

## **APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

**October 1, 2020**

**EPPING SCHOOL BOARD - LIVE/Epping TV Channel 22/Zoom**

**Epping Town Office**

**School Board Meeting - 7:00 pm**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Deborah Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Deborah Brooks, Vice Chair David Mylott, Member Heather Clark, Member Ben Leavitt, Member Robin O'Day, Superintendent Furbush, Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Taya Morgado, and Emily Kelly.

### **SCHEDULED GUESTS**

#### a. Introduction of Director of Facilities - Joe Parzych

Joe Parzych spent 15 years at the Nashua School District helping them with their facilities. He thanked everyone for being so welcoming, and he said that he is excited about this opportunity. The Board said kind words about him and welcomed him to the team. Deborah said that the interview committee was very excited, and they like how enthusiastic he is.

#### b. EES 20-21 Goals - Heather Cantagallo

Principal Cantagallo went over the guiding principles and goals for the 2020-2021 school year. They are social emotional learning, instructional best practices, and literacy. She discussed their action plan and assessment of each of these goals. Heather said that they have very ambitious goals.

#### c. EMS 20-21 Goals - Coby Troidl

Principal Troidl said that the middle school is going to focus on the following four aspects: all students' learning, continuous improvement, climate and culture, and technology integration. She discussed the goals within each of these aspects and the action steps they're going to take to achieve these goals.

Robin asked if any families are utilizing the Comcast deal to help families without the internet. Bonnie said that no one is that she knows of, but she told families to reach out if they need help with it. Ben asked about the UDL, and Principal Troidl said that it's a wonderful learning opportunity. She said that she is still a novice with it and looks forward to updating the Board later on. It's the third year that the State has been offering it to the district.

#### d. EHS 20-21 Goals - Brian Ernest

Principal Ernest discussed the high school's focus areas which are communication, technology, curriculum/instruction/assessment, and social emotional learning. He discussed their goals for each of those areas and the steps they'll take to accomplish them. He will send out a survey to gauge technology issues parents are having with being able to check students' grades.

David thanked all the administrators for being such great leaders. Heather thinks that all of their goals are relevant to the current situation, and they address topics that the district has been working towards. Superintendent Furbush pointed out the similarities between the three schools' goals. The district wants stakeholders to be involved with communication.

#### e. EMS Position Discussion - Coby Troidl

Principal Troidl reiterated that the World Language teacher resigned in August. The district only received two weeks of lesson plan and hired a substitute. Since the district hasn't been able to find a replacement, she is recommending hiring a STEAM teacher instead. This teacher would work as a Unified Arts teacher as well. In addition to that, Rosetta Stone could be offered to students who want to take Spanish or French. As of now, this STEAM position would not be permanent. It would be a one-year temporary contract. The district would want time to see if the position is something they want to continue with. Either way they would not abandon the World Language position; they realize the importance of it and will continue trying to find a teacher for next year. The district is in a desperate position right now because they still want to offer students opportunities and fulfill scheduling needs. The district is having a hard time finding a teacher fluent in Spanish and French. The STEAM position has been posted for a little bit now, and the only person interested so far is the current substitute. Deborah wants to find a certified teacher to fill this position. Parent Jordan Sargent said that she knows her kid likes the substitute.

She also said that he is in and out of the building every day and something more permanent would be better for the students. Another parent said that they already have had three teachers and wants the Board to find a permanent solution. David and Heather support this as a temporary solution. Students who are signed up for French or Spanish would go to a designated room and work with Rosetta Stone. Robin is very excited about the possibility of Rosetta Stone. The Board wants Principal Troidl to speak with the high school World Language teacher to get their opinion regarding the Spanish 1 and French 1 curriculum. She wants her to compare the curriculum with the Rosetta Stone curriculum.

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept this proposal to hire this person to provide STEAM instruction and to go forward with Rosetta Stone for French 1 and Spanish 1 for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders for the 2020-2021 school year. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

**This motion and second was withdrawn.**

Ben asked what the strain would be like on the other staff if the substitute takes the STEAM position. The strain would go down since he would run the STEAM class by himself, and Rosetta Stone would handle the world language aspect.

