

LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

SAU #68

DATE: December 14, 2022

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:

Jay Duguay, Chairperson
Brian Angelone
Kevin Bell
Joe Bossie
Jasmine Weeden
Tamra Ham

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF PRESENT:

Judith McGann, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Debbie O'Connor, Financial Manager
Jason Robert, Assistant Principal
Sharon Holt, Assistant to the Superintendent
Bart King, Technical Support
Rebecca Steeves, Teacher Representative

SCHOOL BOARD ABSENT:

Ashley Youngheim

PUBLIC PRESENT:

None

The School Board meeting was held in the Elementary School Multipurpose Room.

Meeting Call to Order:

School Board Chairperson, Jay Duguay called the School Board meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Minutes:

Tamra Ham made a motion to approve the November 16, 2022 School Board meeting minutes as presented. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the meeting minutes. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Tamra Ham made a motion to approve the November 16, 2022 Public Hearing minutes as presented. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the Hearing minutes. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Correspondence:

- Superintendent McGann mentioned the North Country Education Services (NCES) Newsletter was included in the School Board Packet. The Newsletter provides information on professional development opportunities and student projects.

Business Administrator's Report:

- Debbie O'Connor noted updated year to date budget versus actual financial information was provided to the Board and explained, the District is half-way through the fiscal year and the financials are where they should be. A number of expenses are only incurred in the second-half of the year and funds are encumbered for those expenses wherever possible. Facilities projects are completed. Staffing costs are lower than budgeted because of positions being covered by substitutes. The only item of concern is utilities as utility costs continue to increase. The District's fuel oil price is locked in; however the locked-in rate is higher than what was budgeted.
 - Kevin Bell inquired about food service? Debbie O'Connor answered, last year because of the free meal waiver in place, the food service usage was up and the District had the best year ever for the Food Service program. In the years before the free meal waivers, the District's food service program operated at a deficit and, this year, there is a larger than normal deficit due to increases in food costs and labor prices. The Food Service contractor had supplied two contract costs for this year; one if free meal waivers remained in place and the

other if the waivers were eliminated. The elimination of the free meals waivers has hurt the District's food service program.

- Debbie O'Connor mentioned a copy of the Federal Compliance Audit report was emailed to Board members directly from the DOE and a copy was provided in the Board packets. The audit report shows three findings that require a response:
 1. The federal purchasing procedures need to be included in the purchasing plan. The auditors provided a federal purchasing template for the District to use to update its plan.
 - Jay Duguay asked if any Board action was needed on policies?
 - Debbie O'Connor answered, the auditors were okay with the District's policies, the findings to be addressed are all procedural.
 2. Regarding the Time and Effort procedure; additional wording needs to be added to the time cards regarding payments received from grants and semiannual certification needs to be provided by salaried staff members, such as the Title I teacher, which are paid from grants. The District has been getting the semiannual certifications from salaried employees right along however, the timing of the certifications needs to be cleaned up. The final certification needs to be done after the school year has ended. In past years, the District has been getting the final certification earlier in June to make sure it was done before the teachers left for summer break.
 3. A buy American statement needs to be added to the District's purchase orders.
- Debbie O'Connor noted she will be drafting a response on the findings, indicating the District's plan moving forward.
- Tamra Ham noted these findings were minor.

Superintendent's Report:

- Superintendent McGann mentioned an Elementary School math night was held on Thursday, December 1st.
- Superintendent McGann noted Principal Mark Pribbernow will be back at the start of the New Year.
- Superintendent McGann indicated that bids for the High School HVAC project were due on December 15th.
 - Tamra Ham asked if any bids had been received?
 - Jay Duguay asked how many people attended the walk-through?
 - Debbie O'Connor answered that no bids had currently been received and there were six companies represented at the walk-through.
 - Superintendent McGann stated the Board could award the contract at the January 11th School Board meeting and stay within the project timeline.
- Superintendent McGann mentioned the District received SAFE grants in the amount of \$300,000. \$100,000 for each school (Elementary, Middle, and High). The grant funds will be utilized for doors and windows in the Middle/High School and to complete the Elementary vestibule.
- Superintendent McGann mentioned the calendar of activities and meeting minutes for the Technology and Policy Committees were included in the packet.
 - Tamra Ham expressed her appreciation for the activities calendar being included in the Board packets, noting that it was nice to have the activities in one place for reference.
- Joe Bossie asked if there was any word from NH Homeland Security regarding the walk-through from last June and if any of the funds from the SAFE grant could be utilized for any findings on the Homeland Security report?
 - Superintendent McGann mentioned she has reached out to Homeland Security but has not heard anything back yet. She will continue to reach out.
 - Superintendent McGann also noted, the plan to utilize the SAFE grant funds for the doors, windows, etc. came directly from the June walk-through.

