

Grand Isle Supervisory Union
South Hero School District
School Board Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 18, 2021, 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. Superintendent Michael Clark called the board to order at 6:01 p.m.

In attendance:

-Board members: Tim Maxham, Bentley Vaughan, Bob Chutter, Nathaniel Kouns

-Staff: Susan McKelvie, Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Julie Pidgeon

-Audience: Buddy Meilleur (LCATV)

2. Board reorganization

-Board Chair: Maxham nominated Bob Chutter to serve as board chair. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Board Vice Chair: Maxham nominated Bentley Vaughan to serve as vice chair. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Board Clerk: Maxham nominated Nathan Kouns to serve as the board clerk. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Representatives to the Supervisory Union (3): Superintendent Clark explained the responsibilities of the GISU Board. Chutter nominated Tim Maxham, Bentley Vaughan and Nathan Kouns to serve as representatives to the Grand Isle Supervisory Union Board. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Sick Bank Committee: Clark asked the board to designate a representative in the event there is Sick Bank business to consider. Chutter suggested designating the board chair. Maxham moved that the board appoint Bob Chutter to be the representative on the Sick Bank Committee. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-The board deferred appointments to the Negotiating Committee until needed.

-Regular board meeting: Maxham moved that the board hold its regular meetings on the third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Designated posting places: Maxham moved the board's official posting places to be designated as the South Hero Town Office, U.S. Post Office in South Hero and Folsom School. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Robert's Rules: Chutter moved that the board use Robert's Rules of Order for Small Boards for running its meetings. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Code of Ethics: M. Clark presented the 3.A. Vermont Code of Ethics for School Board Members. Board members individually reviewed the Code of Ethics. Chutter suggested all board members sign it. Chutter asked Clark to provide members with electronic copies that can be signed.

-Communications practices: M. Clark reminded members that they use GISU email and those email communications are public record. He also said he would continue to communicate electronically with board members Chutter, Kouns, and Vaughan, and provide a paper copy to Maxham. Chutter reminded members that email is to disseminate information and not to discuss.

-Board development: Chutter encouraged all members to visit the Vermont School Boards Association website to review materials on the roles and responsibilities of school board members. Chutter noted as chair he is responsible for eight hours of training with the superintendent.

-Designate newspaper: Maxham moved that the board designate *The Islander* as the newspaper of record for the South Hero School District. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

-Local and statewide education advocacy responsibilities: Clark noted that board members will have knowledge of statewide educational issues, such as Covid regulations and related funding, through board meetings. He said he tries to share that information through board reports so members can respond to community inquiries.

3. Adjustment of the Agenda

-M. Clark added a request for an extended leave of absence to the consent agenda

4. Public Comments

None.

5. Consent Agenda (Action)

- A. Approve minutes from Feb. 18, 2021, and Feb. 25, 2021. T. Maxham made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of Feb. 18, 2021, and special meeting minutes of Feb. 25, 2021. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.
- B. Approve 0.6 interventionist Caila Harte: Clark said the position is grant-funded. She teaches English as a second language for the other part of her job. Clark asked the board to approve the position through the end of the year. Chutter moved that the board approve the 0.6 interventionist under grant funding through the end of the school year. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.
- C. Erin Morse resignation and process for replacement: Erin Morse has resigned her position on the school board after election as town and school clerk. Her term ends in 2022. Clark has drafted a notice to the community seeking applications for the board seat. Maxham moved that the board accept Morse's resignation dated March 6, 2021, expressing appreciation for her service to the board and wishing her luck in her new position as town and school clerk. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.
- D. Request for leave of absence: Susan McKelvie and Clark received a letter from Daniele Holm requesting an extended leave of absence for the duration of the next school year after completing the 12-week Family and Medical Leave Act time upon the birth of her second child. Holm said she intends to return to Folsom at the end of the leave of absence and requested her position be held for her. S. McKelvie said it is more likely the school can find a substitute for a year-long leave of absence. McKelvie said Holm is an outstanding teacher and she supports her request. The board discussed payment and benefit coverage. Chutter said he thinks the leave should be unpaid. Vaughan said he supports providing benefit coverage. Chutter agreed and said it is an investment in the school's future. Chutter asked if benefit coverage can be provided contingent the employee returns to employment. Vaughan noted the board had done that before. Chutter moved that the board grant unpaid leave as requested by Daniele Holm, and the board will continue her health care coverage contingent she continues for the 2022-23 school year or the board will expect a prorated reimbursement of the health benefit. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

6. Reports (Discussion)

- A. Financial (R. Gess) (Action): Gess reported that on revenues, the district just received the second tuition payment from CIUUSD. He said he has not received the special education reimbursement from the state yet. He said expenditures are in line, and McKelvie is managing discretionary expenditures well. The audit for GISU is now completed, and Gess said he will be responding to a few questions from the auditors for South Hero. He said the district is on track to submit the application for ESSER funds. Gess expressed appreciation for Sue McNayr's help in documenting students who qualified for free and reduced lunch in short notice. Chutter asked about a tuition reimbursement to Grand Isle in the bills, and Gess said South Hero had overbilled CIUUSD because the student did not join South Hero until November. Maxham asked about technical center offsetting revenue. Gess said that calculation or amount is not

received from the Agency of Education until June. Maxham asked about instructional supplies and health supplies and whether those were Covid-related. Gess confirmed that those are ESSER-reimbursable expenditures.

Maxham made a motion that the board received and reviewed the budget-to-actual report #14273 date March 12, 2021. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

- B. Superintendent's (M. Clark): Clark updated the board on the management decision letter regarding repayment of FY18 grant funds. The Agency of Education has communicated that it does not believe it can negotiate the repayment because this was a federal decision. GISU has identified funding for this repayment when it is required. Regarding Covid vaccination, most staff are seeking vaccination independently. The district is sharing information as it receives it. The superintendent noted the guidance on in-person learning may change in the future, but it has not yet changed, and he has no new information. The district conducted surveillance testing for Covid with staff on March 16. Clark said he will suggest the Education Agency offer surveillance testing for students in the future as staff is becoming vaccinated. He shared that the staff participated in equity training at its inservice on March 1. On the Covid response, all districts are required to develop a Recovery Plan. He updated the board on ESSER, the federal support program to address academic and emotional needs of students due to the Covid pandemic. The district must follow federal rules. He shared the allocation amounts awarded to GISU and general guidelines on how the money may be used. ESSER 1 Allocation: \$274,448 to be spent by 2022. ESSER 2 Allocation: \$1,155,849 to be spent by 2023. ESSER 3 Allocation \$TBD to be spent by 2024. He noted these federal funds require increased workload for management and documentation. He plans to propose a temporary position be added to the GISU staff to manage the ESSER program. He shared that schools continue to work hard to stay open despite absences and a lack of substitute teachers. Clark thanked all staff for their efforts during the pandemic and noted teachers and staff have been working all along.

Chutter asked if there were any plans to spend ESSER funding this summer to support student learning. Clark said some ESSER-3 funds are tied to activities outside of the school year.

Chutter and the board affirmed Clark's statement that it does not expect changes at Folsom until state guidance changes. Chutter added that he did not want a situation for fully remote students to be a limiting factor on a return to school. Clark said he is committed to continuing to support remote learners through the end of the school year. He said he does not anticipate opening the next school year with a remote learning opportunity. Clark noted that students thrive on routine. He said if the state plans to change its guidance on in-person learning that schools need to receive that information soon.

- C. Principal's (S. McKelvie): Susan McKelvie shared that the routines of the school year are well established, and Folsom School is not experiencing a crisis of the type that is mentioned in the media. She has met with unified arts teachers to start planning for a potential schedule change if all students return to the building. She said unified arts teachers and special educators would have to completely change their schedules in that event, and that would be a significant shift from the routine established in the K-4 since the fall. In other changes, she noted staff made a switch to a new data reporting system for report cards this trimester, and those report cards were distributed for Trimester 2 this week. She also said the school has a new system to manage staff time since the fall, and a new phone system that was installed last week. She praised Sue McNayr, administrative assistant, who is learning all these new systems. McKelvie said she is advertising for an athletic director position for next school year.

McKelvie informed the board that the Continuous Improvement Plan has been deferred by the state, and schools are now asked to create a Recovery Plan. The Recovery Plan is similar to the CIP; however, it has a greater emphasis on addressing social-emotional health and engagement (truancy). Regarding summer programming, McKelvie said the school may consider additional programming after-school, over breaks, and in the summer. She is surveying families about their concerns regarding learning and mental health and asking Folsom parents what they think their children need this summer. She noted that the school can plan programs, but she needs to know if parents would commit to sending their children to a summer program. Early response indicates families are not interested in summer programs for academics but may be interested in social camps. Some indicated they would be interested in receiving a summer packet. She said she will survey the need and then determine how to fill it. She expressed caution about the term "learning loss," and over-generalizing. Folsom is collecting data and will be reviewing data. She said the instructional team will dig in and figure out what students need, but students are always learning, and they have learned during these extraordinary times. She said what kids have achieved this year is amazing given the challenges. She said she has concerns about social-emotional development and whether getting back to a usual routine enough, or should the school do more. The school will be discussing what it can offer to students and families. Clark said he believes there will be summer programming available in the Islands.

Board Business

7. Approval of Bills for Payment. Chutter made a motion to pay the bills in Batch #9077 in report 14288 totaling \$347,453.04. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote. Clark asked if the board can add approval of bills for payment to the financial report in the agenda for future meetings. The board agreed to make this change.

8. (C28) Transgender & Gender Nonconforming Students (first reading): Chutter asked if board members had any questions about the policy. There were none.

9. (B22) Public Complaints about Personnel & Instructional Materials (first reading). Chutter asked if board members had any questions. Clark confirmed the board may still have questions about instructional materials.

10. (A20) Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution (first reading). The board considered the policy and had no questions.

11. Budget Informational Meeting debriefing (Discussion): Chutter shared that he received positive feedback on the mailing about the budget, and he suggested the board continue that practice in the future. Clark said the timing of the mailing was effective because it was sent in early February. Clark also expressed appreciation to McKelvie for helping to prepare the slideshow presentation with visuals of learning at the school and text for the informational flier.

12. Other
None.

Closure

13. Setting the next agenda

April 15, 2021: Second reading of policies, Recovery Plan, audit update, handbook for non-union staff

Chutter expressed appreciation to staff at the end of the meeting for all they have done this school year.

14. Adjourn

Vaughan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kouns. Approved unanimously on a voice vote. The board adjourned at 8:07 p.m.