

WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

December 8, 2020

Google Meetings

I. **CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS / PLEDGE**

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Annemarie Redmond, at 6:07PM. Those present were: Annemarie Redmond, Robin Tindall, Mark Yuengling, Kristen Brusco, Jacqui Antonivich, JeanMarie Oakman, David Baker, Jessica Wilmot, BJ Esty, Brooke Breit, Candy Fuller, Carrie Jewel, Christine Bourne, Emily Milligan, Emily Stevens, Janine Saragusa, Kristen Huebner, Kristina Hughes, Laura Berry, Leeanna Robinson, Lora Powers, Lori Small, Megan Shambo, Michelle Smith, Ryan Santangelo, Nathalie Locurek, Jaime Turner, Vanessa Perry, Susan Brown, Angie LeDeau, Ed Connors, SAPA and Becky Chrisinger. The flag was pledged.

II. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

a. Approval of the minutes of 11/10/20 - Hold till next meeting so all can review first.

III. **CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Jessica Wilmot asked if she could speak about a matter not on the agenda. Jessica shared about the strain and stress that many of the teachers are under right now and how it is hard to teach in person and virtually and meet all the demands that are required. There was a lot of discussion about this and many people gave input. COVID-19 has put a lot of stress on staff, children and parents and has required more of all. Jessica presented some ideas that would help alleviate some of the stress and the Board asked that staff come up with more ideas on how to help alleviate some of the stress in these trying times. One idea was to give staff more time for planning by eliminating training that was planned pre COVID. A lot of people had ideas and all admitted that everything is more stressful for everyone at this time. The Board would like the staff to present more ideas to help with these issues.

V. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

a. **FY22 Budget Update** - Ed Connors

Annemarie Redmond had the Budget Committee introduce themselves. They are: Janine Saragusa, Jaime Turner and Becky Chrisinger. Ed Connors went over the account summary. At this time the proposed budget is: 6,742,756 which does include an Assistant Principal

There were questions and answers given by Ed about various aspects of the Budget. Kristen Bruso said due to the current economic circumstances due to COVID, she is rethinking her position about the Assistant Principal. JeanMarie's original Budget proposal was up 7% from last year. With \$10,000 for summer school and the Assistant Principal position added in, it brings the proposed Budget up to 9% more than last year's budget. JeanMarie says she believes it is best to cut the Assistant Principal position but advises keeping summer school as many students will need this service which is something we usually have for students.

JeanMarie Oakman and BJ Esty said they made many cuts but some costs are unable to be cut and are non negotiable such as high school tuition, benefits and wages and any other contractual obligations. There was a discussion around tuition and Ed Connors explained how they came up with the amount that is in the budget. Other questions that were asked and answered were:

- > The building operations line is up as a part time employee is being replaced with a full time employee.
- > Guidance is up as the new guidance counselor has more experience than the last one.
- > The poverty rate is reported in the fall.
- > The BAC will meet with Ed Connors, JeanMarie Oakman, BJ Esty and David Baker to discuss the budget further before the next meeting. See Item E below for more about the BAC.

Other timelines were discussed concerning the budget as well as the CLA and other factors that will determine the tax rate.

b. Hicks Nichols Committee

Diana Stillston has agreed to serve on this committee representing a staff member but we need one more staff member to be on this committee. Tara Smith has agreed to be on this committee. See Items for Action A for approval of Tara Smith.

c. Athletics/Sports Update - COVID-19

All athletics are on hold per the governor till at least the new year.

d. COVID-19 Update

There are health checks every morning. The teachers are doing an excellent job of keeping the students safe throughout the day. This is very taxing for all staff as it is a stressful time and environment we are in. The parents have been excellent with all the extra precautions due to COVID. Will see what happens with the governor's update on

Friday. David Baker hopes to have something to report to the SU Board in early January.

e. **BAC Members**

Becky Chrisinger - community member

Jaime Turner - parent of first grade student and has an accounting background

Janine Saragusa - parent of two students in the school and has worked as a school psychologist for years. See Items for Action B for approval of the BAC

f. **New Member(s) of Board - Board Approval**

Robin Tindall announced that she is resigning from the Board as her family is moving to Woodstock so she will no longer be a resident of Weathersfield. Robin talked about continuing to make virtual learning a viable solution in these hard times. See Items for Action C for the acceptance of Robin's resignation from the Board.

Annemarie Redmond said that Jacqui Antonivich who is a former School Board Member has agreed to serve on the Board once again. The Board is happy to welcome Jacqui back to serve and she has agreed to serve Robin Tindall's slot as it is for three years. Sean Whalen's open position is for one year. David Baker reminded everyone that the person who is appointed will still need to run for the position in March. See Items for Action D for the approval of Jacqui Antonivich as a Board Member.

g. **Pavilion Update**

The pavilion is completed. The faculty and staff would like to thank the School Board, the Hicks Nichols Committee, the anonymous donor, Nick Stantra and Lora Powers and Leanna Robinson for the vision for, funds and hard work to complete this pavilion. The total cost was \$23,500 and this pavilion will be a great resource for the school.

h. **Principal Search Committee Update**

The Committee has over twenty people so it is going to have an Executive Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. So far we have over 30 applicants for this position. This committee is meeting tomorrow night. The Committee will most likely interview 8-10 semi finalists and the School Board will interview 3-4 finalists.

VI. **PRINCIPAL REPORT** JeanMarie Oakman

JeanMarie Oakman was ill and out of school for a while but felt surrounded by the whole community and administrative team. She received a lot of love and care from a distance including her yard being decorated to cheer her up. JeanMarie is very grateful for all the support that wrapped her from a distance.

The students who have been totally remote students have been offered to return at the end of January.

VII. **Superintendent Report** David Baker

David said he is immersed in all of the budgets right now. They had a meeting with the town to discuss the budgets of the town and school. There was a virtual legislative breakfast. David likes the cooperation from the town.

VIII. **Items for Action**

a. **Hicks Nichols Committee Appointment**

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning the appointment of Tara Smith as a member of the Hicks Nichols Committee. Mark Yuengling made a motion to appoint Tara Smith to the Hicks Nichols Committee. Kristen Brusco second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

b. **Appointment of BAC**

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion to approve the BAC consisting of Jaime Turner, Janine Saragusa and Becky Chrisinger. Robin Tindall made a motion to approve the BAC as listed. Mark Yuengling second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

c. **Appointment of New School Board Member**

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion to appoint Jacqui Antonivich to take Robin Tindall's vacant position on the School Board. Kristen Brusco made a motion to appoint Jacqui Antonivich to the School Board. Mark Yuengling second. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

IX. **SETTING THE NEXT AGENDA**

- a. Budget Discussion and Report from BAC
- b. COVID-19 Update
- c. Athletics and Sports Update
- d. Response to Teachers about COVID Stress and Possible Solutions
- e. Principal's Search Update

X. **TENTATIVE EXECUTIVE SESSION** - VSA. T.11 Section 313 - NOT NEEDED

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Yuengling made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kristen Brusco second. NFD. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Chrisinger