

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

June 17, 2021

EPPING SCHOOL BOARD - Epping Town Hall/ Epping TV Channel 22/Zoom

7:00 pm

PUBLIC HEARING

To accept a donation of \$7,750 for Food Services

Lunch debts from families will be paid for with this donation, and any leftover money will be put in the Angel Fund for future use. The donor wanted to stay anonymous.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the donation of \$7,750 for the Food Services Department. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott.

VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

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, Student Taya Morgado, and Student Emily Kelly.

SCHEDULED GUESTS

a. Wellness Committee Presentation

Cathy and Ronnie presented this topic. They recognized all the Wellness Committee members. The committee has had discussions about wellness challenges in the district. Typically, communication was made through the nurses, but it wasn't possible during COVID. Team building & stress reduction district wide activities weren't possible this year. They need to combat stress levels, social isolation, and mental health issues. They came up with the NH 4,000 Footer Challenge. They encouraged and recognized healthy choices for both students and staff.

Students from the high school went on a few ski trips this school year. The French and Spanish students learned about Hydroponics. On Earth Day, zinnias were planted and taken care of by high school students and then planted around campus by all levels of students.

The Epping District has a new collaboration with Southeast Land Trust. They are developing an outdoor education center at the Burley Farm site. The elementary and middle school are talking about offering an after-school adventure program at Burley Farm. The Wellness Committee is currently working on obtaining funding from a grant for a greenhouse. There will be a salad meal for the entire staff on Tuesday as a thank you and to recognize them for their great work.

Heather said that she is so appreciative of Ronnie and all her hard work over the years. She said kind words and reflected on Ronnie's time with the Epping School District and thanked her.

Ronnie had started the Farm to Table program in the schools. Cathy thanked her and gave her a gift. Jessica Marcoux said that Ronnie did a great job.

b. Dyslexia Early Intervention - Student Hayden Miskinis

Hayden told a story about her experiences growing up with dyslexia. She shared her experiences dealing with bullies. She explained how some teachers made her doubt herself and made her feel as though she was less smart because of her diagnosis. Public schools are required to monitor young students for dyslexia by November 30th each year. She explained how early intervention makes a difference. One specific method, Orton Gillingham, works very well for students with dyslexia versus a handful of methods that work for non-disabled learners. Other students learn better with this one method as well, so she argued that this method should be adopted by the school district. Basic training only takes a day or so. She would like the School Board to fund the resources, training, and screening for students. She is always learning how to improve. Deborah recommends that she also talks to the Special Education Director. Heather thanked her for speaking up, and she is hopeful that adjustments can be made to fix this issue.

c. Student Presentation for Policy JBAB - Patrick McTague

He went over the Sanborn Regional policy. He acknowledged that they have different policies for the different age ranges. He recommends similar adaptations for the Epping policy to address the age issue. The students have an issue with the waiver process, and he asked some questions about the process. He asked when the district would consider a student as "out". Superintendent Furbush said that it is not that simple. He asked once a student is out, how soon would the parent find out? He noted that it is an emotionally draining process and that it is a lot on the parent too. It would vary by case, and they would assist the student with coming out to their parents. The

school would like this process to happen within two to three months. Patrick said that Prism investigated different trans policies across the state. None of them are like Oyster River or Dover. They are similar to Epping's current policy. The policy Epping wants to go to is an older policy compared to the State's version. Additionally, the policy they want to change to is only adopted by two schools in NH. Additionally, Oyster River doesn't seem to follow the policy based on students that Patrick talked to. Patrick drafted some edits to the JBAB Policy. He went through the suggested edits. It is very similar to the proposed policy. There were changes made to Sections 1 and 3. Several teachers, counselors, and students have read the proposed policy edits, and all agree with it. The purpose of this section is to create a plan of action between the student and school. This section would also ensure that a written plan is created. He went through the specific edits that were made. Jessica Marcoux said that he is very well spoken. Deborah also said kind words about him and commented on how professional he is.

Joyce Blanchard has had three students go through the school district. Patrick educated her on the LGBTQ+ community. She said that she wants the parents to be involved in the process. She is worried about counselors giving students bad advice. Patrick said kind words about the counselors that he has worked with.

Parent Amy Hodgdon said that it was a great presentation. She was happy he distinguished between the age groups. She is sad that it is so traumatic for some people to just be who they are and that there needs to be a policy about it. There won't be a situation where a student needs to keep a secret from their parents.

Kayla Orthman, former student and former president of PRISM clarified that most students have one teacher that they rely on. She said that any good teacher would respect and honor a student's wishes.

Jennifer Jacoby, French teacher, is proud of the students' activism. Laws and policies are typically created to protect minorities. She said that this group is like a minority within a minority. They have less representation which leads to less power and more vulnerability in these situations. She wants her children to have access to a trusted adult in the school district. She noted that the two students with unsafe family situations, mentioned at the last meeting, are the students who this revised policy would be affecting. The Board and District has an obligation to protect those students. She noted that when voting, the Board needs to put aside their feelings of transgendered people or abstain from voting. They need to remember those two students and those who need protection.

Brian Miskinis, local parent and teacher at Longview School, said that kids are always exploring and trying to figure out who they are. It's important that they have a safe place to do so.

Dan Mueller asked what coming out means. It is about how you identify in terms of gender and sexuality.

Superintendent Furbush is pleased with the community for speaking up.

Jessica Marcoux suggested that the School Board look into the recent news about the federal government Title IX and transgendered students.

POLICY

None

PERSONNEL

a. Resignation of Amelia Moore - EES Grade 2 Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the resignation of Amelia Moore, EES Grade 2 Teacher, with regret. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Resignation of Hannah Carbonneau - Part Time ESOL Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the resignation of Hannah Carbonneau, Part Time ESOL Teacher, with regret. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

c. Resignation of Chelsea Hodges - EES Grade 3 Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the resignation of Chelsea Hodges, EES Grade 3 Teacher, with regret. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

d. Resignation of Hannah Millon-Garvey - EHS Family Consumer Science Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the resignation of Hannah Millon-Garvey, EHS Family Consumer Science Teacher, with regret. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

e. Resignation of Krista Gulick - Director of Curriculum, Data & Assessment

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the resignation of Krista Gulick, Director of Curriculum, Data & Assessment, with regret. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

f. Nomination of Emily Anderson - EES Grade 3 Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the nomination of Emily Anderson for the EES Grade 3 Teacher position. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Vice Chair David Mylott said that it is concerning how many teachers are leaving the district. The Board and Superintendent are looking into it. Several public members asked why so many people are resigning. Parent Amy Hodgdon said that the Board still owes the public some information regarding this topic. Deborah said that some teachers have left due to larger districts offering more money. Tyler Nekton, Jordenne Sargent, and Jesseka Thompson disagreed with Deborah's comment. David said that the Board knows some people aren't leaving for monetary reasons. He also clarified Amy's question; he thinks she is asking what the Board is doing about teachers leaving and what changes are being made. Amy commented on teacher contracts and said that they typically only protect the teachers. Emily, a teacher coming from the Sanborn district, encouraged parents to look at how many teachers are leaving surrounding districts as well. Surveys were suggested in order to gather information about this topic during one of the PD days next week. Changing pay and working on climate and culture was suggested. There was a discussion about this topic. The community will be informed as more information is collected.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

a. Student Report

Emily went over what the different classes are working on. She congratulated the student who will be joining her as the junior representative next year. She also congratulated the 16 freshmen students and 7 sophomore students who made the principal's list. In the junior class, there were 16 students who were recognized for President's Academic Excellence. There were several students who won engineering and book awards. She listed off their names. She thanked Andrea Loving (parent) who brought in ice cream for students and staff.

b. Superintendent's Report

He said the high school graduation was a great event. He mentioned the outdoor band and chorus concert. He talked about the 8th grade award ceremony. There was also an 8th grade breakfast this morning, and they announced the superlatives. He thanked everyone for their hard work this year. The COVID Task Force discussed the topic of masks based on new State guidance. No masks will be required during the summer programs or this coming school year. He also mentioned the non-credible threat at the middle school. He thanked everyone who helped resolve the situation.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES

a. Financial Report

The expenses are under expended by \$520,000 right now. The bus costs went down this year because of COVID. There was no cost from the Climate & Culture survey this year. Only one teacher retired instead of three which saved money. Fewer athletic and extracurricular activities happened this year. Less people took courses and workshops. Revenue is showing a positive \$118,000. This leaves the district with a fund balance of roughly \$640,000. \$250,000 will go into the trust funds. This leaves around \$390,000 that will go back to the town. Food service is staying steady right now; they are still at a \$55,000 loss. The State said that the district may be able to recoup some of that loss. The Commissioner said that some of the ventilation costs may be able to be covered by the CARES Grant. Bonnie asked if they could move the Accounts Payable Manifest to Fridays. Sean Meagher said he'll send a list to Bonnie with areas they can use the CARES Grant money on in the Music Department. Chris Sousa asked if Epping will be offering free lunches for all students again next year. They'll be presenting their recommendations next month.

b. Committee Reports

David said that the Reopening Committee met this week and discussed what they'll do this summer and in the fall. They'll continue this committee into the summer. It is a very diverse group. HVAC/Boiler Committee has been meeting and receiving updates about the work that is being done. It is going well so far. There are a lot of technology improvements and updates that will be made over the summer.

Heather said that the Fields Committee meeting has been postponed for now.

Ben said that the Elementary School PTO had elections, and he will update the Board on who holds which positions at the next meeting. There are still some open positions. There will be a presentation for the students tomorrow. The Budget Committee meeting was last night. There was a clarification from the Committee of their ask of the Board. They want the Board to come prepared in the fall with a 2.1% bottom line budget over last year's approved budget. They would also like them to come prepared with a budget that is feasible for them. He met with the Budget Committee Chair and Superintendent Furbush about the per pupil costs. They are on a hiatus for now while they gather more information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Minutes for June 3, 2021

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to accept the Public Minutes from the June 3, 2021 meeting as amended. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Non-Public Minutes for June 3, 2021 (Prior to SB Meeting)

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to accept the Non-Public Minutes from the June 3, 2021 meeting as written. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

c. Non-Public Minutes for June 3, 2021 (Following the SB Meeting)

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to accept the Non-Public Minutes from the June 3, 2021 meeting as written. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST

a. Account Payable #24

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept Accounts Payable #24 dated 6/3/21 in the amount of \$107,212.24. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Payroll Manifest #25

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept Payroll Manifest #25 dated 6/11/21 in the amount of \$1,766,675.45. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMENTS/OTHER

David said the middle/high school concert was awesome. He said the speeches at the high school graduation were great. He wished everyone a fantastic summer.

Heather said people were wondering why the graduation link is not on the Facebook page. They will add it on there, and they will add the award recipient's names as well. She said the 8th grade graduation was a wonderful event. She thanked the parents and students for coming out for the outdoor concert. She congratulated the Class of 2021. She also acknowledged that it was Bonnie's last meeting and said kind words about her. She thanked her for her time with the district.

Ben said that it was a pleasure to attend the high school graduation this year. He thanked all the teachers and staff. He congratulated all the students.

Robin wished everyone a great summer. She wants the School Board meeting dates to be added to the Principal Reports.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

a. July 15, 2021 - Regular School Board Meeting

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II

A Non-Public Meeting **is scheduled** for June 17, 2021 following the public meeting. (a. Personnel - personnel update) to discuss Superintendent's Evaluation.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to go into a Non-Public session and adjourn the meeting shortly thereafter at 9:37 pm. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary