.

Kimberly said that we could train someone to manage the bi-monthly meetings for livestream as well. There would be set-up and takedown time as well.

Rich Cahoon said that he has heard feedback that people would like to continue to attend meetings remotely.

Tim Theberge shared concern with having to move in and out of public and non-public sessions.

Kevin Pobst shared that he would like to see additional quotes for these services before committing. Is there a system that could be operated independently?

Experiences with livestream were shared.

Mark Schaub said that this is something that we can operate in house. He can look at other audio input. One of the benefits of this system is flexibility with audio and video.

Rich Cahoon suggested that we define what the scope of the exploration should be before sending Mark to research.

Dick Dunning said that Mark's proposal makes sense based on Mark's effort to use equipment we have in house now.

**Dick Dunning moved to follow through with the quote presented with additional information that may be necessary about manpower available at meetings and other required information.**

**Janine Lesser second.**

Katherine Heck agreed that we need to address this however, she shared her concerns with the need to have a person present to film. She said that automated systems are available that require a press of the button. She is in favor of the service but nervous about the need for an individual to run equipment.

The motion is not a vote to go with the quote provided but rather to gain additional information needed.

Kevin Pobst said that he wants information on other systems to assure that we are providing high quality.

Rich Cahoon shared the proposed cost on the quote and additional manpower hours for a period of one year.

Rich said that this should be done for one year and reevaluated at the end of the year.

**Unanimous.**

### c. Reopening Plan (Board Vote Required)

Kimberly Saunders referenced the Reopening Plan and redacted feedback she has received on the plan. She asked that the COVID Monitoring Team be made available to answer any questions tonight.

**Katherine Heck moved to adopt the reopening plan. Janine Lesser second.**

Katherine Heck reported hearing from eleven constituents all around mask wearing. She conducted her research on what other states are doing as well to get a sense. It is all over the board. She asked that if the plan is adopted as written that we maintain, as we have done, the flexibility to roll back restrictions if we find it appropriate.

Rich Cahoon thanked the COVID Monitoring Team. He suggested that in a new year, we would need to change the way that the team operates. It has been an appeal to authority. We will need more of a sense that “this is our recommendation and this is why” approach. He agreed with comments in public that this is more a majority opinion to not require masks. Masks outdoors is a sticking point.

Kimberly Saunders said that she has addressed masks outdoors stating that masks outside are not required if social distancing can be maintained. This information has been shared multiple times. In addition, the plan does not say a hard and fast “we will wear masks”, it says that we will follow specific guidance. When it contradicts, we take it to the COVID Monitoring Team.

Discussion took place about what the document states; if we say we adopt CDC Guidelines, a fully vaccinated individual would no longer have to wear a mask.

Kimberly Saunders said that the feedback is strong about asking about vaccinations. Surveys are conducted.

Rich Cahoon shared a concern with the transportation recommendation. If we encourage students not to take the bus under certain conditions, we have to say that the risk getting to school is greater for COVID than other modes of getting to school.

Kevin Pobst brought focus to the assumed starting point is in blue mode.

Dr. Suzanne Schoel said that it is hard to predict August and September. Concern is over the Delta Variant and is much more contagious. We don't know how effective the vaccine is with this strain. We will still have people under the age of 12 that are not immunized and can carry it into the schools.

Kevin Pobst shared concern with basing procedure on avoiding conflict with certain parents.

Dr. Schoel said that her practice contemplated not accepting non-vaccinated children which did not go well.

Ed Walker said that the district was successful this past year. Other districts experienced late year outbreaks as a result of practice. September is a far way out. This lays out a plan and option to continue until we know more. This summer will allow a test after day camps and other experiences. Problems across the schools were family related. He said that he does not see the harm with a plan that allows flexibility or to enact whatever guidelines needed to be successful.

Rich Cahoon said that the plan cannot be open ended. He said that we need to change the default setting so that if we do something different than surrounding areas we need to be able to explain.

Liz Swan said that she hears about the psychological well-being of mask wearing on students. She wants this to be a focus moving forward.

Kevin Pobst shared his interest in language that might be used to describe the practices for the monitoring team.

Rich Cahoon said that the plan refers to the monitoring team. It would make him feel comfortable to hear that we are going to say why we are following specific advice, not just that we are following it.

Kimberly Saunders reminded the board that the monitoring team are volunteers to the district. To ask the team to provide an explanation of the “whys” of their response is a concern.

Rich Cahoon said that if we are going to be different than we need to explain why.

Katherine Heck said that with the State of Emergency lifted in NH, she shared what surrounding states require. She asked that as we think about mask wearing as it gets closer to reopening that it is for everyone.

**Katherine Heck moved to amend the motion to adopt the 2021/2022 Reopening Plan providing more detailed information when changes are made within the plan as written for when those changes occur.**

**Janine Lesser second.**

Kimberly Saunders pointed out that every time a change was made, a detailed explanation was provided. This plan was not made without bringing explanations forward. Second, she said that she is unsure what personnel is thought to be available to do this work. She requested that the explanations are applied to funding to pay people to provide the explanation being asked.

Rich Cahoon said that when discussion happens at the monitoring team that some of that information be shared. There are districts that aren't requiring masks but we do.

Dr. Schoel said that when decisions were made, information was provided that often included citations. If you are not immunized, the recommendation is to wear a mask indoors. The fact that elementary kids cannot be immunized yet is a concern.

Tim Theberge said that the science is settled on this issue yet people reach different conclusions.

Rich Cahoon said that we should not base this on public opinion but we should explain to the public why we haven't made changes. He is asking for an explanation of why we are doing things differently.

Kevin Pobst shared an example when the NHIAA required masks where he would have liked more information. Kimberly said that we would not have been able to compete if we did not comply.

Kimberly Saunders said that if you are looking for explanations of divergence, a geographical boundary would be needed. Parameters are needed to develop an explanation that would be meaningful.

Alan Edelkind said that we agreed that the plan is a good one. We are saying that we are not satisfied with communication when changes are made. The board has responsibility with voting on when changes are made. Therefore, the board will have to vote differently. We have a process in place to approve the change or not.

Dick Dunning said that the parameters would be districts that surround us. He said that it is part of the discussion that involves the recommendation.

Jim Fredrickson said that we move forward improving the plan and ask Kimberly to provide a recommendation on how to handle this additional communication moving forward.

Kevin Pobst said that it would fall on the School Board to provide a robust explanation on changes.

Rich Cahoon further suggested that people need further explanation as to why. How was a recommendation arrived at?  
**The Motion on the floor is to approve the Reopening Plan as presented with a commitment for improved communication on decisions and changes. In favor: Unanimous.**

**d. Solar Project (Board Vote Required)**

**Janine Lesser moved to approve the Power Purchase Agreement for a solar project as presented.**

**Jim Fredrickson second. Unanimous.**

**e. 2<sup>nd</sup> Read/Adoption (Board Vote Required)**

**- ILD: Non-Educational/Non-Academic Questionnaires, Surveys, and Research**

**Janine Lesser moved to adopt policy ILD as read. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous.**

**10. New Business**

**a. 1<sup>st</sup> Read Policy**

**1) IHAK: Character and Citizenship Education**

Tim Theberge referenced this policy for a first read.

**b. Deputy Treasurer**

**Katherine Heck moved to appoint Judy Miskelly as Assistant Deputy Treasurer for a period of one year.**

**Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

**c. Budget Transfers**

Lori Schmidt referenced budget transfers as a result of cleaning up salaries and benefit lines. In addition, changes to cover encumbrances with legal expenses are asked and to cover food service.

**Rich Cahoon moved to approve the budget transfers. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous.**

**d. Expense and Encumbrances**

May and June Encumbrance - **Rich Cahoon moved to accept the expense report and adopt any encumbrances therein. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous.**

**e. Purchase Recommendations**

Lori Schmidt referenced the following purchase recommendations.

**249 access point 1-year licenses in the amount of \$19,367.22 – Kevin Pobst moved to approve this request. Janine Lesser second. Unanimous.**

**55 Access Points to replace existing models in the amount of \$35,132.25.**

**Kevin Pobst moved to approve this request. Keira Christian second. Unanimous.**

**6 Replacement Treadmills in the amount of \$22,954.00 – Kevin Pobst moved to approve this request.**

**Dick Dunning Second. Unanimous.**

**Transportation Contract - Multi-Year Agreement –One bid was received. Details were outlined.**

The motion requested is to accept a bid but not the single start time.

**Janine Lesser moved to accept the contract for transportation. Dick Dunning second. Rich Cahoon abstained.**

**All else in favor. Motion carried.**

**f. Final Encumbrances 2020-2021**

A level one HVAC system is requested. Because the estimate is \$100K, it was thought to use funding in the budget rather than ESSER funds with reasons cited. The process is lengthy. The State DOE emailed with further guidance late today. Defining what constitutes renovation vs. construction is underway. Lori Schmidt said that if ESSER can be used she will.

**Rich Cahoon moved to approve this request. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous.**

**g. Town Payment Schedule Draft**

The schedule applies \$1.8M to reduce the amount towns have to pay. Authorization to send to towns was requested.

**Katherine Heck moved to approve payment schedule as presented. Rich Cahoon second. Unanimous.**

**h. Monthly Events Calendar – July 20<sup>th</sup> Board Goals Meeting**

The July 20<sup>th</sup> School Board meeting will be when administration reports on goals. An earlier start time was suggested.

Committee meetings going forward require a physical quorum present. Tim Theberge suggested in person meetings only from this point forward. Equity Committee meeting offers both a remote and in person option. Rich Cahoon said that we have conducted countless committee meetings without a quorum present.

**11. Public Comment**

None.

**12. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)**

Lori Schmidt certified that the manifests listed, totaling \$1,666,711.58, 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.

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

None.

Dick Dunning motioned to adjourn at 10:35 p.m. Jim Fredrickson second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok