

Grand Isle Supervisory Union  
**South Hero School District**

School Board Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 6 p.m.

Join Hangouts Meet: <https://meet.google.com/ogi-ywxc-hja>

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## MINUTES

### Call to Order

1. Call to order at 6:13 p.m. (B. Chutter)

Introductions. In attendance:

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

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

-Audience: Michael Wright (LCATV)

2. Adjustment of Agenda

-T. Maxham asked for discussion of the Robinson Scholarship and its Certificate of Deposit. Discussion of the Robinson Scholarship was added to Other Business.

-T. Maxham asked for an update on the bus contract and the audit. The audit and bus contract will be addressed during the financial report.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Consent Agenda (Action)

The board will postpone approval of the minutes of March 19, 2020, until its next meeting on May 21, 2020.

5. Reports

A. Financial (R. Gess) (Action). R. Gess pointed out that an encumbrance for \$20,000 was incorrect in the financial report; the encumbrance was actually for \$10,000 and has since been corrected. He reported no cash-flow issues for FY20.

-Food service deliveries since March 18 have been successful. To deliver food remotely, the GISU had to create a summer food service program for Folsom School, which had not been done previously. The result of that work is the district will be reimbursed for delivery of free and reduced lunches.

-Audits: The audits are delayed due to Covid-19. The governor deemed audit firms and accounting firms as non-essential. Sullivan and Powers are working remotely, but the

documentation it needs to complete the audit is at the office. The federal audit clearinghouse deadline has been extended to July.

-School closure impact: R. Gess reported that the impact of school closures on central office staff has been significant. The district had the foresight to purchase equipment to make it possible for staff to keep payroll, mail and essential tasks going while working remotely. He noted that federal directives to school districts change daily, resulting in many questions for staff.

-Bus contract: T. Maxham asked about fulfillment of the bus contract. He noted the district is using 1 bus to deliver meals, but it has contracted 2 buses. He asked if there would be any adjustment in the cost to the district. M. Clark said several districts are in the same situation as South Hero. The state has been vague about how it plans to handle transportation reimbursements. In addition, there is a lack of agreement in how to follow the governor's order that schools maintain and pay people with whom they have current contracts, while addressing the fact that several businesses are unable to fulfill contracted services. He is working with superintendents in Franklin and Addison counties to consult counsel and move together on the issue of contracted services.

-Tax rate: B. Chutter asked if there is a tax rate yet. M. Clark said no, and indicated he has been participating in financial discussions daily across the state. The Education Fund may go from a \$30 million surplus to a potential \$90 million deficit depending on how the federal government acts on several issues. B. Chutter asked if the board should proceed as planned with budgeted expenditures. M. Clark said the board has the authority not to spend money once it has a clearer picture of the financial future of the state Education Fund and tax rate.

-Teacher contracts: M. Clark said teacher contracts were distributed by the due date of April 15. Support staff contracts will be distributed by June 1.

-T. Maxham made a motion that the board received and reviewed the financial report of April 10, 2020. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved on a roll call vote (Chutter-yes, Kouns-yes, Maxham-yes, Morse-yes, Vaughan-yes)

B. Superintendent's (M. Clark)

- a. COVID-19 & Continuity of Learning Plan Update: M. Clark shared his pride in how teachers in the Supervisory Union have transitioned from teaching in a school building to remotely. Every grade level and subject area has agreed to learning targets. The Continuity of Learning plan was approved by the Agency of Education. The AOE has directed schools to maintain the calendar, which means April vacation is next week. The district will continue to deliver meals through April vacation.
- b. Graduation: The governor has asked the Secretary of Education to make a recommendation regarding graduation. That recommendation is due on or before

May 8. The Islands schools are waiting to make plans until they hear the Secretary of Education's recommendation.

- c. The district is tracking its expenses due to Covid-19 so it can apply for federal reimbursement. M. Clark cautioned that the district may not be reimbursed for all expenses.
- d. The superintendent holds Community Hangouts on Wednesday nights: Last night he had a community member who shared how proud they were of their child's teacher for reaching out to a student. All staff were commended. B.Chutter expressed thanks to Michael, Susan and teachers for their dedication.
- e. M.Clark acknowledged the leadership of R. Gess in supervising the transition of the Central Office to remote work. He ensured bills, payroll and mail would continue, among other essential services. There is a rotation of people going into the office.

- C. Principal (S. McKelvie): S. McKelvie recognized the leadership of superintendent M. Clark, which has helped make this rapid, unexpected process less chaotic. The expectations from the state have been changing frequently with an emphasis on compliance. She acknowledged it has been tough to engage some children, but Folsom has connected with all families. She noted there were some glitches and some early ideas for communication that did not work, but she feels the school has made good progress. She will be distributing a survey to families in early May to gather feedback. She praised staff for their dedication to the children of South Hero.
- a. She said she is not ready to post positions that the board had previously discussed. She said the Athletic Director position will be open.
  - b. The public wifi hotspot at Folsom School is almost ready. The router was installed yesterday, but Dave Brisson has some additional work to do to ensure the internet is filtered and of sufficient speed.
  - c. Continuous Improvement Plan: She expects to have guidance from the state in May about the next steps for that plan
  - d. SBAC testing: The state and federal government cancelled standardized SBAC testing. Local assessments have been canceled.
  - e. Report cards: There will be a modified report card at the end of the year to reflect the Continuity of Learning plan learning targets.
  - f. Facilities: Steve Berard put in the order for the new burner when the budget was approved. Efficiency Vermont will be giving Folsom a 10% rebate on the cost.
  - g. The playground and fields have been closed due to Covid-19. She has posted signs.
  - h. Water testing: The state has not yet provided results from the water testing. S. Berard delivered the samples right before the state closed schools.

T. Maxham and the board offered S. McKelvie congratulations on the birth of her first grandson.

### Board Business

6. Other: Robinson Scholarship: B. Chutter asked S. McKelvie if she could ensure notification about the Robinson Scholarship is made to potential recipients. S. McKelvie said Sue McNayr is taking care of it. B. Chutter noted the board could make a decision on the scholarship independent of graduation.

T. Maxham said the CD is coming due on April 20 and that the town clerk would continue the CD unless the board objects. The CD generated enough interest to cover the scholarship, he said.

7. Approval of Bills for Payment. B. Vaughan made a motion to pay the bills in Batch #5680 totaling \$32,263.57. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

8. Approval of 2020-2021 School Calendar (M. Clark) (Action)

M. Clark said the calendar was approved by the GISU Board at its March meeting. The calendar is a regional one that coordinates with other districts and must be submitted by April 1 to the AOE. Technically it does not require each district to approve it, but it is the tradition of each district to approve it. The superintendent asked for the board to approve the calendar. T. Maxham moved that the board approve the 2020-2021 School Calendar. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

9. Teacher contracts (M. Clark) (Action) M. Clark said contracts were distributed to teachers by the April 15 contracted deadline without board signatures. The contracts did not change in salary or step because a new contract has not been negotiated. Contracts will be reissued once a new contract is settled. M. Clark said this process lets the district know who is returning to work. M. Clark asked the board to authorize someone to sign contracts. T. Maxham moved that the board authorize Bob Chutter to sign contracts. E. Morse seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

10. Principal Contract (Executive Session)

B. Chutter moved that the board go into executive session to discuss the principal's contract at 7:10 p.m. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

The board came out of executive session at 7:28 p.m. T. Maxham moved that the board authorize Michael Clark to negotiate the terms of a contract with principal Susan McKelvie using the parameters agreed upon in executive session and to authorize Bob Chutter to sign the contract for the board. B. Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

## **Closure**

11. Setting the next agenda

-Approve minutes from March 19, 2020, and April 16, 2020, meetings

12. Adjourn

The board adjourned at 7:33 PM. B. Vaughan made a motion to adjourn, and N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

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