Principal's Report:

- Jason Robert mentioned the Elementary School math night went well and was very well attended with well over 120 people in attendance. The math night went for about 90 minutes and dinner was provided. It was a great opportunity to promote math fluency, critical thinking, problem solving, and family time. Each family that pre-registered for the event received a goody bag containing games that were played during the evening to take home and continue learning through play. The math night was a return to pre-COVID Title I events and a reading literacy night will be scheduled in the spring.

- Tamra Ham noted her granddaughter loved the event and they have been playing one of the card games together regularly.
- Jason Robert noted there was an Elementary School craft night prior to the School Board meeting. The craft night was very well attended with about 70 kids staying after school to do crafts geared to each grade level. The art teacher Ms. Frobey did a great job organizing the event! Mr. Robert expressed his appreciation to all staff members and middle/high school students that helped with craft night.
- Jason Robert mentioned the Elementary School has been having Lumberjack “Family Pod” assemblies each month where Elementary schoolers from each grade work together as mentor/mentees. Staff members have been taking turns organizing the monthly assemblies and the 5th graders are taking the lead mentoring the younger students. The 5th graders have asked to run an assembly themselves later in the school year.
- Jason Robert noted he has been distributing a Lin-Wood Elementary Newsletter to staff and families every two weeks.
- Jason Robert expressed his appreciation for the K-12 staff members. Noting that they have been flexible and have been stepping up to cover dates and duties for each other. Mr. Robert also thanked Sheila Rich for her work scheduling the substitutes and other coverage.

Committees:

Technology:

- Superintendent McGann mentioned the Technology Committee worked on the technology training schedule for Staff. Staff training will be held in January, February, and March on new technology as well as currently utilized programs such as ALMA.

Policy Committee:

- Superintendent McGann noted there are policies to be moved forward to second reading.
 - Tamra Ham mentioned the Board was emailed these policies to review.
 - Jay Duguay asked if the edits were suggested from the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA)?
 - Tamra Ham answered, the edits were prompted by the NHSBA.
 - Kevin Bell asked if all Lin-Wood School Board policies were available on the District’s website?
 - Sharon Holt answered, yes, they are all on the website as are policies that are up for readings at Board meetings.

Tamra Ham made a motion to move policies DAF, GA, GBD/BHC, GBEA, GBEC, GBEBE, GBG, GBGD, GBGD-R, GBJ, GBJ-R, GBJA, GBK, GCG, GCK, GCO, GDB, GDJ, GDO, and GDQ to second reading. Jasmine Weeden seconded the motion.

Discussion: Regarding a new policy GBEBE, Jay Duguay noted there are Board members with relatives that are employed in the District and asked if Board members are considered as having supervisory responsibilities over employees? Superintendent McGann noted Board members have traditionally recused themselves when voting on salaries and contracts if an employee involved was a family member. Additionally, Board members do not evaluate staff. In the past when there has been an issue with an employee being the intended supervisor of a family member, a different employee/supervisor has taken on the roll. Joe Bossie noted policy GBEBE is an optional NHSBA policy. Tamra Ham noted Board members do not have supervisory rolls over staff members and mentioned she would like to have policy GBEBE move forward to second reading while additional research is done as to why the NHSBA developed this policy. Superintendent McGann mentioned she would reach out to the NHSBA. Tamra Ham noted that there was another new policy, GBGD, however this policy was based on a specific RSA relating to Worker’s Comp. Jay Duguay noted he had no issues with policy GBGD. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Business Requiring Board Action:

Staff Nominations, Recommendations, and Resignations:

- Superintendent McGann nominated Jared Gunter for the position of PE/Health Teacher to begin at the end of January, 2023. Mr. Gunter was a previous student teacher at Lin-Wood and has most recently been teaching at a school out west. Jared Gunter is certified in both PE and Health.
 - Tamra Ham mentioned the name was familiar and she recalled that Jared Gunter had worked well with Aaron Loukes when student teaching.

Tamra Ham made a motion to approve the nomination of Jared Gunter for the position of PE/Health Teacher. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

- Jay Duguay welcomed Jared Gunter to the District.
- Superintendent McGann expressed her appreciation to Ken Watson for acting as substitute for the PE/Health position for the first half of the school year.
 - The Board also extended their appreciation to Mr. Watson for his assistance.

New Business:

February Board Meeting Schedule/Budget Hearing Date:

- Jay Duguay mentioned the current School Board meeting schedule was included in the Board packet as well as a copy of the proposed schedule. Mr. Duguay asked why the change to the Budget Hearing date was needed?
 - Debbie O'Connor noted, after speaking with the District's attorney regarding the Annual Meeting timeline, the Budget Hearing needs to move forward a week to February 15th to accommodate the Petition Article due date. The original date of the Hearing, February 8th, would fall before the Petition Articles are due. The Petition Articles are needed prior to the Budget Hearing in case there are any monetary considerations in the Articles. Debbie O'Connor mentioned, the Annual Meeting timeline was not available when the Board meeting schedule was originally developed last spring.
- The Board agreed to the Budget Hearing date of February 15th. The February Board meetings will be held on February 8th and February 15th.

High School HVAC Bid:

- Superintendent McGann noted as previously mentioned, bids for the project are due on December 15th. The Board can award the contract at their January 11th Board meeting.
 - Jay Duguay asked if the bids could be emailed to the Board as received?
 - Debbie O'Connor noted there will be an official bid opening on December 15th, once the bids have been opened, they can be emailed to the Board.

Continuing Business:

COVID-19: None

ESSER Funds:

- Superintendent McGann mentioned that the ESSER funded, High School HVAC project was discussed previously in the meeting.

2023-2024 Budget:

- Jay Duguay mentioned correspondence received from the School District's Attorney regarding the use of \$150,000 in retained funds.
 - Debbie O'Connor noted in 2013, the Lin-Wood School District adopted the law that allowed the District to retain up to 2.5% of the year end fund balance. At the time, the law dictated that retained funds could only be used for emergencies and required approval for that emergency use from the NHDOE. Since then, the law has changed and up to 5% of the fund balance can be retained. The law revision also allows for the funds to

be used for necessary purposes after holding a Public Hearing. The School District's Attorney recommends the Lin-Wood School District adopt the updated law through a Warrant Article at the School District Annual Meeting. Additionally, since the District has \$150,000 in fund balance as of now, the District will end the year with not less than that amount in fund balance unless revenues fall short of what is expected or the District mistakenly or legally over expends the total amount appropriated by voters in 2022. As neither of these scenarios is likely, and the funds are already set aside, a Warrant Article at the 2023 School District meeting could appropriate \$150,000 from the year end fund balance toward the High School HVAC project.

- Tamra Ham mentioned the downside to the revisions in the law that allows the funds to be used more readily is that Districts may start to use the 5% retention as a budgeting tool. Debbie O'Connor noted that this is unlikely as the public is still informed through a Public Hearing and there are other reporting requirements including notice in the Annual Report.
- Joe Bossie asked if the retained funds are not utilized, do the funds go back to the District in a Trust Fund? Debbie O'Connor answered, unused funds are not put in a Trust Fund, they are returned to the tax payers.
- Tamra Ham asked if other Warrant Articles would be used in funding the gap in the High School HVAC project or would all the remaining monies needed be included in the Bond Article? Debbie O'Connor noted there was discussion of utilizing the amount generally put on the Warrant for other facilities projects (flooring, roofing, etc.) in a Warrant Article towards funding the High School HVAC project instead.
- Tamra Ham asked what Bonds the District currently had outstanding?
 - Debbie O'Connor mentioned there is one more year on the Science Room Bond and the Elementary HVAC project is also on a Bond.
- Jay Duguay asked if Bond rates were up?
 - Debbie O'Connor noted yes, probably as with everything else currently.
- Tamra Ham asked if there were plans to check Bank Loan rates as well as the Bond Bank rates?
 - Debbie O'Connor answered in the affirmative.
- Jay Duguay asked if any funds from the SAFE grant could be utilized for the High School HVAC project?
 - Brian Angelone answered the SAFE grant funds are going towards the windows, doors, and Elementary vestibule projects that need to be completed but have been put off for a number of years in favor of completing larger flooring and roofing projects.

Strategic Plan:

- Superintendent McGann mentioned the Schools are continuing to work on the student lead conferences referenced in the Strategic Plan.
- Kevin Bell inquired as to the student involvement on the School Board?
 - Superintendent McGann answered, the student council is going through the process and there will be student involvement on the Board beginning in January.

Apportionment Funding Formula:

- Jay Duguay asked if additional information was received from Charyl Reardon regarding Funding Formula scenarios.
 - Debbie O'Connor mentioned additional historical information was provided in the Board packets and she had spoken to Charyl Reardon and run current year scenarios. Using the proposed formula, with the current year scenarios, the overall town percentage split would sway a little more heavily towards Woodstock.
 - Tamra Ham mentioned if the Funding Formula is not changed, it can be revisited again next year or the year after. The Funding Formula must be kept for five years only if it is changed at a District meeting,
 - Tamra Ham noted the major project to get funded this year is the High School HVAC project and she expressed concern that adding the Funding Formula to the Annual School District meeting would muddy the Warrant
 - Kevin Bell asked what the process would be to bring the Funding Formula forward again next year? Would the Board need to vote to form a committee next year?
 - Jay Duguay answered yes, that would be the process and ultimately it is the Board's decision to move any Funding Formula change recommendations forward to the voters.
 - Jasmine Weeden noted a Funding Formula Committee may be comprised of different members next year and it would be key to keep the research and information gathered this year to be included in that Committee's discussions.

- Kevin Bell mentioned the need to educate the public on the Funding Formula and the process.
 - Debbie O'Connor noted the Board could hold Public Forums to educate the public.

Jay Duguay made a motion to keep the current Funding Formula. Tamra Ham seconded the motion. Discussion: Jay Duguay noted he did not want to discount the time and effort put into this process and expressed his appreciation to the Funding Formula Committee members. Jay Duguay mentioned there would not be a dramatic change to the tax payers if the Funding formula were changed at this point and the benefit of not taking action this year would be that the Formula could be looked at again in the near future. Kevin Bell noted it could be a Board Goal to hold Public Forums regarding educating the public on the Funding Formula. Kevin Bell asked if the Funding Formula could be discussed at the Annual School District Meeting when the District would have its' largest audience? Tamra Ham answered yes, it could be included under other business to legally come before the meeting. Superintendent McGann noted a plan could be put to in place for presentation at the District meeting. Tamra Ham asked to hear from Funding Formula committee member, Charyl Reardon. Charyl Reardon noted the facts and information have been presented to the Board and she hopes the Board will follow through with the Public Forums as discussed. **Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. Kevin Bell abstained. All other Board members present were in favor and the motion carried.**

Recognition of Visitors/Public Participation:

Student: None

Staff: Jay Duguay welcomed Rebecca Steeves.

- Rebecca Steeves provided information from the English Department, Heather Krill and Jen Whitcher: Congratulations to the Lin-Wood students who participated in the Rotary speech competition. The four finalists from Lin-Wood were Sarah Jolly, Gabby Ronconi, Jishnu Patel, and Dalton Lylyk. The finalists spoke at the 12/7/2022 Rotary meeting and all finalists showed evidence of excellence revision based on the judges feedback from the first round. The Lin-Wood school champion is Dalton Lylyk, and the alternate is Gabby Ronconi. The Lin-Wood Poetry Out Loud competition is taking place this week in English classes. Poetry Out Loud will continue at 4:30 PM on January 18th at the Woodstock Station.

Community:

- Tamra Ham expressed her appreciation to the School District Administration for allowing the Lincoln-Woodstock Friends of Recreation to host the Just for Kids Shopping event at the Elementary School MPR during the school day on Friday, December 9th. Having the event at the school allows for all students to shop whether or not they have lists or money.
 - Kevin Bell noted it was the first time he had the opportunity to participate in this awesome event and it was great to see the older kids helping the younger ones to do their shopping.
 - Jasmine Weeden agreed the event was great and it is wonderful that the kids are allowed to shop even if they have no list or money, the Friends of Recreation covers the cost for those children in order for all kids to have the opportunity to participate.

Tamra Ham reminded the Board that a non-meeting was needed after the current meeting for the Board to be caught-up on negotiations.

Tamra Ham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Bossie seconded the motion. Discussion: None. Jay Duguay called a vote to approve the motion. All Board members were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Holt, Assistant to the Superintendent