

RSU 63 Board Meeting
Date: May 23, 2016
Location: Holbrook School

Minutes

Members Present:

Town of Clifton – Dola Hinckley

Town of Eddington – Rusty Gagnon, David McCluskey, and Nikki More; and

Town of Holden – Chris Doering, Chris Galinski, Jennifer Newcomb, and Suzanne Wieland.

Dr. Kenneth Smith, Superintendent of Schools.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. A flag salute was conducted and a moment of silence observed.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Nikki More, Second: Rusty Gagnon. *"It is moved to approve the April 25, 2016 regular meeting minutes as written."*

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Motion: Jennifer Newcomb, Second: Nikki More. *"It is moved to approve the May 2, 2016 special meeting minutes as written."*

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

At the May 2 Special Board Meeting, a Version 1 and Version 2 of the proposed budget were presented to the Board Members and community members. The Board voted to approve Version 2 of the Proposed 2016-2017 RSU 63 Budget to present to the community members for approval. At the Informational Budget Hearing to discuss versions 1 and 2 of the proposed budget prior to the Board Meeting that night, Chris Doering had a lengthy conversation with Jennifer Newcomb and he would like that captured in the minutes.

Motion by Jennifer Newcomb and second by Rusty Gagnon to capture the conversation between Chris Doering and Jennifer Newcomb in the official Board Meeting minutes.

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Proposed Budget Discussion between Chris Doering and Jennifer Newcomb:

Chris Doering questioned the differences between Versions 1 and 2 of the budget. He specifically questioned the propriety of the Budget Committee reinvestigating the validity of the recommendations of the Transportation and Operations Committee as to repairs required at Holbrook School.

Jennifer Newcomb affirmed that the Budget and Finance Committee, together with the Superintendent, Business Manager and Director of Transportation & Operations thoughtfully and collaboratively analyzed budgetary recommendations from the Transportation/Operations Committee and unanimously agreed on the items and amounts budgeted in Version 2 of the 2016-2017 Budget.

Recognition and/or Awards of Students, Staff and Others: None

Acceptance of Gifts/Donations: None

Presentations:

A. Facilities Study Report – Phase II

In Phase II of the Facilities Study, Oak Point Associates listened to school employees from Holbrook Middle School, Holden Elementary and Eddington Elementary regarding what they felt they needed to perform their jobs in a modern day school. Interviews were conducted in each school where employees were given the opportunity to interact with the interior designer and an architect. In addition, input from administrators was sort as to the challenges facing the schools and the needs as they saw them. Dr. Smith introduced Oak Point project architect Tyler Barter and interior designer and space planner Sarah Smith.

Tyler discussed some of the educational requirements that would go into a new K-8 building. When beginning the process, we look for a site that maximizes student safety, is safe for vehicular and pedestrian traffic (both entering and leaving the site and parking areas), systems and construction types that will lower your overall operating costs, and what efficiencies could be gained by having a consolidated school. Tyler discussed the following benefits of a new K-8 school: 1) safer school site, without the concern for heavy main road traffic; 2) significant operating cost savings; 3) more efficient Food Service Program (one kitchen versus three); 4) more curriculum offerings; 5) more efficient use of staff; 6) better utilization of facility (gym, cafeteria and stage), and 7) improved security inside and out. The cons of a new K-8 school would be cost and change. Cost can be a very expensive endeavor if it is not a state funded school. Another con would be change. There are a lot of changes educators have to grapple with when they move to a different educational model under one roof. Oak Point would work with the staff going forward to find some efficiencies and ways different programs could share space and overall reduce total square footage and cost of the project.

Planning Decisions of Portland completed a comprehensive school enrollment projection report for RSU 63. Tyler reviewed the ten-year enrollment estimate for grades PK-8. The report shows a declining enrollment over the next three years and then stabilizing. One of the challenges with enrollment projections in a PK-8 school is really a double-edged sword. You have a lot of classrooms that have smaller total numbers within, but you need that to maintain appropriate class sizes. You are keeping your teacher-student ratio on the lower end, which is great for educational purposes, but makes it challenging to provide enough space and staff on a year-to-year basis to educate all those students. Based on these projections, Oak Point came up with 2 Pre-K classes, 3 classes each for grades 1-4, and 4 classes each for grades 5-8.

Tyler discussed some of following factors that appear to draw families to RSU 63: 1) quality of the educational system is important; 2) being able to live near work but in a

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more rural/suburban environment; 3) secondary school choice is a major drawing card for RSU 63 families, and 4) favorable tax structure is important.

There are several options for funding a school project. One of the most common options for a lot of communities is going through the State's Major Capital Improvement Program. Every 5-6 years the State solicits applications for communities to put in for a new school program. Tyler explained the construction process for a new school. RSU 63 would write the educational specifications for a new school (requirements needed to support educational program) and submit an application to the Department of Education for consideration as a state funded project. The Department of Education rates all applications for state funded projects from highest to lowest priority. During the last cycle they received 70 applications and funded the first 12 on the list over 6 years, so it is a very aggressive and challenging process to go through. The Department of Education notifies the school system of their rating. The communities then decide to move forward with or without the state funding. If selected by the state for funding, the first step is site selection (site, utilities associated with it and cost to build infrastructure). The second step is concept approval (establish how big the project is and overall project cost). Both steps must go to the Department of Education at separate times for approval. Once approved, the DOE gives you the approval to go to referendum vote. After referendum, we go directly to design of the new building, which takes approximately one year and construction of the building approximately one and half years.

Community involvement is very important is this project. Oak Point does this by a number of different forums. We listen and then present what we found over the next few forums. We then test it to find out if we had heard and listened to all the things that were important to the community and if not, what we need to make for revisions to come back and best meet RSU 63's needs.

Sarah Smith reviewed two schematic floor plans – Option A and Option B. This is the first pass on trying to make sure we put in all the spacing that was requested, laying the classrooms and the public spaces out that might be more beneficial to the way the school can be shut down or closed off. The sizes of the spaces laid out are what the state would fund if a state funded school. The state gives you a matrix on how large the spaces should be. The Central Office is not in the plan, as the state does not fund a Central Office. The diagrams have a public zone and a school zone so if you have events after school hours you can close off the school zone. Option B includes a full auditorium/performance area. Total footage for Option A is 101,415 square feet. Total square footage for Option B is 112,170 square feet. Jason Spearin asked the Board to consider flipping the gym and full auditorium/performance area around on Option B. Don Varnum asked if there was any advantage going up rather than out. Adding one stop to elevator is often cheaper than adding additional foundation and exterior walls. It will help on the efficiency but does not work great for educational purposes because you have separated one group of students three floors from specials in the gym. Also, some towns have building height restrictions. Has there been any consideration of combining this with a bus garage? Yes, there has been some discussion. Does the outside of the building come into your design plan at all? Yes, that is the next stage of

the project – athletic fields, parking spaces, playground areas, etc. Usually, the starting point is 25-40 acres when looking for a site.

Tyler discussed the cost for Option A and Option B. The total cost for Option A is \$35,657,025.00. The cost for Option B is \$38,495,460.00. Both options include all new equipment/furniture as the state funds these purchases. There are a number of companies that offer furniture/equipment packages and there are vendor days for the public. The cost would decrease if we had equipment/furniture we could still use. The costs given do not include a bus garage.

Chris Doering asked what the repayment period on bonds was. It is 20 years. Has an analysis of efficiencies going to one school versus staying with three schools been done? We have already started to look at the components for an estimated savings. So far there is a significant savings. It is clear we will not make up a \$2.5 million loan repayment (assuming we receive no state funds), but the question is how much are you going to cut into the \$2.5 million.

Tyler showed the Board members and community members examples of their previous projects: 1) Hall Dale Elementary School in Hallowell; 2) Chelsea Elementary School in Chelsea; 3) Jefferson Village School in Jefferson; 4) Falmouth Elementary School in Falmouth; 5) Mt. View Elementary/Middle/High School in Thorndike, and 6) Ellsworth Elementary/Middle School in Ellsworth.

Tyler discussed the following sustainable design strategies: 1) biomass renewable energy; 2) geothermal heating and cooling; 3) solar thermal-heat and hot water; 4) photovoltaics; 5) natural ventilation; 6) management of daylight and views; 7) green roof systems, and 8) sustainable sites.

What is the salvage value of old schools? It is very low.

B. Report on How Well Our Students Are Doing in High School

One of the things we did this year is to try and find out how our students we are paying tuition for are doing in high school. We used the following four sources to help us determine this: 1) transcripts; 2) freshman surveys; 3) state assessment data, and 4) conversations with area high school administrators. We also looked at tuition bills. In the fall of 2015, we paid tuition for 295 high school students. Seventy-five of the 295 students did not attend Grade 8 at the Holbrook School. We had 48 students who attended Holbrook in Grade 8 and would be in high school this year for whom we were not billed high school tuition. Families move in and out of the districts and some students attend private schools and charter schools. We had approximately 16 students we did not anticipate starting high schools due to the fact that many of these students attended private schools K-8, but these schools stopped offering high school programs. We have updated our process for verifying residency. Chris Doering asked if we had any indication of anyone committing a fraud or claiming they live in our district when they do not. If we do find out such a case, we address it. We have no indication of

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that currently. Two hundred twenty of the two ninety-five students attended Grade 8 at the Holbrook School.

Of those 220 students, 202 (92%) are doing well in high school (GPA above 2.5 or 76) and 18 (8%) are struggling academically (GPA at or below 2.50 or 75). About half of these students are attending Brewer High School and the rest of the students are attending Bangor High School, Hampden Academy, John Bapst, Old Town and Orono High Schools.

We sent out surveys to parents of freshmen and 51 surveys to freshmen. We received 16 back from parents and 13 back from students. The freshmen that responded to the survey were doing well academically. Thirteen of the 16 parents said that their children were participating in extracurricular activities. They all felt they were well prepared. We also asked what we could have done to better prepare them for high school and to tell us something we did well. Susan Smith reviewed some of the answers received by the parents and students. Freshmen are realizing that time management (making deadlines, finding time for homework, etc.) is important and we will take a look at that as we move forward.

Susan Smith reviewed the S.A.T. scores in Grade 11 for Math and Reading in 2013-2014. Our area public high schools are doing better than the state high schools on average.

Susan Smith had some great high school tours and conversations with the high school administrators. Basically are students are doing well and they did not see anything negative or negative patterns for our students. All high schools said that freshmen tend to struggle with time management and organizational skills. Susan Smith was impressed with the variety of programs the high schools could offer for supporting the most vulnerable learners up to A.P. classes.

David McCluskey asked if there were any take aways that could influence curriculum and program changes in the schools. The biggest take away for Susan Smith was around time management, organizational skills, and getting homework done for students who are struggling. How do we help the struggling students find the time and structural resources to learn what is expected of them?

Jason Spearin asked if we tracked our actual graduation rate and the percentage of our students who pursue some secondary education or college. We did not. Rusty Gagnon asked what else we could do to generate more feedback. Chris Galinski asked if we had feedback from students attending virtual or charter schools. If we are not paying tuition for them, it is difficult to find them. The funds from the state go directly to the charter schools, as well as Maine School of Mathematics and Science.

C. Educational Passages – Holbrook Middle School Mini Boat Project

Dick Baldwin is the founder of Educational Passages. Approximately 20 of our G&T students met with Mr. Baldwin's assistant and spoke to the students about the program.

Richard Modery talked about the mini boat project the students will be doing. The mini

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boat is about 5 feet long. It is a self sailing boat that is designed to go across the ocean using trade winds and the prevailing winds. It is powered solely by ocean winds. They are self-righting boats with a heavy keel. The boat has a GPS unit attached to it so the students can track them on their computers wherever they go. There is a cost to acquiring the boat and attached equipment. The students would work with local vendors and businesses to get donations for the boat and decorate the boat. Our students would most likely work with Maine Maritime Academy to get the boats in the water and out to sea. Richard Modery showed the path one of the mini boats took after it was launched. We spoke to Mr. Baldwin about the 2016 International Regatta he is planning, however Mr. Modery is not sure our students will be ready for participation in the Regatta. One of the goals is to see how many boats the students can get to completely circle the Atlantic. The program teaches marine science and basic research and provides an intra-cultural experience. The goal is to provide an exciting international program in marine science and research. The challenging part of getting our G&T students in the middle school involved is scheduling. It will be easier for the 7th and 8th grade students, but we will find a way to get all the grades an opportunity to be involved.

Questions and Comments from the Public: Instead of building a new school for Pre-K to 8, Jason asked the Board if they had considered Pre-K to 5 and outsourcing grades, 6, 7 and 8.

Meeting Dates:

Budget & Finance Committee – Monday, June 27, 2016 at Holden School, 5:15 pm

Policy Committee – Monday, August 1, 2016 at Holbrook School, 6:15 pm

Operations/Facilities Committee – TBD

Curriculum Committee – TBD

Technology Committee – TBD

New School Committee - TBD

Pre-K Advisory Committee - TBD

Discussion/Motions Regarding Board Reports:

Motion: Rusty Gagnon, Second: Jennifer Newcomb. **"It is moved to approve the Grade 6-8 Social Studies Brochures."**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Motion: Rusty Gagnon, Second: Jennifer Newcomb. **"It is moved to approve the purchase of Grade 6-8 Big Ideas Math Textbooks."**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

BrightBytes Technology Survey is given to all our students, as well as our teachers. Our students and teachers both felt they had really good access to technology (hardware, infrastructure, internet connectivity). Compared to the state and across the country, we scored very high. There are some areas in the use of technology that came across as weaker areas. Professional development for teachers was one of the areas we scored the

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lowest. Even though teachers are asking for professional development, they want to use technology for higher order thinking things, and on line writing.

Chris Doering expressed concern about spending money on investigating building a new school when it looks like funding from the state is unlikely. We would have a debt service obligation of roughly \$2.25 million a year. He does not feel the communities would bear/support that and concerned that we would continue to pursue an investigation of a new school. The argument is we will be saving so much money by consolidating to one school, but he feels that the Board should be focused on and considering how much we are going to save in that consolidation. We need to take a hard look at that before we spend any more money.

Budget & Finance: Nothing to add to Business Manager Report and Budget & Finance Committee Report.

Motion: Nikki More, Second: Jennifer Newcomb. **"It is moved to extend the Board Meeting past 8:30 a.m."**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Superintendent's Report: In addition to his written report, Dr. Smith added that last week Dr. Smith, Jake Morgan and George Cummings visited SAD #44 in Bethel and received a tremendous overview to Transfinder, the new software program we will be using. SAD #44 went over the reports they are using and how much money they saved by using Transfinder. Last week Dr. Smith visited Tom Coleman's second grade class. The students learned a little bit about lobster fishing and some of the creatures in the sea that appear now and then. Dr. Smith was amazed at the type of questions the students asked for second graders.

RSU 63 Chair Report: No report

Old Business:

- 1) New School Committee: We will schedule a meeting in the near future.
- 2) Teachers and Administrators' Contract Negotiations: Negotiations with the teachers and administrators are ongoing.

New Business:

- 1) Policy IJOCA – Security standards for Volunteers:

Motion: Rusty Gagnon, Second: Nikki More. **"It is moved to approve for a first reading Draft Policy IJOCA – Security Standards for School Volunteers as written."**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Motion: Rusty Gagnon, Second: Nikki More. **"It is moved to approve all written and oral reports as presented to the Board."**

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

Personnel Actions:

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- 1) There were no resignations or leaves.
- 2) Elections: Whitney White has withdrawn her application for consideration of the Speech & Language Pathologist position.
- 3) Appointments: Dr. Smith nominated the following individuals for appointment to RSU 63: Michele Archambault – Math Camp Coordinator; Josh Jenks – Math Camp Teacher; Kelsey Linscott – Math Camp Teacher; Danielle Nason – Math Camp Teacher; Leigh Robles – Math Camp Teacher; Erin McDonald – Summer Springboard Grades 6-8 Writing Teacher; Lindsey Baillie – Summer Springboard Grade 6-8 Teacher, and Rita Lovejoy – Summer Springboard Grades 6-8 Math Teacher.

Motion: Nikki More, Second: Jennifer Newcomb. *"It is moved to approve Dr. Smith's nominations for appointment to RSU 63."*

Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

- 4) Searches: Speech & Language Pathologist
- 5) Reassignments: Erin McDonald will be moving from Grade 5 Classroom Teacher to the Special Ed Resource Room Grades 5/6 Teacher position.

Questions and Comments from the Public: None

Executive Session:

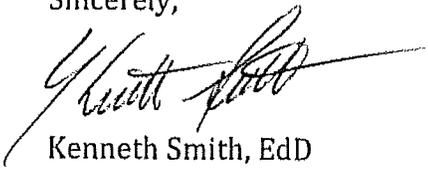
At 8:38 p.m. motion by Rusty Gagnon with a second by Jennifer Newcomb. *"It is moved to go into executive session to discuss Teacher and Administrator Negotiations pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D)."*

Roll call was taken with all members replying "Yes". Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed

At 9:16 p.m. David McCluskey declared the Board out of executive session.

At 9:17 p.m. motion by Rusty Gagnon with a second by Jennifer Newcomb to adjourn the meeting. **Vote: 8 yes, 0 opposed**

Sincerely,



Kenneth Smith, EdD
RSU63 Superintendent of Schools