There was a discussion about the Alt 4 certification and how they would find a mentor for him (the substitute).

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to hire this person to provide STEAM instruction for the rest of this school year and that the district will use Rosetta Stone for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade French 1 and Spanish 1 classes and that this would only be for this current school year of 2020-2021, and the Board authorizes Superintendent Furbush to extend the offer. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

f. HS Football Discussion - Ben Bourgoin

Deborah asked about spectators, and Ben said that they are able to come to the district's home games.

Ben said that just about every school in the state that usually plays football is playing this season. There are only three schools in the state that aren't offering football that usually do including Newmarket. There have been no issues with any of the games so far. Ben is hoping to be able to schedule games and play in the playoffs. They will be keeping a database on all the athletes. He hasn't purchased any additional safety equipment for football, but he would have to. He has already contacted their equipment rep about helmets that have an additional face mask. Epping

now has enough players to play without Newmarket students. Although, they really wish that Newmarket would be joining them. This in no way is a reflection of their relationship with Newmarket, and Epping will welcome them back next year. The costs would be down this year. Less equipment will be issued, and they will only play three games this season. They would potentially have only one or two home games which means less referees that the district has to pay for. Epping would only have a Varsity Football Team.

David is excited about this opportunity, but he is concerned about the athletes' safety. The coach addressed this. The team has been doing a lot of training, and they are starting from the ground up. All the players are athletic guys who have played other sports previously. The team only has three freshmen. Epping would be playing the JV teams of larger schools, and Ben reiterated that safety is their number one concern.

Heather said that her kid is playing and that the coach has been doing a great job.

**Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to accept the Football Proposal as presented. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries. Member Heather Clark abstained.**

## **POLICY**

All the following policies are recommended to be reviewed every few years.

a. DB - Annual Budget - First Read

This was moved to a second/third read at the next meeting.

b. DIE - Financial Audit - First Read

This was moved to a second/third read at the next meeting.

c. DM - Cash in School Buildings - First Read

This was moved to a second/third read at the next meeting.

## **PERSONNEL**

None

## **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

### a. Student Reports

The SATs are less than two weeks away. The SLC and SGC are moving forward with plans for homecoming week. They're planning spirit days, having a banner reveal over video, etc. They can't have a bonfire this year due to the virus. They want to plan socially distanced activities instead. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, the high school will be having play auditions. The play will be virtual. The sophomore newspaper is starting back up. Heather would like the newspaper sent out to the Board. The boys' and girls' soccer team have another home game tomorrow. The volleyball game was tonight. The issue with cleaning supplies staining students' clothing has been resolved. The hallways will now be two-way which the students are excited about. Student Government elections for the sophomore and junior class are coming up. Students are still doing well with wearing masks and social distancing. Teachers are being supportive of mask breaks. The kids are still happy to be back.

### b. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Furbush went over the high school's sports records. He said that the NH SAS testing is coming up. The Reopening Task Force met this week to reassess. They talked about allowing for the two-way hallways at the high school; there was a discussion about mask usage at elementary school recess. They also talked about professional development days and came up with a recommendation for the Board. Superintendent Furbush and the Task Force would like to extend these PD days because teachers still need more time for technology integration among other reasons. Additionally, students have really been enjoying the remote Fridays. Their one area of concern is for elementary school parents and finding daycare. Although, a lot of elementary school parents are on board with this recommendation, and parents were aware that the PD days may get extended.

Joanne McCann mentioned that this is an unusual year. They're working towards digitizing the curriculum. Students and teachers say that they like the PD day and that is helpful for mental health reasons. She said that any extra time for teachers is helpful.

The Reopening Task Force is asking for an additional three PD days. October 9<sup>th</sup> would be a full PD day with no school for students. On October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, they would be remote learning days for students and PD days for the staff.

Parent Jordan Sargent gave some parent perspective about the request.

David thanked all the teachers. He also said that he is concerned that they will fall behind if they continue this for too long. Parent Jordan Sargent doesn't think that they're losing out any more than other districts.

Heather is in support of the recommendation and likes the consistency of PD days being on Fridays. She likes that they thought about families' wellbeing.

Principal Ernest said that on PD days they have time for Q&A. It also offers more opportunities for deep cleaning. They have social/emotional workshops. It allows for team time and planning time. He wants to make sure that they're supporting the teachers.

Principal Troidl doesn't want to wear out the teachers. She wants the teachers to have the training that they need.

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve the Reopening Task Force recommendation for a professional development day for teachers and no school for students on 10/9 and professional development days and remote learning for students on 10/23 and 10/30. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. Motion carries.**

Communication from Superintendent Furbush and the schools has been well received by parents.

## **FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES**

### **a. Business Administration Updates**

All administrators are currently working on their budgets. The NH Retirement increases their rate every two years. Bonnie mentioned the new rates and said that the district's budget will be going up. She also said that the district might have access to some funds for PPE equipment. The money would be sent to the town and then the town would give it to the district. At the next meeting, Bonnie will have all the unanticipated expenses.

Superintendent Furbush presented the remote learning expenses and went over their process for creating the remote learning system. He went over the costs and funding. The district came up with stipends to further support additional work that teachers are doing. There are approximately 106 students utilizing remote learning. The cost is around \$70k-\$90k which is not much

considering the situation. They want to absorb this cost with the operating budget; although, they are still looking for funding and reimbursement options.

Changes have been made by the State in order to help schools such as Executive Order #38. It would allow the district to withhold last year's unrestricted fund balance just in case they need it, and they would give it back to the town if they don't end up needing it. If the district only gives back a small amount of money this year, it won't cause a spike in the tax rate calculation since they gave back a small amount last year as well.

Heather said that the tax rate has been relatively flat for the past 10 years.

Ben brought up a concern that he had. The tax rate is decided mid-October.

David had an HVAC meeting today and said that it went great. He said that everything is going well. There are only a few concerns as can be expected. The project is still on track and within the window.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. Public Minutes for September 17, 2020

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the Public Minutes from the September 17, 2020 meeting as written. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

b. Nonpublic Minutes for September 17, 2020

**This was tabled until the next meeting.**

### **MANIFEST**

a. Payroll Manifest

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept Payroll Manifest #6 dated 9/18/20 in the amount of \$425,926.64. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

b. Accounts Payable

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept Accounts Payable #7 dated 9/24/20 in the amount of \$83,731.65. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**COMMENTS/OTHER**

Robin said that communication has been going well. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be an SST meeting. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Wellness Committee meeting.

Heather said that the first middle school PTO meeting is next Tuesday, and they're doing an apparel sale. Tempo is doing their annual pie sale.

David reiterated how proud he is of the district. He recently picked up his middle schooler and was impressed with how smooth it was. He also thanked and recognized the kids.

Ben thanked everyone on the Reopening Task Force. He said that people's efforts are not going unnoticed. He said that the next elementary school PTO meeting is Monday night. He also mentioned that the elementary school afterschool pickup is not as smooth as drop off. Superintendent Furbush had a conversation with Officer Hero about the situation. He asked people to be courteous and to not block any intersections or driveways. They have no intention of having an officer direct traffic. They are advising parents to not come quite as early. They will potentially change the flow of traffic if necessary. Heather said that this is not a new issue.

Superintendent Furbush thanked the staff for being there rain or shine.

Deborah said that she thinks the district is doing a great job. She reminded taxpayers that being open comes at a cost and that the district has to spend money in order to keep the students safe.

**NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED**

a. Meeting to be scheduled for October 15, 2020

**NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II (a. personnel)**

Non-Public Meeting is not scheduled for October 1, 2020 following the public meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 pm.  
Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary