

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 21, 2023, 7:00 PM
EPPING SCHOOL BOARD
Epping Town Hall/Epping TV Channel 22/Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Heather Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Heather Clark, Vice Chair Ben Leavitt, Member Robin O’Day, Member Julie Knight, Member Jen Jacoby (Remote), Superintendent Furbush, and Business Administrator Christine Vayda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

SCHEDULED TOPICS

a. Book Mobile Presentation - Emma O’Neil & Dave Palange EES & EMHS Library Media Specialists

They outlined the goals for the Bookmobile which included to provide engaging literature to students, decrease the effects of the “Summer Slide”, and to build a more connected community. They said the Bookmobile made 12 stops over two days each week and the program lasted 4 weeks. Over the course of the program there were 392 books read and 204 students who participated. They shared some positive feedback that was given by parents and shared some photos from the program. They provided some thoughts on how to improve the program next year including adding an extra week, adding more stops, and the potential for high school volunteer opportunities. They also thanked multiple people for their help and support of the program.

Three students shared their favorite parts of the Bookmobile program. They said they liked having such a large variety of books to choose from and how the librarians knew what books they might like. They also liked how they are able to offer suggestions for new books to be added to the Bookmobile.

Superintendent Furbush thanked both Ms. O’Neil and Mr. Palange for their effort in making the program so successful. Jen said she thinks the Bookmobile is a great thing for the community. She also asked how people find out the schedule and where the stops are located. They said the Bookmobile social media accounts provide up-to-date information and information is also sent out in the newsletters at the end of the year. Jen also asked if donations can be made to the Bookmobile. They said books can be dropped off at either library for donations. Heather asked if all stops were used or if some were not productive. They said that some stops only had a student or two and others were very popular. Superintendent Furbush asked how they may be able to get older students more involved in the program. They said continuing to get more variety and engaging titles may help encourage older students to participate. Superintendent Furbush

asked if the current level of funding in the budget is sufficient or if more is needed. They said more funding would allow for more new books to be bought. They would like to see funding in the budget for mileage/fuel since they both use their personal vehicles for this program. Superintendent Furbush thanked them for continuing to build the community. Heather asked if they currently reach out to preschools so those families can also be made aware of the stops. They said they work with the preschool summer school that Epping runs, but will reach out to others this next year.

b. Mark Vallone & Michael Vose, New Hampshire State Representatives

Mr. Vallone gave an overview of important changes to the budget regarding education. He highlighted more funding for school building aid, building safety improvements, and CTE programs. There was a discussion about recently passed bills and upcoming legislation. Heather noted that there was a bill passed previously which makes the School District financially responsible for special education students who attend charter schools. There was a discussion regarding this bill. Superintendent Furbush said there are approximately 10-12 special education students enrolled in charter schools currently. There was a discussion about where the funding for these students should be coming from. Mr. Vose asked if there had been any discussion with the Department of Education on these issues. Superintendent Furbush said that the issues have been brought up in previous meetings and he has testified on the issue as well. Heather said that as charter schools have become a more viable option for more students the impact has become greater. Heather said the two biggest issues they would like to address in a bill are the special education funding and the CTE tuition funding for homeschooled students. Mr. Vose said both Mr. Vallone and himself can have a discussion with members of the Board of Education regarding these issues. He also said they can talk to the Office of Legislative Services to gather more information. Ben asked how the charter school voucher amount is calculated. Mr. Vallone said he is unsure of the exact method. Mr. Vose said there is a formula but he is unsure of the exact calculation. There was further discussion about various funding issues. There was also a discussion regarding homeschooled students. There was a discussion about how these issues are dealt with in other states. Heather asked about the timeline for next steps. Mr. Vose and Mr. Vallone said they could probably have an answer within a month on these issues. Mr. Vallone and Mr. Vose are scheduled to return at the November 2nd meeting for an update on their progress.

POLICY

None

PERSONNEL

None

REPORTS

a. Principal Reports

None

b. Superintendent Reports

Superintendent Furbush spoke about recent athletic events, and invited everyone to Homecoming. He mentioned that the schedule is on the school sign. Heather gave an overview of the schedule and noted that the football game will be the NH Tackles Hunger game. Food and monetary donations will benefit the local food banks in Epping and Newmarket. Superintendent Furbush said recent negotiations sessions went well.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Meeting Minutes September 7, 2023

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Public Minutes of the September 7, 2023 meeting as written. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST

a. Payroll deposited on September 1st, 2023

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on September 1st, 2023 in the amount of \$338,696.07. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Payroll deposited on September 15th, 2023

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on September 15th, 2023 in the amount of \$763,950.42. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

c. Accounts Payable deposited on August 31st, 2023

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on August 31st, 2023 in the amount of \$903.50. Seconded by Member Robin O'Day. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Robin asked about an expense item for a course reimbursement in the amount of \$2,400. Christine said she will look into it further.

BOARD COMMENTS/OTHER

a. 2023 Proposed Resolutions - NHSBA

8. The NHSBA opposes any policy affecting curriculum that enables parents, guardians or other individuals or organizations to circumvent already extant local school board review policies and exposes teachers to civil suits and sanctions at the state level.

The Board agreed to not support this proposed resolution.

9. NHSBA affirms the qualification of school librarians to research and select appropriate digital and printed material for school libraries. Recognizing that marginalized groups have been historically underrepresented in school libraries, literary collections should offer students information that provides a balance of ethnic, political, religious, and cultural values. Further, library material should represent diverse points of view, provide a global perspective, stimulate critical thinking skills, and meet the interests, abilities, learning styles, and information needs of the learning community.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution with alternative language.

10. To include an estimate of actual food service costs for the upcoming year in the preparation of the upcoming default budget.

The Board agreed to not support the proposed resolution.

11. NHSBA will support any legislation that intends to streamline the recruiting, credentialing, and hiring of certified teachers from other states. This resolution is in support of both the State of NH credentialing laws, as well as the interstate compact and reciprocity between NH and neighboring states. This resolution also supports changes to reduce barriers to teachers from other states who wish to transfer retirement savings from their current retirement program into the NH Retirement system.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution with alternative language.

12. NHSBA will support legislation that clarifies the responsibility and accountability of parents/guardians of students who do not conduct themselves according to local laws or school policies. NHSBA will also support legislation that clarifies the protocols for school districts to follow in disciplining students and holding parent/guardian(s) accountable.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution with alternative language

13. NHSBA will support legislation that creates flexibility for town moderators and moderators of cooperative school districts to postpone school district elections in the event of inclement weather.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution.

14. The Manchester Board of School Committee proposes that the language of the

Resolution II-C be amended and strengthened as follows, to increase funding significantly for Building Aid:

“NHSBA supports additional appropriations under RSA 198:15-a, IV, the state’s Building Aid Program to adequately fund all necessary school facility needs. This program has effectively created local and state partnerships in financing school building improvements that benefit all students of New Hampshire, and which should be considered a significant part of fulfilling the State’s constitutional duty to provide an adequate education to all children.” (First Adopted in 2000 – Revised in 2014)

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution.

15. We propose strengthening the language of the continuing resolution II-S: advocate for funding for universal Pre-K; Pre-K programming; and related facilities costs.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution.

16. We support advocating for state sustainability incentives, opportunities, and targeted goals for energy efficiency and the expansion of renewable energy; resources for electric school buses; and capital funding dedicated to sustainability-related building construction, renovation, and infrastructure.

The Board agreed to not support the proposed resolution.

17. We propose advocating that Medicaid be used as primary calculator for free and reduced Lunch numbers for NH school districts; advocating for the State to join the Medicaid Direct Certification program; advocate that Medicaid to Schools (MTS) be revised to allow greater flexibility in sign off (by guidance counselors, e.g.); reduce administrative burden on localities; and fund an increase in per service fees.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution with alternative language.

18. The NHSBA Board of Directors recommends deleting/removing the following Resolution.

“IX:D NHSBA supports the efforts of the National School Boards Association to provide more local governance and flexibility by working with federal officials to ensure passage of all federal legislation and regulations consistent with this goal. (2015)”

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution.

19. NHSBA will advocate to the NH State Legislature to create a universal and subsidized meal program for NH public school students.

The Board agreed to support the proposed resolution.

b. Board Comments

Julie said she thinks it is a great use of resources to allow the 4th and 5th graders who participate in early band to take the EMHS bus. She also encouraged the public to watch upcoming School Board meetings which will provide a lot of information on the budget. She requested adding the discussion of School Board meeting configurations to the October 19th agenda.

Ben said the Budget Committee meetings are also public and very informative. He also asked if there was any update on the proposed dates for the budget meetings. Robin said they should have a decision shortly after their next meeting. Ben thanked everyone for their efforts in getting the students to school on time. Julie added that the changes regarding the morning SST session present some transportation challenges.

Robin commended Epping for their efforts for getting students to school on time. She stated that truancy is a major issue elsewhere and is happy to see it is not an issue in Epping.

Jen asked if the new athletic director could explain how the expenses related to the cooperative teams are calculated for each school involved when he presents at a future meeting.

Christine said budgets are starting to get put together.

Heather said the upcoming homecoming weekend seems to include a lot of new and fun events. She also mentioned other upcoming local events.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

a. October 5, 2023

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II Non-Public Meeting **is not scheduled** for September 21, 2023 after the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn at 9:14pm. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary