

## SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

June 15, 2016

A regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board was held on Wednesday June 15, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 6:11 PM by Corey Masson, School Board Chair, in Room 137 at Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston, NH. The following were recorded as present:

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Janice Bennett  
Peter Broderick  
Dr. Pam Brown  
Corey Masson, Chair  
Roberto Miller, Vice Chair  
Sheila Pierce  
Nancy Ross  
Michael Giordano, Student Council Rep

ADMINISTRATORS: Dr. Brian J. Blake, Superintendent  
Carol Coppola, Business Manager  
Jodi Gutterman, Student Services Director

The meeting began with a salute to the flag.

### REVIEW AGENDA

Add **a. Personnel Staffing – Bakie**; **delete c. Policy CCA**; add **g. Staffing**.

### MINUTES

Ms. Bennett made a motion to accept the June 1, 2016, meeting minutes. Dr. Brown seconded the motion. Dr. Brown asked that the following corrections be made: Page 6, under School Board Comment. “ Ms. Bennett talked about the heart-**soul** connection.” Correct spelling for soul. Correct page 6, last paragraph, Dr. Brown’s comments should read, “She **is on** the Negotiations Committee.” Five in favor; two abstained – Ms. Bennett and Mr. Miller.

### MANIFEST

The following manifest was signed by the School Board: Accounts Payable #30-\$388,300.76; Payroll #26 - \$916,521.12.

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Blake reported on the year end activities. 176 students graduated. Forty percent of the students are going on to four year colleges; thirty percent of the students are going on to two year colleges; twenty five percent of the students are going into the workforce; two percent are going into careers or technical trades; three students are entering the armed services.. Today was the last day of school for students. Tomorrow the staff will meet; Dr. Blake will have

closing comments, followed by breakfast and an all day first aid and CPR workshop. On Friday teachers will finish wrapping things up and packing their classrooms.

### **SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENT**

Mr. Masson commented on what an awesome week last week was from the Baccalaureate, to class day, to graduation. He was happy to stand on the stage handing out diplomas. He was impressed to see the work that Plan NH was able to accomplish in a few days.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jordan Piper of Newton wished the SB good luck. He said that no matter what they do tonight, you can't make everyone happy. He suggested the SB table the discussion tonight on the HS vestibule and asked that any projects approved be spent from reserve funds or capital funds.

Annie Collyer of Newton read from a prepared statement: "Each School Board member has personally received a letter from over 50 members and friends of the Newton-Kingston Taxpayers Association. This letter requests that the approximately \$800,000.00 in unspent funds for the current fiscal year that ends in 2 weeks be returned to the taxpayers as a tax credit, instead of moving forward on proposals to rush to spend it.

The Taxpayers believe money should be spent on needed capital improvement projects. They support improved security for students and staff. What they object to is rushing to spend the "left-over" money before it has to be returned. Every year there is money left over in the operating budget. A rush to spend builds community distrust. NKTA would like you to try an alternative.

The NKTA request is that the School Board act with respect toward those paying the bills. The request is two-fold: 1. Take all the time needed to evaluate the proposed expenditures before okaying them, and 2. Spend the money out of the new budget to begin in 2 weeks instead. The new budget is \$900,000.00 higher than what has been spent year to date this year, and an additional \$1.4 million higher than last year's actual. That is a total increase of \$2.3 million in 2 years, or 7% in low inflationary times.

On the first point, taking the time to evaluate expenditures. The HS vestibule was originally projected to cost \$48,500.00 and is now coming in with a cost almost 2.5 times that amount. It appears that there are less costly alternatives that could be looked at – like enclosing a third of the front entryway with bulletproof glass, and avoid much of the reconstruction to the office area. A simpler, less costly design for more security for students and staff.

On the second point, spend instead out of the new budget that starts in 2 weeks. There is money in the budget already allocated for the vestibule. There is also a slush fund of almost \$50,000.00 in benefits allocated should we ever decide to replace Carol Coppola's contract position with a full-time employee. There is normally \$500,000.00 to \$800,000.00 in unspent money each year. If these monies were spent on the vestibule, lighting upgrades and the Bakie roof after July 1, there is a good argument that they could then be deducted from the calculation of the next default budget amount. Default budget calculations have guidelines but

not formulas in the RSA's, and one-time expenses are to be removed. A vestibule and other capital improvements are arguably removable.

It feels wrong to spend dollars quickly at year end when there is money in the next budget and always unspent money at the end of the year. To get taxpayers support, the School Board needs to respect taxpayer dollars by not using the left over money, and by proposing a future budget more in line with ones that pass in other Districts 1-2% increases instead of the 6-10% proposals in recent years. Let's try that, and build some cooperation in the District please."

Tammy Gluck of Newton spoke in favor of repairing the roof at Bakie and the renovation of the HS vestibule. She stated that the most important thing is safety, and she thinks the money should be spent now. Ms. Gluck also read from a prepared statement questioning staffing at the schools.

Ms. Cheryl Giordano of Newton said she supports the SB in spending leftover money on the vestibule at the HS and the Bakie roof. She said it might be helpful if residents know what they're getting for their money, people don't understand she said. She said the decision to move a HS teacher to a lower grade will be tough on the students.

Mr. Evan Czyzowski, HS English teacher thanked the students and his colleagues for their support. He said he was proud to be a teacher and will always put kid's education first.

Mr. Jim Baker of Newton said that in his opinion, left over money should go back to the taxpayer. He said there is two weeks to go until the next budget. Money has been allocated for projects. He said the vestibule at the HS is a waiting room. There are no metal detectors. He said that if there are no metal detectors, anyone can carry anything they want into the school. He said we need a security plan.

Ms. Tammy Mahoney said she echoes Ms. Gluck's and Ms. Giordano's concerns about the reassignment of a HS teacher.

### **SCHOOL BOARD COMMENT**

Ms. Bennett said she is inspired by all the activities in the District. She said she attended a retirement party, and she could sense the love and commitment of the staff. She said the HS graduation was flawless, the weather was great and the "diploma hander-outer" was great. She said the graduation was a bright light. Ms. Bennett also attended the Memorial School tribute to Mr. VanderEls. She said what struck her was the way the children were looking up to Mr. VanderEls.c

Michael Giordano of Newton asked if we have a security plan in regards to the HS vestibule.

Ms. Ross read from a prepared statement: "Over the past two weeks, I have had the opportunity to attend several events surrounding year end activities. Last Thursday, I attended Baccalaureate – one of the most well attended baccalaureates I have been to in many years. On Friday, I was at the graduation. As usual, I was impressed with the speeches and all the accomplishments of these students. The band and chorus, as always, were very impressive. However, one of the most touching events I attended was a farewell celebration for two

members of the Bakie staff as well as an “all school” farewell to Principal Jon VanderEls of the Memorial School. The event recognizing the two individuals from Bakie, one a para who has been with the district 24 years and the other a teacher serving the district for 22 years was especially touching and heartfelt. The outpouring of love and appreciation for these two dedicated educators spoke volumes of what they have brought to the children of our District as well as the special bonds they have forged with their peers. The sendoff for Mr. VanderEls, who has devoted the last 17 years to the students of this District was, in a word, overwhelming. As Mr. V is fond of saying “it’s all about the kids” and the entire student body reciprocated in kind. There were videos, poems, songs and story-telling which included every student at the school. It was plain to see how much, not only the students but the staff and parents as well, will miss him and how much they have appreciated what Jon has done for them. I sat through the entire assembly with tears in my eyes and a huge smile on my face. Jon will most certainly be missed but never forgotten.

Upon reflection of these special events, I asked myself why we are losing such wonderful teachers, mentors and administrators. Along with the individuals I just mentioned, there are several others who have decided to leave the District at the end of this school year. Some of the questions I asked myself:

Is it the growing sentiment in the community that our teachers and administrators are overpaid and don’t deserve a new contract? One only has to attend a deliberative session to understand how deep seeded that opinion is. That, along with the fact that this past year was the 4<sup>th</sup> time in the last 7 years that a teacher’s contract was not approved by the voters.

Are the teachers upset that they are now 4 steps behind their peers in other districts?

Are they leaving because they can go elsewhere for more money and start at a level commensurate with their experience?

Do they feel they are being micro-managed?

Do they feel unappreciated?

I don’t know, and I don’t want to ask because I am afraid of what their answers might be – but my guess would be yes to all of the above.

The responsibilities of today’s teachers are far different that when I was going to school. Not only are they responsible for providing an education to these children, in many cases they act as parents and care-givers – sometimes the only ones making sure their basic necessities of life are being met. Not only are they teaching how to learn, but providing critical life skills as well.

There are individuals in the District that think we don’t need to provide all that we do. I have heard statements like, “if it was good enough for me, it should be good enough for them”. That is not the kind of progressive thinking that is one of the main tenets promoted by the Superintendent and School Board. And I challenge those with that mind-set. Shouldn’t you want a better, more fulfilling education for our children? Don’t you want our children to be challenged to be critical thinkers and have the opportunity to reach their full potential?

Sanborn teachers and administrators are asking our children to think outside the box. They are taught how to learn and solve problems. Settling for anything less than this would be doing a disservice to the children of the District.

The purpose of the School Board is NOT to micromanage the Administration and staff. It is our job to make sure we provide the right tools and enough resources to our administrators and staff to do their jobs – which is to give the youth of our District the best education possible.

It is also our job to make sure we hire the right personnel who can execute the curriculum, work within the budget constraints and make certain we are providing the best possible education for the children in the District. We are proud of our credentials that our staff and administration have compiled. For example, Steve Riley, our Facilities Director, has worked for the District for over 33 years and as the Director for 19 of those years. He is intimately aware of the condition and needs of every building in the District. If he recommends that a major capital expense like replacing the windows at the middle school be done, the school board will take his recommendation seriously and work with the administration to map out a strategy to best address this issue.

If our business administrator says we need to reconfigure the current waiting area in our High School to make it safe, we do our due diligence to study the issue, see what other school districts have done, competitively bid the design and build and ensure the district is getting what we paid for. In light of recent events in Orlando this past weekend, I have to ask, now, more than ever, do we want to take the risk of not doing enough? God forbid anything should happen, I know I will sleep better knowing we can say “we did all we could” rather than “we should have done more.”

Do I think we are the perfect board? No, I don't, but I don't believe the solution is to utilize our time at board meetings to scrutinize the budget and question every penny spent. The administrators and subcommittees already do this during the “due diligence” process and before bringing requests before the full board.

I embrace having more “non-fiscal” time during our meetings. I would love to establish a policy whereby we celebrate the constant successes happening in our schools. I encourage us to recognize outstanding teachers, students and administrators. We need to publicize all the wonderful programs and clubs we have available to our students. We need to show our appreciation for all the hard work put into making this District the wonderful District it is.”

Dr. Brown responded to Ms. Ross and Ms. Bennett saying there are people living in our district whose homes are in disrepair and can't afford the increases. She said you can't dump everything on the taxpayers. She said that yes, she is guilty of micromanaging. She said you need to think about cost and efficiency.

### **STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT**

Michael thanked the SB for attending the HS graduation. He said that Dr. Blake was missed, but they understood he was attending his son's graduation. He said that the Student Council is already talking about next year's homecoming. The theme this year is movie genres. The

seniors have chosen Horror, the juniors have chosen SciFi and the sophomores have chosen Western themed movies. The Student Council was awarded the 2016 National Council of Excellence Award and Travis Comtois was named State Student Council Secretary. The drama club will be presenting *Pirates!* June 24, 25 and 26. This is a District-wide production.

## **SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a. Facilities Committee: Ms. Bennett reported that the Facilities Committee met June 8<sup>th</sup>. Bid results were reviewed for the High School vestibule and Bakie roof. They talked about hiring a roof inspector or clerk of the works for the repair. A clerk of the works ensures that things are being done properly. The Committee reviewed a donation from the Newton Grange of a painted curtain to the HS. The Grange Trustees will pay the cost to have it installed at the HS. The committee discussed upgrading lighting in the café and the circular stairway in the HS. She spoke of the HS vestibule. She said this was part of the CIP and was first discussed October 21, 2015. She said these decisions are not rushed and the Committee believes it is prudent to get it done now.

b. Finance Committee:

Ms. Ross reported that the Finance Committee met. Topics covered included: bids, adjustments, lateral move of funds. The District has more than 887,000 pages of documented paperwork that needs to be scanned into new software. We received a quote of 14 cents per page to scan from the company that currently does our scanning. Charging stations for Chrome notebooks will cost approximately \$25,659.00 Bids received included: tennis courts, a 350 truck, the Bakie roof and HS vestibule. Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the bid from Grappone Ford in the amount of \$48,224.00 for a 2016 Ford F-350. Ms. Pierce seconded the motion. Six in favor; one abstained – Dr. Brown. Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the bid from Vermont Tennis Court Surfacing in the amount of \$9,954.00 to repair the tennis courts; Ms. Pierce seconded the motion. All in favor.

c. Personnel: Mr. Masson reported that due to a bubble at Bakie School, one more kindergarten teacher will be hired. Dr. Blake reported that eight applications were received for the Memorial School Principal position. The Committee discussed hiring a one year interim principal. They did not feel they had enough time to go through the entire process. Dr. Blake said that Jon VanderEls was a hard act to follow. Someone asked if there were any internal applicants? No.

