

WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

May 12, 2020

Google Meetings

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/PLEDGE

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Sean Whalen at 5:44PM and was conducted through Google Meetings due to COVID-19. Those present were: Sean Whalen, Annemarie Redmond, Kristen Bruso, Robin Tindall, Mark Yuengling (later), JeanMarie Oakman, David Baker, Ed Connors (part), Candy Fuller, Angie Ledeau, Cathleen Karaffa, Craig Locarno, Megan Shambo, Julian Villa, deforest Bearse, Emily Stevens, Jenna Barton, Karen Ammerman, Kelly O'Brien, Kirsten Huebner, Kirstina Hughes, Laura Berry, Leanna Robinson, Lora Powers, Lori Small, Mary Ann Danielson, Michelle Jarvis, Michelle Smith, Judith Duhaime, SAPA and Becky Chrisinger.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

This was moved to the end of the meeting and wasn't done so will complete at the next meeting.

III. CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Move Approval of Minutes to After Principal Report

Items for Discussion

Teacher Appreciation Item A

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Teacher Appreciation Week

Teacher appreciation week was last week and Sean Whalen expressed that we are now realizing more than ever how much we appreciate our teachers. JeanMarie Oakman spoke highly of all the Weathersfield staff and teachers.

B. Internet Conductivity - Kristen Bruso on Behalf of V-Tel

Kristen shared that V-Tel is working on providing as many good connections as they can and there will now be a hot spot at the 1879 Building in Perkinsville which will be available outside.. Kristen is also committed to working with members of the Weathersfield community to provide them with a good internet connection via V-Tel and said that people could reach out to her through V-Tel with issues they are having. Sean Whalen thanked Kristen Bruso and V-Tel for these efforts.

C. Memorial Day Observance for This Year and Proposal for Future Programs

Sean Whalen reached out to deforest Bearse who is head of the Veteran's Memorial Committee. Deforest shared that there will be a Memorial Day service at noon at the Veterans' Memorial in Perkinsville that will be conducted using FaceBook. All are encouraged to attend.

There was discussion around a map project that will be a part of the Veteran's Memorial when completed that they are hoping a boy scout might undertake. When the map is finished, it will be made into a panel that will be a part of the Memorial. There was a discussion around fourth grade teachers being in charge of Weathersfield history and incorporating some of this topic into that education. Sean Whalen has offered to help and advise on this project. Sean shared about Memorial Day at his school once he moved to Vermont and how much those services meant to him. Sean would like to see something like what he experienced as a child be done in Weathersfield one day. The Board would like to create a Memorial Day Committee and those interested in being on this Committee should email JeanMarie Oakman or Sean Whalen with their interest.

C. Financials - Ed Connors

Ed Connors used a visual presentation and went through the Year End Projections for Weathersfield School. Our Projected Revenue is: \$5,933,844 and our Projected Expenditures Are: \$5,623,666 which leaves a Projected Surplus of: \$310,218 which is 5.23%. Ed also went over the Fund Balances as of 04/30/20.

Due to COVID-19, the Department of Education is projecting that education funds will fall short. There was discussion around this issue. Ed Connors also explained the Hicks Nichols Funds and that they were set up in the 1970's and how they work.

Ed Connors asked for questions. Sean Whalen asked some questions about the Food Program. Ed said that we could have funds left in the Food Program due to going to the summer Food Program early due to COVID-19. Robin Tindall asked about books and supplies and the surplus and JeanMarie Oakman said these funds had been frozen for the rest of the year right before the pandemic hit.

D. BAC Recommendations

The BAC met with Annemarie Redmond to present all of the recommendations they had for the Board while working on the FY20/21 Budget.

They were:

1. Athletics - Discussed and kept
2. Drama - Discussed and kept
3. \$6,000 Bus - Algebra Bus - Suggested the students attending the class online to save the cost of the bus. - Not Discussed
4. Foreign Language Position - Whether a little bit of foreign language is valuable. By cutting it would save \$24,853.
5. We R Hope - \$18,000 from school budget for this coming year and \$9,000 from Medicaid funds. JeanMarie Oakman said this program is very beneficial to the students they serve and they have continued to serve these students and other students during COVID-19 which has been very beneficial.

Jenna Brown worked very hard to set up Windsor County Mentoring in the Weathersfield community and school. They were just about to match a volunteer with a student when the pandemic hit.

6. Stipends For Extracurricular Activities

These are received for various activities such as academic teams. There is a stipend for Mrs. Smith for \$3,000 that is for books. This stipend was discussed in detail at a former Board meeting.

7. \$5,000 Field Trips - A. Admission and B. Transportation

This was discussed and staff, JeanMarie Oakman and the Board all feel that field trips are important for students to be able to experience.

8. \$25,000 Staff Training and Professional Development - This is part of the Master Agreement so needs to remain.

9. Substitute Line - JeanMarie Oakman said the reason for this line going up was due to the substitutes needing to be broken down by grades and Sean Whalen added that the substitutes got a well deserved raise.

On behalf of the Board, Sean Whalen thanked the BAC for their service and they are now disbanded as their duties are complete. (See Items for Action) The Board and David Baker are going to look more into how the BAC was first formed as far as the wording with having a BAC for both the Town and School.

E. Hicks Nichols Committee and Grants - Spring 2020 Grants

Sean Whalen discussed the outdoor classroom that has been presented to the Hicks Nichols Committee. The Board is in support of this outdoor classroom. The outdoor classroom has been presented to the Hicks Nichols three times and was approved for partially in the amount of \$5,000. The amount requested when proposed was \$15,500. Lora Powers and Leanna Robinson gave updates about the outdoor classroom and said that the proposal they had wanted to use was from Nick Zandstra. Lora and Leanna will obtain an updated quote from Nick. They have reached out to Jim Taft but he is really too busy to build this outdoor classroom with all of his other duties. Lora and Leanna would like the classroom to embody the outdoors which is what Nick's design does. Nick would also engage students in the process. David Baker will reach out to Jim Taft also. There was a lot of discussion about the outdoor classroom, the vision and design and various ideas on ways to help keep the cost down.

The other Grants that were approved and then the approval was rescinded at the last meeting were discussed. They were: Vt Symphony Orchestra for \$300, Flexible Seating for \$500 which was explained further by Jenna Brown and other teachers, and \$10,000 for Cross Country Ski Equipment which Laura Berry explained further. Laura Berry said that they need to replace pretty much all of the equipment which was in the program before Laura started teaching so the equipment has lasted a long time. She needs most of the equipment replaced in order to have all students participate at one time. There was discussion about the quotes possibly being high and Laura Berry said she used LL. Bean because the equipment we have now came from them and has lasted for such a long period of time. There was a lot of discussion around cross country skis. Robin Tindall shared how she and her husband get good deals for the program

they run and offered to try and do some sharing of equipment with Laura. Laura and Robin will discuss this and try to work out a plan. This grant was approved for \$5,000 so boots can be purchased for the program to keep running. (See Items for Action)

There was discussion around how the Hicks Nichols Committee is formed and that the Committee is under the Board's supervision. Laura Berry said the members on the Board right now have served consistently for several years and have a good idea of the criteria for approval of a Hicks Nichols Grant which is very helpful. Laura thanked the present Hicks Nichols Committee members for their consistency over the past nine years. Sean Whalen would like the Board to open up the Committee.

F. Principal Search Committee

David Baker shared a document and went over the document that outlines the process for searching for a new principal. The Board agreed to adopt this document. (See Items for Action)

G. Plans and Policies for 2020 and Beyond

There was discussion around various plans for the 2020 school year due to COVID-19 restrictions that may or may not happen. The SU is looking at three different scenarios which are: remote, in person or hybrid. The teachers all expressed that they would like time to receive more training on virtual teaching.

Lora Powers read a list of what the staff would like as far as policies and training surrounding proposals surrounding COVID-19 and the school. These requests are: staff need to be a part of decisions and plans and need to have plans that fit the Weathersfield School.

Annemarie Redmond asked how staff that aren't classroom teachers are being used right now. JeanMarie shared that staff are being used in various ways and that before they left the school, all students were assigned a staff member to check in with the student daily. Staff members also provide tutorial work and specialists work with students. There was a lot of discussion about how this has been working.

The SU is hoping to have half days for the last 8 days of school in order to provide more virtual teaching training. There was discussion on ending earlier as students and parents are burning out from virtual learning. Virtual teaching is also very stressful for the staff. It was decided that one letter will be crafted and sent from Administrators, the Board and teachers to request that school end earlier.

Hiring Special Education Paraprofessionals and the French Language Teacher were discussed. Cathy Kraffa is retiring so a classroom teacher will be needed. The Special Education Teacher that was hired accepted another position so we need another Special Education Teacher.

VI. PRINCIPAL REPORT - JeanMarie Oakman

JeanMarie said that Cathy Karaffa submitted her letter of retirement. The Master Schedule is out. The MTTTS leadership team is meeting this Friday and there are new regulations. They are rethinking when and how they are going to roll this out with the present pandemic according to Angie Ledeau.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT - David Baker

David gave an update on COVID-10 and thanked all staff for all they have put into making this work.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. Discharge BAC

Sean Whalen made a motion to discharge the BAC. Robin Tindall second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

B. Accept Cathy Karaffa's Retirement Letter

Sean Whalen made a motion to accept Cathy Karaffa's retirement letter. Mark Yuengling second this motion.

C. Approve the Hiring of Ericka Yuengling

Sean Whalen made a motion to approve the hiring of Ericka Yuengling for the Special Education Teacher. Mark Yuengling recused himself from this vote. Robin Tindall second this motion. NFD. Four ayes and one abstention. This motion was approved.

D. Hiring of Amy Parnell for the Foreign Language Position.

Robin Tindall made a motion to approve Amy Parnell for the Foreign Language Position. There was further discussion around hiring for this position due to the pandemic. There were three ayes and two nays. This motion was approved.

E. Motion to Adopt WS District Principal Search Document

Sean Whalen asked for a motion concerning this document. Annemarie Redmond made a motion to accept this document. Robin Tindal second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

F. Hicks Nichols Grants - VT Symphony Orchestra \$300, Flexible Seating for All \$500, Outdoor Classroom \$15,500, Cross Country Ski Program - Boots \$5,000

Sean Whalen asked for a motion concerning the above Grants and amounts. Robin Tindall made a motion to approve the above Grants and amounts. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

IX. SETTING THE NEXT AGENDA

Items for Discussion

A. Plans for COVID-19 for 2020 and Beyond

B. End of School Year and Virtual Teaching Training

- C. Principal Search Committee
- D. Memorial Day Celebration Committee

X. TENTATIVE EXECUTIVE SESSION VSA T.11 SECTION 313 - Personnel

Sean Whalen asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Annemarie Redmond made a motion to go into Executive Session. Robin Tindall second. NFD. This motion was approved. The Board went into Executive Session at 10:27PM. Sean Whalen asked for a motion to come out of Executive Session. Robin Tindall made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 10:50PM. Mary Yuengling second. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved. The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:50PM. No action was taken.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Sean Whalen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Robin Tindall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mary Yuengling second this motion. NFD. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Chrisinger