

WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Google Meets

January 12, 2021

Approved Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS / PLEDGE

The meeting was called to order at 6:05PM by Board Chair, Annmarie Redmond.

Those present were: Annmarie Redmond, Jacqui Antonivich, Kristen Brusco, Mark Yuengling, JeanMarie Oakman, BJ Esty, David Baker, Ed Connors, Kristen McNamara, Janine Saragusa, Katie Ahern, Angela Ladeau, Katie Ahern, Barbara Martin, Jessica Wilmot, Candy Fuller, Diana Day, Dennis Fitzgerald, Jessica Kischko, Jennifer Durham, Jessica Brown, Julie Russell, Kate Ryan, Diana Stillson, Jaime Turner, Kathy Dana, Kristen Huebner, Kristina Hughes, Laura Berry, Leanna Robinson, Lora Powers, Lori Small, Robin Tindall, SAPA, Becky Chrisinger. The flag was pledged.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. Minutes from 11/10/20

Annmarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning the minutes of 11/10/20. Jacqui Antonivich made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/10/20 and Mark Yuengling second. NFD. All in favor. These minutes were approved as written.

B. Minutes from 12/8/20

Annmarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning the minutes of 12/8/20. Jacqui Antonivich made a motion to approve the minutes of 12/8/20 with changes. Kristen Brusco second this motion. NFD. All in favor. These minutes were approved.

III. CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Student Tuition Waiver Request

There was discussion about a tuition waiver request. This will be discussed further during the Executive Session.

B. Town Meeting Date

There was discussion that the Select Board is thinking of moving the Town Meeting date till April or May which would give more time to gather facts about the Budget. The Board decided to follow the Select Board's lead on when the voting will take place. See Items for Action A.

C. FY22 Budget Preparation

There was discussion about the Budget and various aspects of the Budget.

The BAC Committee recommended the following Saving/Reduction

Recommendations:

Assistant Principal - Don't recruit for this position for this year.	\$114,582
W R Hope	\$24,000
Spanish Program .4	\$26,974
Summer School	\$10,936

There was discussion around these recommendations and the Board said they felt these cuts or cost savings were needed.

There was a lot of discussion around the cost of tuition going up so much this year due to rate increases and more students. School Choice was discussed and it is believed it is very important to our town. The town would need to vote on designating a high school or high schools and giving up school choice.

Various other cuts were discussed such as ways to lower the Athletic Program, bus costs, electric cost, the LNA position and ways to pay for this and other costs. There was a lot of discussion about Athletics and the AD broke down the costs for the program and gave some ideas of ways to cut costs if they are needed. In the end, the other cuts that were agreed upon at this time were \$2,000 for the Athletic busses, \$5,552 from the electric bill because of solar panels and the new LNA position for \$24,395. The total cuts were: \$176,492 which brings the Budget to \$6,573,775.00. There was a lot of discussion about ways to cut more items but it was decided at this time this is the Budget that is needed to provide a solid education to the students as well as make needed cuts for the tax rate. The Board thanked Ed Connors and the BAC. See Items for Action B.

D. Covid 19 Update With Extended Day Plan

David Baker said he is glad we went remote for the week after the break. Windsor had two positive cases. The COVID rates are continuing to go up in Vermont. Our K-8 students are going to extend their day. This extended day will eliminate the need for WIN time which has added stress to teachers, parents and students. Lora Powers and Kristina Hughes were instrumental in making a schedule that gives everyone breaks in their day. The busses will arrive at 8am and will be picking students up 15 minutes earlier. There are 10-11 students who have been remote learners that will be coming back at the end of the month. One student is going from in school learning to remote. The 6th graders will only be 3 feet away rather than 6 feet due to the returning students. The governor says 3 feet is an acceptable amount of space. David Baker commended the staff for the great job they are doing and that so many students want to return to in person learning.

E. Athletics and Sports

David Baker said they started high school sports and a JV team had to quarantine as one student at the practice tested COVID positive. The team and coach have had to quarantine for two weeks. The Administration Team is still discussing K-8 sports but at this time no decision has been made to have sports for these grades. JeanMarie Oakman and several teachers said they do have fears about having other people coming into the building as it won't be as safe once others come in. The coaches would need to come in the building in order to have practices. Laura Berry just got the gym back and she'd need to pick up every night if the gym was used for practice.

F. Response to Teachers about COVID Stress

Annemarie Redmond said the WIN time has been eliminated due to the extended day and that WIN time was causing a lot of stress. Lora Powers said they have surveyed the staff and come up with the following ways to help with COVID stress.

1. Let snow days remain snow days. It is stressful for all to do virtual learning for a snow day and it would be nice to let students just enjoy having a snow day.
2. Eliminating afternoon WIN - This has been done.
3. Dismissal at 1:15 and this has been implemented
4. Time to eat or plan
This has been taken care of and staff will have a twenty minute break as well as thirty minutes for lunch.
5. 5.5 hours of instructional time while students are remote
It is very difficult to keep young children occupied virtually for 5.5 hours so would like this to be for grades three and up. Angie Ladeau said the whole 5.5 isn't meant to be on the computer and students can do other activities that are assigned and check back in.
6. Interdisciplinary teaching takes a lot of planning and takes away from special teachers planning time for their specials.
7. There are some teachers who would like to be able to access the building on the weekend to prepare and plan.

There was discussion around some of these points as well as about Athletics. Teachers agreed it is very extensive to plan for a remote day. There were comments on not being able to get together with other family members but being put at risk for students to participate in sports activities. Diana Day thanked David Baker for calling the last snow day the morning before as it provided more preparation time for the virtual teaching day. Diana is appreciative of the extra twenty minute break. Diana

agreed that most staff are apprehensive about having sports in the building and believe this is an added risk. Diana Day did mention that some of the older students look forward to the WIN time as they are at home alone. There was more discussion about sports and dance activities and attending activities in other towns. Emily Stevens said if the activity is in Vermont and the governor has deemed it to be safe then the school can't restrict out of school activities.

G. Principal Search Committee Update

Meredith Kelly reported that the committee is in the middle of interviews and they meet next week. The committee should have names to pass onto the Board and will be ready for next steps with the Board.

H. Hicks Nichols Committee Question

Kristen Bruso said the committee has questions about the terms on the committee that are 1, 2 and 3 years. It is believed these terms were left up to the committee to determine.

VI. PRINCIPAL REPORT - JeanMarie Oakman

A few families and adults are in quarantine right now. The state department was so overwhelmed that Emily Stevens stepped in and helped with some contact tracing. JeanMarie Oakman thanked BJ Esty, David Baker and Emily Stevens for all their extra work due to the COVID cases.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT - David Baker

The Town reports and data are being put together. Negotiations have been completed for now but will have to start again soon for next year. Mark Yuengling was on the committee but stepped down and Jacqui Antonivich stepped in to serve on this committee. Sean Whalen, former Board Chair, had been serving on this committee and David Baker thanked Sean for all of his hard work on this committee.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. Select Board and Town Meeting

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning the Town Meeting. Mark Yuengling made a motion to follow the lead of the Select Board if they choose to move the Town Meeting. Jacqui Antonich second the motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

B. Budget Approval for FY22

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning the Budget for FY22. Mark Yuengling made a motion to approve an expenditure budget for FY22 in the amount of \$6,573,775.00. There was more discussion. Jacqui Antonivich second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

IX. SETTING THE NEXT AGENDA

- A. Budget
- B. COVID-19 Updates
- C. Athletic Update
- D. Update on COVID Stress
- E. Town Meeting Date

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION - VSAT.11 - Section 313 - Student

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the waiver request. Jacqui Antonivich made a motion to go into Executive Session. Mark Yuengling second. NFD. All in favor. The Board went into Executive Session at 8:50PM. Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion to come out of Executive Session. Jacqui Antonivich made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Mark Yuengling second this motion. NFD. All in favor. The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:25 PM.

In a public session, Jacqui Antonivich made a motion to approve the tuition request discussed during the Executive Session at a reduced rate consistent with the difference between the state block grant and the full announced tuition prorated for the second semester. Kristen Brusco second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Annemarie Redmond asked for a motion concerning adjourning the meeting. Mark Yuengling moved to adjourn the meeting. Jacqui Antonivich second. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Chrisinger