d. Policy: Ms. Ross reported that Policy CA and Policy CB were reviewed.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Personnel Staffing at Bakie: Ms. Bennett made a motion to approve the hiring of a kindergarten teacher at Bakie School. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. All in favor.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Nominations: Ms. Bennett made a motion to approve the nominations as presented in the June 15, 2016 document. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. All in favor.
- b. Resignations: Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the resignation of Jill Lizier . Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor. Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the resignation of Jill Pomeroy. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor. Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the resignation of Carol Coppola with the deepest regret and sincerest gratitude for all she's done for the District. Mr. Masson seconded the motion. Ms. Ross asked Ms. Coppola if her resignation was negotiable. Ms. Coppola responded no, she felt it was in the best interest of the District to hire a full time Business Administrator. She said the District deserves a full time Administrator. Ms. Coppola's position is a contracted position. The SB members thanked Ms. Coppola for all her hard work; for the savings she has made possible over the years. Mr. Miller said that Ms. Coppola graciously gave the SB everything they needed and wished she wasn't leaving. The SB members thanked Ms. Coppola.
- c. Policy: Ms. Ross requested a motion to accept the first reading of Policies CA and CB. Ms. Bennett made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy CA. Ms. Pierce seconded the motion. All in favor. Ms. Bennett made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy CB. Dr. Brown seconded the motion. All in favor.
- d. Donations Carried Forward: Ms. Bennett made a motion to carry forward to next fiscal year: NHIAA Life of an Athlete (\$2,743.70); NH State Council Knights of Columbus (Key Club)(\$1,100.00); American Youth Policy Forum Honorarian (\$200.00); Kiwanis Club of Salem (Key Club) (\$2,000.00); and Kingston Medical Committee (\$2,477.10). Dr. Brown seconded the motion. All in favor.
- e. Public Hearing – Bakie Donation: Ms. Deb Bamforth, Principal, Bakie School, appeared before the SB to request permission for the Bakie School to accept a donation on behalf of Katie Tuscano. Ms. Tuscano was a teacher at Bakie School. She was in an automobile accident and as a result was left paralyzed. She, and her parents, visited the Bakie School and told the staff at Bakie that they were so touched by all the love and support they felt from Bakie School, that as part of her settlement, Katie requested that the trucking company at fault make a donation to the Bakie School. The school was presented a check in the amount of \$15,000.00. A public hearing is necessary to accept any donation over \$5,000.00. Tentative dates for the public hearing are June 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>.

- f. Bakie Roof Bid: Ms. Bennett made a motion to accept the Bakie Roof repair as recommended by the Finance Committee in the amount of \$167,000.00. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. All in favor. This amount includes \$147,000.00 for the repair; \$10,000.00 for a roofing inspector; and \$10,000.00 to remove asbestos flashing. This will be funded from the unexpended fund.
- g. High School Entrance Bid: Ms. Bennett made a motion to accept the bid of \$119,145.00 for the redesign of the High School front office/vestibule. Ms. Ross seconded the bid. Discussion followed. Five in favor; two against – Mr. Broderick and Mr. Miller. This will be funded from the unexpended fund.
- h. Summer Calendar: Dr. Blake presented the summer calendar. The SB is off for the month of July. The next meeting will be August 17. Ms. Bennett made a motion authorizing the Superintendent of Schools to hire employees during the summer. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. All in favor.

At 9:40 PM the SB recessed. Meeting called back to order at 9:59 PM.

- i. School Board Goal Setting: A discussion was held on the SB goals for the next year
- j. Superintendent Goals: Dr. Blake presented the SB with a draft copy of the Superintendent Goals.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED/SENT**

A discussion was held on what constitutes communications received/sent. The SB agreed to have further discussion about what would be included in future meetings. An email from Tammy Gluck was read and correspondence from Rachel Bird.

**WRITTEN INFORMATION** none

#### **SCHOOL BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next **regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board** will be held on **Wednesday, August 17, 2016, at 7:00 PM**, in Room 137 at the **Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston.**

#### **Non-Public Session – RSA 91-A:3 IIb. Personnel**

At 11:40 Ms. Ross made a motion to go into non-public session. Ms. LeBlanc polled the Board. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail M. LeBlanc  
School Board Secretary

*Minutes of the School Board meetings are unofficial until approved at a subsequent meeting of the School Board.*