

# Mount Ascutney Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

Approved Minutes

Present at the Meeting:

Board- Amy McMullen, Kris Garnjost, Elizabeth Burrows, Bill Yates, Nancy Pedrick Admin Present- David Baker, Jenifer Aldrich, Colleen DeSchamp, Katie Ahern, Angie Ladeau, Kate Ryan

Special Guest(s): New board member Rebecca Roisman

Additional Attendees: None

I. Call to Order by: Elizabeth Burrows @ 6:30pm. Note that Kris Garnjost will be joining late.

II. Additions/Corrections to the Agenda

Add under action items after the new Treasurer, payments made for summer work to Admin.

III. Public Participation on Items Not Related to the Agenda

None

IV. Announcements and Celebratory Comments from Board Members

Welcome to new Board member Rebecca Roisman

V. Discussion/Possible Action Items

A. New Board Member Appointment

Welcome Rebecca Roisman

Motion to Accept as new member: Amy McMullen

2nd: Nancy Pedrick

Vote: 4-0 Unanimous (Kris Garnjost-Absent)

B. Vote on New Treasurer

Duties include coming to SU office 2x/month to sign off on payments made.

Motion to Accept Nancy Pedrick as Treasurer: Bill Yates

2nd: Amy McMullen

Vote: 4-0 Unanimous (Kris Garnjost-Absent)

*Added item-Payments to Admin for Summer Work.*

David Baker has a spreadsheet breakdown for dates work.

Jenifer Aldrich 20 days @ Perdiem Rate \$8345.00

Kate Ryan 25 days @Perdiem Rate \$8928.00

Colleen DeSchamp 25 days @ Perdiem Rate \$9625.00

Motion to pay Admin for Summer Work: Nancy Pedrick

2nd: Kris Garnjost

Vote: 5-0 Unanimous

### C. Student Representation on the Board

Colleen DeSchamp is working with School Counselors to identify a student council member(s) to sit on the board. She will pass along the name when she has it.

Motion to add a student to board: Kris Garnjost

2nd: Nancy Pedrick

Vote 5-0 Unanimous

### D. Budget Process FY22

General discussion about desire for the budget to tie to specific items in the strategic plan. More to come on budget in next meetings.

### E. Transportation Follow-Up

Another meeting with Dr. Baker and representatives of Student Transportation of VT. Getting much closer to understanding of routes with perspective as 1 district. We are now delivering meals on remote days, however since there is less time we will receive a credit back on those days, so that will help the budget.

### F. SRO Memorandum of Agreement

Would like to invite SRO and/or Chief Sampson to a meeting to discuss details and functions and role in the buildings. Would like clarity around expectations. There was feedback from Admin on what tasks are helpful for him to be involved with. Dr. Baker shared an email with the board around the role, and some revisions are needed. Will discuss further at the next board meeting.

SRO should be in one of the buildings M-F 745-245pm.

Mt Ascutney pays 45% of annual salary

Hartland pays 30% of annual salary

Town pays 25% of annual salary

### G. BLM and Symbols Used to Create Safe Space

Board invited teacher Chris Lord to the meeting, and he read a letter. It is listed below. Dr. Baker has approved his posting of a BLM and Pride Flag in his classroom.

I wish that this wasn't something that required any explanation or a need to defend, but that I am here at all speaks clearly as to why these messages are vital and I thank you for allowing me to speak to you tonight.

I am not here to discuss or debate the Black Lives Matter Movement or The LGBTQ Rights Movement. I'm not here to debate the meaning of either flag in the larger context of our country. I'm here to explain why I have them in my classroom and why I have had similar messages on my classroom walls since I started teaching 25 years ago.

I work to be a voice for ALL of our students. But these flags speak to where I see the greatest and most immediate need for our advocacy.

They are not about exclusion, but about putting the focus where there is a necessity. They are not statements about white or straight people and they are not accusatory or meant to lay blame.

Both flags are meant to amplify a message of civil rights and social justice AND the voices that are frequently unheard, ignored, silenced, or ridiculed, even here in our schools. They are

meant to ask how we can do better. What do we have in place as a school district to support our

students and families of color? How do we provide support for our LGBTQ students? And in what ways do we seek out those crucial voices?

My intent is to send a clear and (based on the deliberate size of the flags) loud message that my classroom is a safe space for our LGBTQ students and students of color.

Why? I hear racist and homophobic slurs as well as mocking of different ethnic and cultural groups on a regular basis. In a class last year, a few students made the statement that “The Civil War and Slavery ended 200 years ago and that black people should stop complaining and get over it.” And when discussing a gay character in a novel, it isn’t uncommon to hear “that’s gross”.

These comments very clearly send the message that the lives of our LGBTQ students and staff and students and staff of color DON’T matter.

Both flags say that they DO.

They are meant to spark discussion and to help provide our students with a greater understanding of history and current social issues. They are also part of supporting a more inclusive, diverse and anti-racist curriculum.

So why Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ Pride flags? They are about building awareness of the immediacy in not only our county and state but also in our school district. While there will always be exceptions...

- \* White and heterosexual students and staff aren’t discriminated against, isolated, harassed, ridiculed, bullied or marginalized because of their race or sexual or gender identity.
- \* White and heterosexual students will be presented with a curriculum that will teach them about their history, will include characters in novels that they can identify with and will see themselves represented fully and respectfully in discussions of current events.
- \* When studying history, literature or current events (subjects that often address issues of race) white students will be surrounded almost entirely by other white students and will never be asked to “speak for their race” during discussions.
- \* White and heterosexual teachers and students will never have their thoughts or behavior viewed through the lens of their race, sexual or gender identity.
- \* White and heterosexual students are guaranteed that there will be teachers, administrators, support staff, coaches and guidance counselors that they can identify with, based on their race or sexual or gender identity.
- \* Heterosexual students will never hear that they are “gross”, “wrong”, “not normal” or told they’re “dressed wrong”.
- \* Heterosexual students will always have their correct pronoun used and will never have a teacher or classmate “forget” or refuse to use it.
- \* White student-athletes don’t have to fear that they will face racist taunts or insults by

opposing players and fans during games.

\* Black students have to see political slogans, worn by their classmates, that represent politicians who have devalued their race on the national stage.

\* Black students have to see the Confederate Flag, a symbol of hatred and white supremacy, worn on the clothing of classmates, on the bumper stickers of cars, and flying above houses in their town, but Black Lives Matter flags are labeled controversial and debated publicly.

\* Black students that start drivers-ed and begin driving, will be 2-3x more likely to be stopped by police than their white classmates.

\* LGBTQ teens are more than three times as likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual classmates, often stemming from harassment, bullying, and a sense of isolation.

So this is why I hang the flags. To say that in my classroom and at Windsor, "You DO matter".

It is not my place to be the voice, but to help create a safe space and a platform to hear from those that are going unheard and to help bring attention to a true need within our schools. Thank you for letting me speak today and for supporting our students. I also want to thank my principals and Dr. Baker for their leadership as we move forward.

Author- Chris Lord  
(7/8th Grade ELA Teacher)

#### H. COVID Updates

Dr. Baker sent an email out to families about the positive case at Windsor School. That has been contained and any close contacts are already in quarantine as per VDH. Building Admins reported that use of outdoor spaces are going well, and the beautiful weather has certainly helped. They plan to continue that as long as possible, and even during winter months as much as they can.

#### I. After School Programs

Dr. Baker and Principal Aldrich reminded that the school can't control what the Rec Ctr does. Both schools have heard complaints of lack of masking and social distancing, and have suggested those concerns be addressed to the Rec Director James Aldrich. ABS is looking for alternative arrangements for their students. There are approximately 42 kids in this program, and 5 more on the waitlist to join. Not all of them go every single day.

#### J. VTVLC/High School; Distance Learning Grades K-12

100% remote students, managed by Angie Ladeau. It has been a challenge and everyday is better. These students are following the VTVLC curriculum in earnest.

IP/PM Remote Grades K-8-these students are getting extra help in the afternoons, and/or teaching pods are coordinating the 1hr of work given each day.

IP/PM Remote Grades 9-12 these students are on a structured schedule and have 2-3 classes in the afternoon each day. Running smoothly.

K. Trauma-Transformed Champions Update

Tabled until next meeting due to time. We don't want to cut this short as J Aldrich has done tons of work in this area that the board would like to hear about.

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of previous minutes

- September 4, 2020 (Special Board Meeting)
- September 10, 2020 (Special Board Meeting)
- September 14, 2020
- September 18, 2020 (Emergency Board Meeting)
- September 24, 2020 (Special Board Meeting)

Motion to approve Minutes: Nancy Pedrick

2nd: Bill Yates

Vote: 5-0 Unanimous

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business

IX. Future Agenda Items

Trauma Transformed

Budget FY22

SRO

COVID Updates

X. Executive Session-VT Title 1, Section 313

Entered Executive Session at 6:45 pm and exited at 7:30 pm

Motion to Enter Exec Session: Nancy Pedrick

2nd: Bill Yates

Vote 4-0

Motion to Exit Exec Session: Kris Garnjost

2nd: Amy McMullen

Vote: 5-0 Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy L. Moody