GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 22, 2021 @ 6:00 P.M.
REMOTE MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Shepardson Watson, Andrea Ackerman, Dean Antipas, Jane Giulini, Liz Porter, Rosemary Robertson, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Watson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag led by Kim Watson.

II. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION OF VISITORS AND DELEGATIONS

- History Day Winners – Mrs. Porter noted her 30 years of involvement with History Day and gave an overview of what is involved in the History Day competition. Mrs. Porter stated that this year Groton entered the Norwich History Day. Mrs. Porter noted the winners from Groton: Jackson Kramer came in first place and is eligible to go to State; Mary Clarke came in third place and is eligible to go to State; and Honorable Mention for James Weitlauf.
- Board Member Appreciation Month – Ms. Austin noted a certificate for each Board Member and a pin engraved with "Team Work" for all that Board members do for the Groton Public Schools.

III. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

IV. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

V. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

The Student Representative reported that they have heard really great things about the sports coming back, like cheerleading and basketball. They think people are really enjoying being able to finally feel like we are getting back to normal, and that everyone is very grateful to be back with their teams and their friends. Also, they have heard from a few fellow students that are full distance, that they are really considering coming back to four days if we go back almost full time. At this point, they think everyone is missing being normal at school, and they think it would be awesome to get everyone back together and to be as normal and safe as possible.

VI. SUPERINENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

A. Superintendent Report
   a. Introduction of Tom Lonsdale, Student Data Manager – Superintendent Austin introduced Tom Lonsdale, the new Student Data Manager, who shared his educational background that brought him to Groton. Tom Lonsdale gave a presentation regarding assessment. **(ATTACHMENT #1)**

VI. SUPERINENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS cont.

B. Business Manager
   a. Object Code Summary **(ATTACHMENT #2)** – Mr. Knight reviewed the Object Code Summary dated March 18, 2021 that shows an unexpended balance of $285,122.
   b. Health Insurance Report – Mr. Knight reviewed the Health Insurance Report for the month of January **(ATTACHMENT #3).**

C. Director of Buildings and Grounds
   a. Mr. Kilpatrick thanked the Board on behalf of the departments he works with and noted that the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) has been approved through September 30, 2021. Mr. Kilpatrick also noted that the Farm to Community boxes of food will be distributed at Washington Park on March 31, 2021, 10:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m.
   b. Update re: Two New Elementary Schools – Mr. Kilpatrick noted that the process is on schedule. TRM is 2 weeks behind, however, it is substantially completed and is still expected to be completed by June 30, 2021; the FFE has been approved by the State.
   c. Update re: packing plans for the elementary schools - Tom Beebe, Move Manager, has been holding weekly meetings and noted that boxes have been delivered to the schools.
   d. Update re: air filters and air quality in the schools - Mr. Kilpatrick noted that MERV 11 filters had been installed at the beginning of the school year in our air conditioners, however, the recommendation from the State is MERV 13 or the one your system can handle. During the vacation week, installment of the filters will occur. We will start the HVAC system early in the morning and leave them on for 2 hours after the close of school. We flush the water system twice a week, Monday and Wednesday, and will continue this practice.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy – Mrs. White noted that the Policy Committee met. The committee had no questions on the first reading of policy P 6142.102 Social and Emotional Learning.
B. Curriculum – Mrs. Giulini noted that the Curriculum Committee met on March 15, 2021. Mrs. Giulini noted that nationally 66% of students are entering college with 35% graduating. An area of concern was that youth are disconnected. FHS teachers are digging in to address this problem.
C. Finance/Facilities – Mr. Weitlauf noted that the Finance/Facilities Committee met on March 1, 2021 and reviewed policy P 1330; they discussed the insurance data, GMS construction funding, Supplemental Aid, priority CIP items, 2021 budget projections, and they tabled the OPEB.
D. LEARN – Mrs. Volkmann noted that LEARN's Superintendent's Perspective was given by the Montville Superintendent; the Marine Science Magnet School hosted a Farmers Market as part of a state side initiative for the coral they grew. They had over 200 visitors and raised $6,000 for the coral they grew. All RESC Directors have asked their lobbyist to create a document of all educational related executive orders for distribution to our district. The LEARN Building Committee for Ocean Avenue Learning Center has a $10,000 grant application that they are hopeful will be approved. All lotteries have been done.
E. BoE/TCC/RTM Liaison – Mrs. Watson noted that the BoE/TCC/RTM Liaison Committee met and finished review of the budget; discussed the reopening plan, and apartment locations and occupancy.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS – cont.

F. BoE/AGSA/GEA Liaison – Mrs. Watson noted that the BoE/AGSA/GEA Liaison Committee will meet on Wednesday, March 24, 2021.
G. Groton Scholarship – Mrs. White noted that the Groton Scholarship Fund Committee met last week. Mrs. White noted that the subcommittee members are reading the applications.
H. Athletic Fields – Mr. Weitlauf noted that the Athletic Fields Committee met and have a firm proposal to send to the Town Council for funding.

Mrs. Watson asked for volunteers to join the Trail Liaison Committee. The committee meets quarterly and their next meeting will be June 17, 2021. Mrs. Watson also asked for volunteers for the Long Term Recovery Committee.

Mrs. Watson asked to add an item to the agenda to set the graduation date and the last day of school.

MOTION: Volkmann, Porter: To add the setting of the graduation date and the last day of school to the agenda.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consent Agenda

MOTION: White, Giulini: To approve the Consent Agenda.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

B. Old Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 6142.102 Social and Emotional Learning **(ATTACHMENT #4)**

MOTION: White, Porter: To approve policy P 6142.102 Social and Emotional Learning as a second reading.
YES – Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Porter, Robertson, Volkmann Weitlauf, White
ABSTAINED - Antipas
PASSED

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – cont.

C. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the implementation of the Healthy Food Option.

MOTION: Volkmann, White: To certify, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

2. Discussion and possible action regarding food and beverage exemptions.

MOTION: Porter, Volkmann:
To allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met:

1. the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;
2. the sale is at the location of the event; and
3. the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – cont.

C. New Business

3. Discussion and possible action regarding recognition of Paraprofessional Appreciation Day.

MOTION: Weitlauf, Porter: To recognize April 7, 2021 as Paraprofessional Appreciation Day, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to send a letter of appreciation to the paraprofessionals.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

4. Discussion and possible action regarding recognition of Administrative Professionals Day.

MOTION: Robertson, White: To recognize April 21, 2021 as Administrative Professionals Day, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to send a letter of appreciation to the administrative professionals.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

5. Discussion and possible action regarding the setting of graduation and the last day of school.

MOTION: Watson, White: To revise the 2020-2021 school calendar to indicate the last day of school as June 17, 2021 and graduation as June 18, 2021.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

IX. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

A. Letters, communications, and comments by Board members on meeting items and any other items in their jurisdiction.

- Mrs. Volkmann noted communications regarding school reopening and a question regarding May 3, 2021 regarding it being a 4 day week not a 5 day week.
- Mr. Antipas noted the same emails as other Board members.
- Mrs. Robertson noted:
    - The same emails as other Board members;
    - Her attendance at GASP meetings;
    - Thanked the community for their help with the Sound Community Diaper drive.
- Mrs. Porter noted people asking why we're not going back to school 5 days a week. Mrs. Porter noted that a former Groton student will be driving the Nut Mobile (Mr. Peanut) to the St. John Food Drive.

IX. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS – cont.

- Mr. Weitlauf noted:
  - The same emails as other Board members;
  - A question regarding the graduation date;
  - Recognized Carmita Hodge for reinstituting History Day at Fitch High School.
- Dr. Ackerman noted her attendance at a virtual conference at UCONN, National Multicultural Conference meeting, with Deanna Foster Moore, a Fitch graduate and Martin Luther King Scholar.
- Mrs. Giulini stated that she has notice great relief regarding people being vaccinated.
- Mrs. Watson noted:
  - The same emails as other Board members;
  - That she received a text from Mayor Granatosky showing a graph that the COVID numbers have increased in Groton.
- Mrs. Volkmann noted an interview held by Ms. Austin on the Welcome to Groton Program.

X. ADVANCE PLANNING

A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items for Board Attention

As noted in the agenda.

There will no COW meeting on April 12, 2021.

B. Suggested Agenda Items

Mrs. Volkmann noted the need for discussion on what are we doing this summer.

Mrs. Volkmann asked for a report from the Guidance Department at FHS on how seniors are doing in planning their future.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Volkmann: To adjourn at 8:01 p.m.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY