

Weathersfield School Board
April 14, 2020
Google Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/PLEDGE

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Sean Whalen at 5:36PM via Google Meeting. Those present were: Sean Whalen, Annemarie Redmond, Robin Tindall, Kristen Bruso, Mark Yuengling (later in meeting), JeanMarie Oakman, David Baker, Kelly O'Brien, Angie LeDeau, Alicia Crane, Jessica Kischko, Leanna Robinson, Jessica Brown, Lora Powers, SAPA and Becky Chrisinger. The flag was pledged.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A. 03/04/20

Sean Whalen asked for this to be moved till later in the meeting.

III. CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Add Hicks Nichols to Items for Discussion

Add Setting the Next Agenda

There are six resignations and some hires which will go under the Principal Report and Items for Action.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Portrait of A Graduate

This committee will resume in later summer or early fall. The competencies are completed. Sean mentioned that due to the time we are in we are all learning more about education how to do progress based learning.

B. Complete Board ReOrganization from last meeting

1. Election of Vice Chair of the Board

Sean asked for nominations and nominated Annemarie Redmond as Annemarie has taken on quite a few tasks lately that would make her a good Vice Chair. Robin Tindall second this motion. There was no further discussion. All in favor. This motion was approved.

2. 3rd Member of the SU Board

Sean Whalen nominated Mark Yuengling as the third member of the SU Board. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

3. Appoint Signer of the Manifest

Sean Whalen nominated Kristen Bruso for this position. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

C. COVID-19 Crisis Actions moved to Superintendent and Principal Reports

D. Trash Update and Food Service Update

Jim Taft says we will be ready for the new law when it goes into effect in July. Casella will provide the receptacles and they have buckets to use in the classroom and lunchroom for the food scraps. Jim says the trash bill will go up minimally if at all. It is going to take a school wide and community effort to work and educate the students. Craig Locarno reiterated that it will take education and time to educate as long as we have the right set up. Sean Whalen mentioned that we have had success in teaching students about this in the past. JeanMarie Oakman mentioned that since students eat snacks in their rooms in the afternoon, that the buckets will need to be brought from the rooms after this snack is eaten. There will be education on how to use the bins. Lora Powers and Leanna Robinson took a course about this and have small buckets to use also. Sean Whalen mentioned that having better and more appetizing food for the students is the largest asset as there will be less food to compost. Robin Tindall said that the education around this never ends and there will need to be continuous education. Robin volunteered to come in and do some audit education.

Food Service and COVID-19 Updates

Jim Taft and David Baker said they decided to centralize the food service program for the lunches going out to students in the SU in order to meet guidelines and regulations for providing these lunches. They decided to use one kitchen for all four schools at this time for sanitization purposes. Jim Taft said they have been working with the CDC and Risk Management and other government departments to find out what they need to do. It has been advised to close as many rooms as possible at this time. Jim Taft said it is common sense to keep community and staff safe and this provides the best scenario to accomplish this. Craig Locarno said that Heather has stepped up to the task at this time and that he is proud of the staff at Weathersfield and Hartland. Craig said they have an amazing staff and schedule of volunteers. All of the food products will be packaged by 9am. Then the lunches will be bagged and put in boxes in the all purpose room. Staff will take the boxes to the busses. All stations will have six to eight feet distance between staff and volunteers. There will only be one volunteer on the bus right now and they will continue to wear a mask. Sean Whalen mentioned that families have been amazed at the quality of the food their children are receiving. JeanMarie Oakman encouraged people to apply for free and reduced lunch if they need this. David Baker thanked JeanMarie, Craig, the bus drivers and all of the volunteers for their hard work and dedication. Sean Whalen read a letter from a 4th grader discussing that all of the cleaning products used in our school should be environmentally friendly. Sean received letters from many students in Jessica Wilmot's class and will pass these letters on to JeanMarie. The Board and David Baker thanked Craig Locarno and Jim Taft.

E. Athletic Update/Questions Raised at Town Meeting - Athletic Director, Jessica Kischko
Some of the questions raised at the town meeting were read, reviewed and answered by Jessica Kischko.

1. Parents don't want to pay a fee for Online Sports Engine/Parents Don't Want to Pay a Fee for Their Students to Participate in Sports

Jessica said that it is her understanding that we have had fees for athletics for the last 20 years. Jessica went over the fees from other nearby towns which were all higher than Weathersfield.

2. Parents would like to know what changes that Jessica has implemented over this year. Jessica says she has implemented the following changes:

Implementing Sports Engine

There was a question pertaining to sending students to sports teams/games and Jessica said that the 5th girls team went to a Dartmouth game. Jessica left going to these external games to coaches.

Jessica said she will reevaluate and do some more new things next year.

3. Time and Commitment for Salary

Jessica said she does a lot of her work behind the scenes at home by coordinating with officials, coaches and parents and emails with parents. She said most of her job is done without visibility but she does attend many games also. Robin Tindall suggested looking closely at the time Jessica spends on tasks and also talked about the complexity and time involved when doing this job and a fulltime job also. Robin said keeping track would benefit Jessica and everyone for planning for this position.

4. Jessica shared and went over a budget outline

The budget involves paying coaches, officials and buying equipment. David Baker mentioned how difficult it is to keep Athletic Directors and how in most towns it is a partnership between the school and the town. E-Finance is changing the way that coaches and officials will need to be paid which will be more complicated and time consuming.

Overall, people felt that the sports season went much better this year. There was discussion about having an Athletic Committee or a Booster Club with parent participation. Alica Crane feels that this year has gone a lot smoother than other years. Alica says she loves Sports Engine. Jessica Brown said that there are a lot of parents who would like to offer their support in helping with the sports program.

The Board thanked Jessica Kischko for sharing this information tonight.

F. Discussion About Hicks Nichols Spring Grants

There was a long discussion about the Hicks Nichols Grant and the Committee. The Board felt that they didn't have time to review the spring Grant proposals before approving them at the last meeting. Sean read a letter that he wrote to the Board and the Hicks Nichols Committee. Sean Whalen researched where the money came from for the Grant and the Grant is the largest public fund in Weathersfield. The Grants can only come from the interest from the fund.

Sean talked about the fact that the kindergarten teachers and Susan Hindinger representing Four Winds have asked for an outdoor classroom and each time it has been denied by the

Committee. Sean also said that the Board has reached out repeatedly to the Committee to find out about the Committee. After talking some, Robin Tindall, said that it seems like there may have been details added to the criteria for receiving Grants over time. Kelly O'Brien said the funds that can be used are in an account that Ed Connors is in charge of till the Grants for that year are given out. The Grants are awarded in the fall and the spring. The rules and regulations for the Grant funds were set up by the town when the trust was first set up. David Baker mentioned that Hicks Nichols is a Standing Committee of the Board. The Board has been in support of the outdoor classroom for four years but Hicks Nichols has never approved this Grant request, The request is for \$15,000. One of the spring requests was for cross country skis and was for \$10,000. Robin Tindall reminded everyone that her and her husband, Colin provide a free cross country ski club to all students. David Baker said that it seemed like a good time to review the Hicks Nichols criteria for Grants and also to work on improving communications between the Board and the Committee. The Board will request a meeting in the next two weeks with the Hicks Nichols Committee and the Board. David said that anyone who voted to approve the Grants at the last meeting could vote to rescind the vote. There was more discussion about the outdoor classroom.

Will have Ed Connors come to the next meeting to give a financial update and also talk about the Hicks Nichols Funds and how they are disbursed.

G. BAC Communication

Annemarie Redmond met with the BAC and discussed the cuts they recommended. The Board thought the recommendations the BAC made were for \$30,000 but they were for \$100,000 and Annemarie went over these recommendations with the BAC. Sean thanked Annemarie for this and the recommendations will be discussed more at the next meeting.

VI. PRINCIPAL REPORT

JeanMarie gave the following list of people that are retiring or resigning from their positions at the school. They are:

Tim Herbert SU/Special Education Teacher - letter of retirement
Peter Pullenen/ Middle School History Teacher - letter of retirement
Jenna Brown/Guidance Counselor - resignation
Roland Whitney/Part Time Janitor - retiring
MaryJo Ramsey - retiring

Approval for the Following Recommendations for Positions

Brooke Breit - First Grade Teacher
Ryan Santangelo for Middle School History Teacher
Melissa Cole for Guidance Counselor
Erika Yuengling for SU/Special Education Teacher
Callista Polidor for Regular Education Para

David Baker announced that JeanMarie Oakman/Principal will be retiring at the end of the next school year after working at Weathersfield for 10 years. David Baker thanked JeanMarie for the year notice so there can be an extensive search to replace JeanMarie. David thanked JeanMarie for her dedication to the Weathersfield School over the last ten years.

There was discussion about the reports from the state on Education revenues being down and going down more due to COVID-19. This could create a tremendous shortfall for the school year of 2021. We are finished with negotiations with Support Staff but still in negotiations for Teachers.

Sean Whalen brought up that he believed that Weathersfield and Hartland should have been included in the hiring process for an assistant for Craig Locarno due to serving all the schools in the SU. David apologized for not checking in with the changes that took place in the Food Service Program and said they had to act quickly.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. Rescinding Approval for the Spring Hicks Nichols Grants

Annemarie Redmond made a motion to reconsider at the next Board meeting on 05/12/20 the approval of the Hicks Nichols Grants approved at the 03/04/20 meeting. Sean Whalen second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

B. Acceptance of Letters of Resignation and Retirement Listed Above Under Principal Report

Sean Whalen made a motion to accept the letters of resignation and retirement as listed above and accept JeanMarie Oakman's letter for retirement for the following school year. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. There was no further discussion. All in favor. This motion was approved.

C. Approval of Hires as Listed Above Under Principal Report

Sean Whalen made a motion to approve the above hires as listed. Robin Tindall second this motion. NFD. Four in favor and one abstention from Mark Yuengling. This motion was approved.

D. Sean Whalen made a motion to accept the minutes as written from 03/04/2020. Kristen Bruso second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

IX. SETTING THE NEXT AGENDA

- A. Foreign Language Teacher and Sped Para Updates
- B. Hicks Nichols Meeting
- C. Financials - Ed Connors
- D. COVID-19 Update
- E. Review BAC Recommendations

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

Sean Whalen asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Mark Yuengling made a motion to go into Executive Session. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD. All in favor. The Board went into Executive Session at 9:12PM. Sean Whalen made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Kristen Brusio second this motion. NFD. The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:50PM. The following action was taken: David Baker asked for a motion concerning the Support Staff Contract. Sean Whalen made a motion to approve the Support Staff Contract. Mark Yuengling second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Sean Whalen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Robin Tindall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Chrisinger