

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Physical Location: SAU #1 Board Room

Livestream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/c/ConValEvents>

Minutes

BOARD

William Bryk, Tom Burgess,
Richard Dunning, Alan Edelkind,
Jim Fredrickson, Curtis Hamilton,
Dan Harper, Michael Hoyt,
James Kingston, Thomas Kirlin,
Greg Kriebel

Lucy Jackson, Student Rep.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.
Brian Cisneros, B.A.
Michael Hatfield, H.R.
Heather McKillop, CVHS
Jen Kiley, CVHS ATC
Rachel Lunan-Hill, FES

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Richard Dunning called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Points of Pride

Kimberly Saunders shared various Points of Pride as reported to her by administrators.

3. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Brian Cisneros certified that Manifests totaling \$1,772,608.48 have been reviewed by him 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

Jim Fredrickson moved to approve the Manifests as read. Alan Edelkind seconded. Unanimous.

4. Public Comment

Richard Dunning read a statement about Public Comment.

Chris Lundsted, Peterborough, said that he has worked as athletic trainer and is present to speak about the decision to not renew Kevin Proctor's contract. The consensus is that Kevin is incredible at his job. It would be devastating to lose Kevin. Chris spoke about the work that he has done with Kevin and what students need. He thanked the board for their time.

Amanda Perry, Antrim, said that today she saw the Athletic Director position posted on the website. She said that she is disappointed. She asked what message this sends to the community, staff, and future employees. She asked what other changes are in store for the athletic programs. She urged others to seek answers.

Erin Michaud, Peterborough, said that she is here on behalf of Kevin Proctor. Not renewing his contract is an absolute blow to the community and program. As a district, we hear that we cannot retain teachers. We let six go at the high school. What would make sense is to stick to our beliefs and acting on our "We are ConVal" motto.

5. Reports

a. Student Representative – Lucy Jackson

Lucy Jackson reported that the boys' varsity tennis had a home game today. Other upcoming dates were shared. Students will be travelling to Montreal and Spain over break. Two weeks ago, eleven students participated in a clay competition.

b. Teacher Representative

Leslie Hodgen, Kindergarten teacher at GES, reported a lot of great things going on; NHD, third annual book bracket tying in March madness by reading books together and voting on them. Literacy night took place at GES and a PTO readathon.

c. Budget & Property Committee – Jim Fredrickson

Public Hearings will take place on May 7th prior to the School Board Meeting to use trust fund money for the Peterborough Elementary School roof, CVHS, and Hancock playground.

Budget & Property Committee will meet to discuss the CTE project plan and funding.

Kimberly Saunders reported that we have had more special education costs than in the past which will impact the return of funds.

Dick Dunning said that as a board, we need to authorize Jim Fredrickson and Mike Hoyt to read the manifests and approve them.

Greg Kriebel moved to approve Jim Fredrickson and Mike Hoyt to read and approve the manifests. Alan Edelkind seconded. Unanimous.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes

1) April 2, 2024

b. Personnel

1) 2023-2024 Resignation

2) 2024-2025 Leave of Absence Request

3) 2023-2024 Co-Curricular Notifications

Greg Kriebel moved to accept the Consent Agenda. Alan Edelkind seconded. Unanimous.

7. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. Attorney, Dean Eggert Presentation – Board Responsibilities, Right to Know, & Feasibility Studies

Attorney, Dean Eggert, introduced himself and his firm. He shared that Wadleigh, Starr & Peters is 125 years old.

Attorney Eggert said that his goal is to share light on what the board does and why.

We do what we do for all children. We have a fiduciary trust that involves the lives of children.

Decisions should be informed, in part, by law.

The School Board is impacted by the State Constitution, State Statutory Law, Judicial Decisions (e.g. adequate education funding lawsuit), Federal Law, District Charter e.g. Articles of Agreement, and District Policy.

In addition, The State Board of Education, U.S. Department of Education (grants), and Legislative Body (citizens).

The School Board is the governing body.

Statutory obligation for educational quality. NH is not a home rule state. The State has much more authority.

Minimum standards are the floor of the education we need to stand on and not reach.

The board has the duty to provide equality of educational opportunity. ConVal has continually reviewed what is provided.

Regardless of the town a board member serves, you have a duty to serve the students of all of the ConVal towns.

The Statutory Duty to Feed Students, The Board's Duties with Regard to Teacher Dismissal were touched on. When it comes to teacher dismissal or nonrenewal were touched. If it is nonrenewal, the board owes the duty not to comment.

Operational policies and student policies were among several touched on e.g. attendance policies.

RSA 193:38 and 193:39 involve anti-discrimination and the plan to prevent, intervene, and assess the presence of discrimination.

A Board member can be sued, but if acting within your capacity as a board member, can be indemnified. A board member can bring issues to the board's attention but anything more would be considered acting outside of the scope of authority, unless delegated.

Limitations on Political Advocacy were discussed.

Policies adopted by the board require implementation by the Superintendent(s) and staff.

Superintendent's Duties - every year, the Superintendent is evaluated. If the Superintendent has followed policy set by the board, it is also an evaluation of the board. Do not manage the district.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) - the right to inspect, review and access educational records within 14 days. An educational record should never be released absent parental consent.

Ethics was touched on.

The Right to Know Law was discussed. Meetings must be posted of the board.

Anytime an email is sent that pertains to the function of the district, it has the potential to become public record.

A meeting is determined by convening a quorum. You cannot use side commentary to create a quorum outside of the room.

You can send emails to the entire board but you cannot make decisions or transact business of the board. You cannot deliberate. Items for the agenda should be sent to the School Board Chair and/or Superintendent.

Public participation is limited.

Protections afforded to the public include that meetings are open to the public. Minutes will be released, including those of Non-Public session, unless sealed for a period of time or in perpetuity. Minutes are treated as a permanent record.

Boards should consider what the public has to say, communicate, and care.

Right to Know - exchanging emails - nothing wrong with sending out an email to the board. If the board engages in business it is problematic. Informational is okay, deliberation is not.

Withdrawal Process - Committee is formed by Statute and must convene by May 15th.

Do we need two withdrawal studies? No.

The committee will have to perform multi-tier functions to consider all combinations of possibilities. The study must be complete by November 1st.

Withdrawal is typically sold as a cost savings; important to study.

James Kingston asked when does the liability of encumbrance to withdrawing from a district get delineated.

Attorney, Dean Eggert said that while the study is pending, the bonding may not create a liability for the withdrawing entity. Can they withdraw from the district and stay with the SAU? Yes, the studies brought forward are to withdraw from the district but not the SAU.

Can withdrawal be recommending in part e.g. just the elementary school? It gets complicated but it could happen.

Greg Kriebel said that the board is a single entity representing all towns. If you suggest withdrawing, are you not going against your fiduciary responsibility?

Attorney, Dean Eggert said that it may disqualify and create a conflict of interest on the board.

Can students be taken back on a tuition agreement? Yes, there are multiple ways a student or students could attend.

Attorney, Dean Eggert said that it is a privilege to serve the ConVal School District. If board members have a legal question, they should be channeled through the Superintendent of Schools.

Richard Dunning said that Dean's firm has been outstanding in supporting ConVal with making tough decisions.

d. Audit Presentation – Plodzik & Sanderson, P.A.

Kyle Gingras, Plodzik & Sanderson, P.A. was present to review the annual audit.

Mr. Gingras reviewed each section of the full-blown report. Budgetary financial statements that reflect budget to actual for each of the funds were referenced.

Fund balance was voted to retain 2.5% of district net assessment to retain \$1M for emergency expenditures throughout the year. This was adopted in 2021; this is the first year this was implemented.

Schedules related to the single audit were referenced. They are compliance audits related to expenditures over \$750,000.

Kimberly Saunders asked Kyle Gingras where the district is performing. Kyle said that the district is performing very well.

Feasibility Study: Kimberly shared the names of Select board members from each town that will serve on the Feasibility Study Committee.

Kimberly asked which School Board member from Antrim and Peterborough will serve on this committee. William Bryk and Janine Lesser will serve on the committee. The first committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25th at 6:00 p.m.

e. Monthly Events Calendar

The Monthly Events Calendars were reviewed for April and May. Policy Committee will not meet on April 23rd. Budget & Property Committee will meet on both May 7th and May 21st.

f. School Board Requests

Kimberly referenced a School Board request submitted by a School Board member and the associated School Board policy EFAA.

Mike Hoyt said that the concern was not the meals itself but rather that students were given meals even though they accumulated a heavy outstanding bill and then purchased a la carte items with cash.

Kimberly said that if there is a food service staff member who has concerns, they should reach out to the Food Service Director.

e. Nominations – SY” 2024-2025

1) Annual to Annual Contract

William Bryk motioned to approve the nominations as read. Greg Kriebel seconded. Mike Hoyt abstained. Motion carried.

2) Annual to Continuing Contract

Greg Kriebel motioned to approve the nominations as read. Mike Hoyt seconded. Mike Hoyt abstained. Motion carried.

3) Continuing to Continuing Contract

Greg Kriebel motioned to approve the nominations as read. William Bryk seconded. Mike Hoyt abstained. Motion carried.

Kimberly Saunders reminded the School Board of a Senior Class Trip planned to Montreal that was approved. Yesterday, the bus company U.S. Coachways, let us know that they were unable to meet their contract.

We have managed to secure transportation for our students. Because U.S. Coachways did not meet their contract, we will need an additional \$11,373.70.

Kimberly asked for approval to use funds within the budget that have been identified.

William Bryk moved that we waive all notice requirements and adopt the amendment to the budget that has just been shared. Seconded.

Dick Dunning said that he assumes that we will pursue this company for repayment. Confirmed. Unanimous.

8. Old Business

a. Support Staff Sick Bank (Board Vote Required)

Kimberly Saunders referenced a proposal for Support Staff Sick Bank. The board was asked if there were any questions.

Greg Kriebel moved to adopt the support staff sick bank proposal. Tom Burgess seconded. Unanimous.

9. New Business

a. Request to Accept Gift/Donation (Board Vote Required)

1) ConVal High School requests authorization to accept \$500.00 from the Peterborough Retirement Community for the purpose of sponsoring the 5K race for "Break the Stigma".

Tom Burgess moved to accept the gift as presented. William Bryk seconded. Unanimous.

b. Request to Accept Gift/Donation (Board Vote Required)

1) The ConVal Facilities Director requests authorization to accept a donation of \$50,000 from the NH Charitable Foundation/Monadnock Betterment Fund for the purpose of ConVal Athletics Fields under the direction of Timothy Grossi, Facilities Director.

Jim Kingston moved to accept the gift as presented. William Bryk seconded. Unanimous.

Tom Burgess wanted to share the gratitude of the board for the gifts as outlined in both of the presentations.

c. Field Trip Request Approval (Board Vote Required)

1) Great Brook School, grade 8, students request to travel to Chattanooga, TN, from May 15-19 for the Aerial Drone Group to compete in what is the equivalent to the World Championship for the VEX Robotics Group.

Kimberly Saunders shared that two students will travel to Tennessee for a competition.

Dick said that when students stay overnight, School Board permission is required.

d. Expense and Encumbrances (Board Vote Required)

Brian Cisneros referenced the Expense and Encumbrance Report.

Greg Kriebel moved to approve the Expense and Encumbrance Report and the encumbrances therein. Seconded. Unanimous.

g. Budget Transfers (Board vote Required)

Brian Cisneros referenced budget transfers that required shifts to proper places.

William Bryk moved to accept the budget transfers as presented. Greg Kriebel seconded. Unanimous.

h. General Assurances

Kimberly said that she is legally required to inform the board of federal funds anticipated for receipt.

Title I, Part A - \$586,983.01

Title II, Part A - \$155,906.96

Title IV, Part A - \$91,206.95

IDEA, Part B - \$660,322.51

Perkins V - \$147,266.12

Questions from Board members? None.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3, II

a. Negotiations

b. Personnel

c. Student

d. Legal

William Bryk motioned to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 8:53 p.m.

Mike Hoyt seconded. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Greg Kriebel motioned to come out of Non-Public Session at 9:05 p.m. William Bryk seconded. Unanimous.

Greg Kriebel motioned to seal the minutes for five years for personnel, seconded by William Bryk. Unanimous.

12. Adjourn

Greg Kriebel motioned to adjourn at 9:08 PM. Seconded by William Bryk. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok