

Grand Isle Supervisory Union
South Hero School District
School Board Regular Meeting
Thursday, Nov. 19, 2020, at 6 p.m.
Location: via Google Meet
meet.google.com/jcn-guaz-snh
Join by phone (US) +1 513-666-7379 PIN: 476 044 895#

MINUTES

Call to Order

1. Call to order at 6:02 p.m. (B. Chutter)

In attendance:

- Board members: Tim Maxham, Bob Chutter, Bentley Vaughan, Nathaniel Kouns, Erin Morse
- Staff: Susan McKelvie, Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Julie Pidgeon
- Audience: Buddy Meilleur (LCATV)

2. Adjustment of Agenda

None.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Consent Agenda (Action)

- A. Approve minutes from Oct. 15, 2020. T. Maxham made a motion to approve the minutes of the Oct. 15, 2020, meeting. B. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote (B. Chutter-yes, N. Kouns-yes, E. Morse-yes, T. Maxham-yes, B. Vaughan-abstain).
- B. New hire - Caila Harte (.4 FTE ELL Teacher): S. McKelvie said the school has offered a position for an English Language Learning teacher to Caila Harte. The position was unbudgeted. When a student moves into a school for whom English is not the first language, the school undertakes an assessment to determine whether there is a need for additional, specified English instruction per state requirement. The cost of the position was discussed. Superintendent Clark said the impact on the budget would be minimal. N. Kouns moved the board hire Caila Harte for a .4 FTE ELL teaching position for the remainder of the school year. B. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

5. Reports

- A. Financial (R. Gess) (Action): R. Gess reviewed the expenses and revenue reports. He noted on the revenue side that students paying tuition from Grand Isle School will bring \$130,000 unanticipated revenue to South Hero. On the expense side, the school

budgeted for 48 high school tuitioned students and has 48 actual students. He noted that the budgeted tuition increase was 3%, but the actual costs are higher and will be about \$30,000 higher than budgeted. He is anticipating savings in after-school programming costs. He does not see significant budget exposure at this time. Regarding Covid reimbursement, R. Gess said he still has not received an application process from the state. The state has provided some guidance on how to account for the Covid relief funding. The Covid spending is more than \$18,000. R. Gess updated the board on the GISU budget. It has been completed and submitted to GISU Board members. The budget will result in an approximate 8% reduction in the assessment. B. Chutter asked to receive a copy of the GISU budget.

T. Maxham asked questions about the financial report regarding the building expenses. He asked for clarification about encumbered energy service. R. Gess will report back. B. Chutter asked about payment of a retirement incentive, and R. Gess said it will be paid out in December or January. T. Maxham made a motion that the board received and reviewed the financial report for FY 20-21 #13749 of Nov. 12, 2020. B. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote. .

- B. Superintendent's (M. Clark): First, the GISU has had its first cases of Covid in schools. There was one case that required quarantining at Grand Isle School. There have been no cases reported at Folsom. The process of contact tracing was smooth. Two total cases have been reported to the state, and there has been no transmission in GISU schools. He noted there has been almost no transmission in Vermont schools. Wearing masks, washing hands, keeping distance and staying home when sick are working, along with the stringent cleaning protocols and screening systems in the schools.

Second, Superintendent Clark noted that concern exists about what will happen after Thanksgiving break. He noted the new rules around the travel map and around household gatherings. He encouraged families to follow the governor's executive order. He shared the concern that if people were to contract Covid over Thanksgiving break, then that would trigger quarantining of staff and students. Superintendent Clark noted principals are having to substitute, and the schools lack substitutes to cover for quarantining absences.

Superintendent Clark shared that GISU participated in the state's surveillance Covid testing of staff. GISU conducted testing of staff on Monday. More than 50 percent of GISU faculty and staff were tested, and even more had volunteered but had trouble with the state's registration process. Test results have been returned. The GISU does not receive individuals' results; however, no one has notified the district of a positive test result. E. Morse asked if the school can ask families if they are planning to travel or if the school can ask families to sign a pledge not to travel. The superintendent said the district has been informing families of the guidelines. He noted that one of the screening questions is whether one has traveled. He also said the school has requested that families notify the school if they have traveled and need to quarantine. E. Morse asked if

UVM students were available to substitute. M. Clark said they have asked, and those students are not available to substitute.

N. Kouns asked if there is a policy in place for the school to provide testing to teachers and students who might be exposed to a Covid-positive case. M. Clark said the school has not done testing for students, but it has shared information about how to be tested through the Vermont Department of Health. He said there is not a statewide plan to test students if there is an outbreak. N. Kouns expressed concern about the impact on Folsom if there is an exposure.

M. Clark shared the process for contact tracing. The process requires at minimum a 7-day quarantine, and the amount of time needed to return a Covid test does not reduce the 14-day period by many days. In addition, there are confidentiality issues. He said he is working on plans to have teachers work remotely if quarantining. B. Chutter reiterated that the board wants kids to be in school and needs to encourage people to make the right choice around travel. S. McKelvie said she has asked families to notify the school ahead of time if they are planning to travel. She said the school has to put its trust in the South Hero community to keep the school safe and open. N. Kouns asked if there is a threshold for the governor to close schools. M. Clark said there is not a threshold. He said the transmission is not happening in schools, and the issue is more that schools may lose their work staff due to quarantining. He does not anticipate a state-ordered school closure like spring. B. Chutter suggested the Board put a note out to the community via Front Porch Forum. He will draft a note and distribute it to board members to review.

- C. Principal's (S. McKelvie): She reported that Folsom is on track to bring back 3rd and 4th grade students after Thanksgiving. The school is going to move that date from Monday, Nov. 30, to Thursday, Dec. 3, that week due to space reconfiguration. With the addition of the ELL teacher, as well as the Covid configuration requirements, it has made the space for the 4th grade students and staff too tight in the current room. She has decided to turn the library into a classroom for the 4th grade. She will need a little time to convert the library space. She is asking families to have their students home for one additional remote day. The library space is large and has excellent ventilation. She said the 4th grade classroom will be used for breakout space and special education services. Regarding the budget, S. McKelvie asked the board to think about whether it wants the school to provide its own after-school care next school year. She and R. Gess will be working on the Folsom budget, and she can prepare a cost estimate. E. Morse asked about the need. S. McKelvie said that for this year, it appeared there wasn't a need with the hybrid model. S. McKelvie said she needs to follow up on Parent-Child Center's plans for next year, and she can survey families. B. Chutter recommended reaching out to the Parent-Child Center on its plans.

B. Chutter asked about the burner. S. McKelvie said the school continues to have problems with the new burner. She said the burner frequently turns off and doesn't

restart itself. Green Mountain Boiler does appear promptly when called. B. Vaughan asked if the company is being cooperative about making repairs. S. McKelvie said the company is responsive.

B. Chutter said he was happy to hear there will be some recreation offered to the kids. S. McKelvie said 28 middle school students have signed up for basketball clinics, and she will be paying the two teachers who are offering the basketball program. S. McKelvie expressed hope that the school can offer some other after-school programs by the end of the school year.

Board Business

6. Approval of Bills for Payment. B. Vaughan made a motion to pay the bills in batch #5956 totaling \$8,479.45. E. Morse seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote. B. Vaughan made a motion to pay the bills in Batch #5954 totaling \$189,577.54. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved a voice vote.

7. Budget Update (R. Gess) (Discussion): R. Gess updated the board on his process to prepare the budget with Principal McKelvie. He will have a draft budget for the December meeting.

8. Audit Update - FY19 (R. Gess) (Discussion): R. Gess has received the bound copies from Sullivan and Powers. He will drop them off at the town office on Monday, Nov. 23.

9. Policy Review Plan (B. Chutter): B. Chutter noted there is a schedule to review policies that was shared with the board. M. Clark said the board is reviewing policies at the recommendation of the Vermont School Boards Association.

10. Board-Superintendent Relations Policy (First Reading) (B. Chutter): B. Chutter asked board members if there were questions. There were none.

11. Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Procurement Policy (First Reading) (B. Chutter). B. Chutter asked board members if there were questions. There were none.

12. Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX Policy (First Reading) (B. Chutter). B. Chutter asked board members if there were questions. There were none.

13. Community Use of School Facilities Policy (First Reading) (B. Chutter). B. Chutter asked board members if there were questions. B. Chutter said he likes that the policy has the ability for people to appeal a building use decision. Board members discussed the fact that this policy was more strict regarding the use of alcohol and that groups can appeal.

14. Other:

B. Chutter shared his advice regarding upcoming town elections that if a member is considering running for another office, it is not necessary to resign from the school board to do that.

Executive Session (if needed pursuant to 1 V.S.A. sec. 313)

Closure

15. Setting the next agenda

-Budget review

-Action to accept the completed FY19 audit.

16. Adjourn

The board adjourned at 7:28 PM on a voice vote. B. Vaughan made a motion to adjourn. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.