

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

**Thursday, August 26, 2021
SAU Office Board Room
7:00 p.m.**

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approve Minutes of June 24, 2021**
- 3. School Reopening Update**
- 4. Committee Reports**
- 5. Surplus Update**
- 6. Superintendent Meeting**

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CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 24, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Physical Location: SAU Board Room

Virtual Location: None

Minutes

Present: John Robertson, George Willard, Jeff Brown, William Kennedy, Bob Marshall, Kate Fuller, Carole Monroe, Tim Theberge, Stephen Ullman, Jim Fredrickson, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Lori Schmidt, Janine Lesser

1. Call to Order

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

2. Approve Minutes of May 27, 2021

Jeff Brown moved to approve the minutes of May 27, 2021. George Willard second. Unanimous.

3. Unexpended Fund Balance

Dr. Saunders reported that it is projected that there will be \$4,000,000 in unrestricted fund balance. How is this possible? On July 7th we froze the budget. Nothing was ordered that wasn't absolutely necessary. Prior to that, services for special education were not spent but anticipated to be spent on those compensatory services at a later date. Last year, direction was minimal. Services not provided were evaluated and the board encumbered \$1.6M for potential compensatory claims. Approximately \$600,000 was used for these services. We hired additional specialists to meet the needs to provide these services that were necessary. In addition, unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$600,000 was in place. The board retained \$320,764.00. This totaled \$2M.

The remaining \$2M was a result of programs that did not run; summer academy classes, summer school, substitute teachers, athletics, co-curricular, supplies, transportation, tuition, health insurance, and mileage. After funding trust funds in the amount of \$700,000 and reducing town appropriations payments it is anticipated to return a balance to set the tax rate in the amount of \$1.4 million dollars. This is unaudited information.

This reflects programming that we are obligated to provide that we were unable to. Every expenditure went to the board for their approval.

William Kennedy asked about school transportation. Did we transport last year?

Yes, we came back to school and incurred transportation. In addition, buses were used to deliver food to students who qualified for free and reduced lunch and provide technology packages.

The new schedule that was just sent to the towns includes \$1.8 million to reduce town appropriation payments and is reflected in the new payment schedule. It was sent out last week.

Lori Schmidt said that the first page of information sent to the towns identifies how the calculation was arrived at. The reports have gone through the DRA process. The \$1.8M was subtracted and calculations by town were calculated.

Bob Marshall asked how the second portion is going to be distributed. At the beginning of September, revised estimated revenue will be submitted to the DRA and the fund balance returned will be identified. It reduces the amount that towns have to raise and is not a check back to the towns.

Jim Fredrickson said that it is his intention to write an article (Article #11) that will explain all of this in detail.

Jeff Brown asked about a \$3.2M fund balance. He further asked how the district was doing with supplies.

Kimberly Saunders said that a certain amount is budgeted per year per student. The district is fine with supplies.

Lori Schmidt said that we substantially decreased our buying but we did do some. There were unknowns about FEMA and ESSER monies.

Dr. Saunders said that she and Lori Schmidt, Business Administrator, would be happy to attend any Select board meeting or meet with Town Administrators to go over the numbers.

Recap – \$1.8M has already come off the payment schedule. \$1.4M will be used in the future calculations.

Discussion took place about monthly payments from the towns while the towns receive two payments per year from their residents.

Why was \$1.8M used rather than \$3.2M used? The \$1.8M is an attempt to help towns with cash flow now.

The remainder will be used when the auditing figures come forward.

It was noted that the school district cannot float a TAN but towns can.

Dr. Saunders said that the district does not have the same flexibility as the towns. In addition, she said that should the towns get into trouble they can make requests to the district for flexibility for consideration.

Jeff Brown asked what cost saving measures the district may have experienced.

Kimberly Saunders said that 85% of the budget is related to staffing. The only way to cut costs is to cut staff. There are efficiencies. We are the largest geographic school district in the State.

Tim Theberge said that several times the district has been asked to look at consolidation. It is a lot of work and on all three occasions it has been turned down.

Kimberly Saunders said that the political will has not existed to take consolidation or reconfiguration any further. The most important thing that we are doing right now is bringing our students back in school and working with them to cover ground that has been lost.

Tim Theberge said that the district runs leaner than is probably healthy for a district this size.

Discussion took place about Legislation.

Carole Monroe said that consolidation has been discussed several times over twenty years. She said that she has not seen a model that combines “like cultured schools”.

Kimberly Saunders cautioned that you do not want to combine schools such that all of the poorer towns are combined into one school. Demographics and cultures are not the same thing.

4. Fall 2021 Reopening Plan

Dr. Saunders reported that the reopening plan is not very different than presented in May. Decisions about mitigation strategies have not been finalized yet as a result of decisions about variants that may be needed. The second piece is around vaccination rates in our communities and in our state. In addition, the medical impact on children is a factor.

Right now, masks are not required outdoors as long as physically distanced. In the fall, they may not be required at all outside.

We have decided to continue screening students upon arrival and physical distancing in classrooms. Cleaning regimens will remain. Plexiglass may come down. ConVal has not had a case of transmission within our schools.

Jim Fredrickson and Stephen Ullman exited the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

All of the schools have ionization filtration systems. ConVal got ahead of the supply chain problem. We have extremely clean air in our buildings.

Jeff Brown asked about the tents. Is there a way to liquidate and sell some of them?

Kimberly Saunders said that it is being looked at. ConVal does want to hold onto several in the event that they are needed.

5. Committee reports

Tim Theberge reported that Budget & Property and Education Committee have met and have developed priorities.

Meetings, other than the School Board, will reconvene in August. The board will meet in July.

6. Overview of 2020-2021 Year

Tim Theberge reported that he has observed the delivery of education and meals at both ConVal and other districts. ConVal offered as many programs possible under the protocols in place. Kids were thankful when athletics started to run. Much of what this district did was then replicated in other districts. He added that it would have been nice to have the State as a partner throughout this process but they were not. He applauded the staff and students for the phenomenal job done by all.

7. Other

Kimberly Saunders asked if there is a Chair and Vice-Chair to this committee. John Robertson is Chairman and Jeff Brown is Vice-Chairman.

Selectmen's Advisory Committee will meet next in August.

Jeff Brown moved to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. Carole Monroe second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok