

SAUQUOIT VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL

Sauquoit, NY 13456

Public accessed the meeting live starting at 7:00 p.m. at <https://youtu.be/GiJHD6B15Sk> which was located on the school website at www.svcasd.org.

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Kind of Meeting: Regular

Presiding Officer: Mrs. Dawn Miller, President

Meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Dawn Miller, Anthony Nicotera, Michele Brennan-Vuocolo, Ronald Critelli, James Dever, Todd Nelson, and Christine Weber-Mangini

Administrators Present: Ronald Wheelock, Superintendent of Schools
Charles Cowen, District Treasurer; Brian Read, High School Principal; Mark Putnam, Elementary School Principal; Peter Madden, Middle School Principal

Others Present: Staff, community members and Derek LaLonde (MORIC).

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Presentation(s) – Principals

- Mr. Putnam Thanked the Board for the invitation to give an update on the Elementary School. The attendance in person since September has been at 96% of the over 300 students enrolled. Monday, November 16, 2020 when all classes went remote due to COVID related closure, attendance was at 90%. The emotional and social state of the students is very upbeat when attending school. When the students arrived the Tuesday after remote, many stated to be happy to be back. Testimony and appreciation goes to the teachers, assistants, aids, parents and Mr. Wheelock for their support and understanding. Everyone is always ready and willing to volunteer to help when needed without questions. Within the first month of school the students were instructed on the proper wearing of their masks, social distancing, and washing of hands. Students and staff have accepted these responsibilities very well. The only thing is that some masks fall below a students' nose. When instructed to lift up, there is no hesitation and the student immediately does it.

- Mr. Read also thanked the Board for the opportunity to give an update on the high school and was grateful for allowing the high school to stay open in the hybrid context. Report cards are being mailed out this week. Having a hybrid format can be positive. There are smaller groups of students in a class at a time which gives them more individual support. Monday's closure everyone was remote and the high school's attendance was just under 90%. On Wednesdays when all students are remote it gives the teachers time to structure the lesson plans for in-person and remote students alike. The staff have meetings to reformate and share ideas. Staff and counselors reach out to struggling students. Those students who are struggling, Mr. Read and the school counselors conferenced with students to identify their strengths and assist them in setting goals to improve their academic performance. Credit should also go to Ms. Babbie and Mr. Kempney who have been working on the technology end to assist everyone. Extra curriculum activities are up and running, mostly virtual. The first edition of the newspaper was published. Mr. Nicotera thanked Mr. Read for his leadership. Mr. Dever also gave Mr. Read praise as a new person to our district and has given great direction to the school. Ms. Brennan-Vuocolo commented that she as an educator herself understands the difficult process and undertaking to educate students in these difficult times. Mr. Nelson thanked all the principals and Mr. Wheelock for the report and support. It would not happen without all the team work together. Sauquoit Valley has the best! Mr. Read commented that all the parents seem to be understanding of the situation and offer great feedback.
- Mr. Madden, Principal of the Middle School stated he feels the same as the other principals. The attendance is at 86%. He and Mr. Ryan, guidance counselor have gone to visit some homes where the students have not been attending regularly. The Wednesdays, all remote is useful giving the faculty time to get interact with the remote learners and continue to prepare for in-person and remote instruction. Parents' response to the hybrid format is frustrating to some. The feedback that Mr. Madden is getting back from parents is that they prefer their children to be in school every day. Mr. Putnam joined in stating that some parents have told him they were happy to be in attendance all day so they can return to work.

Public to Be Heard - There was none in the chat room.

Students to Be Heard - There was none in the chat room.

Board of Education Sub-Committee Reports – There was nothing to report.

Superintendent's Report – Mr. Wheelock reported on two items:

- The number of outbreaks in an area determines the three zones that the county and department of health are monitoring as yellow, orange, or red. In order for schools to remain open when in a yellow zone, we must test 20% of our staff and students every two weeks to ensure we are remaining below the area positivity rate. It will be costly to get results of all the testing. The other issue is where to go for the tests as availability of tests is becoming an issue. BOCES is looking to administer the testing process if possible. Mr. Wheelock will keep everyone informed if something

arises. If the Oneida County and Health Department consider this area as yellow it may be wise to move to remote instruction due to the potential expense of testing. Some schools are leaning toward one week after thanksgiving to go remote. Mr. Nelson agreed with Mr. Wheelock to stay open and suggested to react to facts before closing. Mr. Wheelock has informed everyone to be prepared if there is another closing due to the COVID at a moment's notice.

- The second topic is athletics. Still waiting for the governor and the NYS Health Department to approve or disapprove the winter sporting activities. Mr. Wheelock inquire with the Board their thoughts on conducting a bowling season as it is permitted to take place. Bowling was a sport that was considered to be cut from the budget last May, but currently remains in the budget. To proceed the Board would like Mr. Wheelock to:
 1. Place on the agenda for next month.
 2. Inquire about the protocols the bowling alleys have to ensure a safe and clean environment?
 3. What and if other schools are offering the sport?
 4. Maximum number to have on a team?

Mr. Corleto made a suggestion to have the athletic director, Doug Jones form an athletic committee which he will be glad to join. Mr. Nelson also volunteered to be on the committee. This committee could suggest intramural activity ideas for the students to partake in within our school district which would eliminate the exposure of COVID from outside the district.

Old Business

Discussions continued regarding budget planning for 2021-22. It was noted that the auditors have required the District to remove the state aid funds withheld by NYS in the amount of \$180,128 from its revenues for 2019-20 resulting in a net loss to the General Fund for the year of \$115,642. Total fund balance at June 30, 2020 stands at \$1,435,639. Information was shared comparing fund balance as a percentage of the 2020-21 adopted budget for Sauquoit and other school districts. This measure indicates that Sauquoit has the lowest fund balance as a percentage of budget at 5.88% of the fourteen school districts included in the analysis. Fund balance for this analysis includes all forms of fund balance; Restricted (reserves), Appropriated, and Undesignated. A preliminary projection of the 2021-22 budget was discussed as well. It was noted that this projection was based upon historical trends rather than a detailed analysis of costs at the line item level as that will begin in January. Based upon the projection provided a tax levy increase of over 11% was calculated to be necessary for 2021-22. This projection utilized conservative estimates for revenues (no increase to state aid in 2021-22 over the 2020-21 budget amount) and will be adjusted as more details become available in early 2021. Lastly, the impact of an 11% increase to the levy was reviewed. For a property assessed at \$100,000 with the Basic STAR exemption, the increase was estimated to be approximately \$236.

Discussions will continue at future board meetings regarding the outlook for the 2021-22 budget.

New Business

Mrs. Miller stated that action items 9.1 to 9.10 will be read as a consent motion and take one vote. If there are any questions or comment, members can do so prior to vote or pull a motion for further discussion.

Resolution No. 22 made by Mr. Nicotera, and seconded by Ms. Brennan-Vuocolo

- to appoint Katrina Carro as a per diem substitute teacher effective November 18, 2020. Fingerprint clearance for employment was received March 3, 2020.
- to appoint Isabella Arrigo as a per diem substitute teacher aide effective December 18, 2020.
- to appoint Michael Riccardi as a per diem substitute bus driver effective November 18, 2020.
- to accept the resignation of Brian Davoli, bus driver effective November 1, 2020.
- at the recommendation of the Superintendent to compensate Randy Walker \$60 per day, in addition to his pay as building mechanic, for assuming temporary additional duties related to management of facilities operations.
- that the minutes of the October 27, 2020 meeting be approved.
- to approve the first quarter (Sept. 2020) extra-curricular activity report.
- that the Tax Collector's Report be accepted and also that the Tax Collector's Report for uncollected taxes from Oneida and Herkimer counties for the 2020-2021 school year be accepted and recorded as follows:

Oneida County	
Bridgewater	\$1,801.37
Marshall	\$79,724.74
Paris	\$4,270,853.15
New Hartford	\$1,030,335.02
Kirkland	\$7,722.90
Herkimer County	
Frankfort	\$837,187.99
Litchfield	\$295,653.90

- that the Treasurer's Report of Balances be approved as presented.
- that the Board of Education upon completion of its review of the IEP in accordance with Section 200.4(d)(2) of the Regulations of the Commissioner agrees to arrange for appropriate special education programs and services for students numbered; 1401403, 1401503, 103040, 102804, 102755, 102817, 102756, 1400084, 1401062, 102583, 103263, 103153 and 1401444 as recommended by the Committee on Special Education.
- To approve the lease agreement between the Sauquoit Valley Central School District and Upstate Cerebral Palsy dated November 17, 2020 for the lease of three (3) classrooms at the elementary school for the 2020-21 school year.

Carried: Ayes 7, Nays 0.

Miscellaneous Topics - Sean Dwyer, teacher & union representative thanked Mr. Wheelock and Mr. Cowen for meeting and working together in the same direction for the good of Sauquoit Valley CSD. He would like to form a committee to review the unknowns with the tax cap and how the need to exceed the tax cap will impact our programs.

Public to be Heard – There was none in the chat room.

Resolution No. 23 made by Mr. Nicotera, and seconded by Mrs. Weber-Mangini, that the Board of Education go into executive session at 9:18 p.m. to discuss a personnel and contractual matter.

Carried: Ayes 7, Nays 0.

The executive session was declared over by the Board President at 10:27 p.m.

Resolution No. 24 made by Mr. Critelli, seconded by Mr. Dever that the Board of Education meeting be adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Carried: Ayes 7, Nays 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Marie Goodman
Board Clerk