

South Hero School Board
Location: Folsom Education & Community Center
Thursday, May 3, 2018, 6 p.m.

MINUTES

Call to order at 6:00 p.m.

Introductions

In attendance:

-Board members: David Cain, Melanie Henderson, Tim Maxham, RJ Sweeney, Bentley Vaughan

-Staff: Matthew Brankman, Don Van Nostrand, Helen Bishop, Rob Gess

-Audience: Jim Jones (LCATV), Kaight Althoff, Andre Bertmann

Adjustment of Agenda

A special education staffing update was added.

A discussion of a school administrative staff matter was added for discussion in Executive Session.

Appointment to the GISU board's newly formed Executive Committee was added.

Public Comments

Kaight Althoff presented to the board and administration Nut Free Chocolates and thank you notes for Folsom Appreciation Week from the PTO.

Consent Agenda (Action)

A. Approve minutes from April 5, 2018. The minutes of the April 5th meeting were approved on a 5-0 voice vote. B. Vaughan moved the board approve the minutes. M. Henderson seconded.

Superintendent Don Van Nostrand's Report

The superintendent reported that South Hero needs to staff an EEE preschool paraeducator, 3 half-days a week. The board agreed. There will be a 50 percent reimbursement, but South Hero will pay the full salary.

Principal Matthew Brankman's Report

The SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) standardized testing regular session is finished. Make-ups to follow.

The Folsom Innovation Team met May 3 with principal Susan McKelvie on the phone. The team has a good understanding of its role in developing the school's continuous improvement plan for the State of Vermont. M. Henderson reported the group will use the GISU's three goals for continuous improvement and add a fourth goal. The GISU plan will be used as an exemplar for the state. Megan Grube, curriculum director, led the district through the process, and it was

applauded by the state. The team is discussing with S. McKelvie the best goals for Folsom for the coming school year.

T. Maxham asked about budgeting for summer work and requested that M. Brankman ask Steve Berard, building maintenance, what he anticipates for the summer.

D. Cain said that the town is asking for an emergency contact to have building keys, thus D. Cain needs a key.

D. Van Nostrand reported that an Executive Committee for the GISU board has been created. The GISU board meets quarterly, and this committee will meet five times plus any special meetings. D. Cain will join; the board chair is listed as a member. D. Cain moved that M. Henderson be the alternate. RJ Sweeney seconded. Approved.

M. Henderson reported that the brochures are here to advertise Folsom and a new website, goFolsom.org, is up and running. D. Van Nostrand will get M. Henderson time on the other boards' schedules to do a brief presentation, or she will talk to the principals about promoting Folsom as a choice to their middle school students.

Business of the Board (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. Approve Reduced Student and Staff Days in June

D. Van Nostrand listed the decisions of the other schools. Alburgh's last day is June 15 for students and June 19 for staff. The other schools are June 20 for students and June 22 for staff. The GISU inservice is currently scheduled for June 21. D. Cain proposed June 20 for students' last day, and June 22 for staff. M. Brankman asked that June 20 be only for staff so that he can go over data and get more done with staff. T. Maxham asked about doing an inventory of everything. D. Van Nostrand confirmed that staff will be doing comprehensive inventories of their classrooms. M. Brankman said the school could use more than half-a-day for conversations on ongoing issues. K. Althoff mentioned that some parents have paid for summer camps that week. Motion by M. Henderson to end the students' year on June 19 and staff's year on June 22. T. Maxham seconded. 5-0 motion passed.

B. Review FY19 non-licensed and support staffing

One person is transferring from salary to hourly. D. Van Nostrand asked if the board wants to make changes, add positions or take away positions. D. Cain said the quick answer is that this is what the board budgeted, so no changes. The list of support staff includes administrative assistant, custodian, food service, maintenance, home-school coordinator, and paraeducators. D. Van Nostrand said he is not interested in reducing staffing at this time. Discussion followed. D. Cain asked about the questions they have regarding the role of the home-school coordinator. M. Brankman responded in support of the value of the position and the need to discuss the system as a whole. M. Henderson agreed that a plan is needed. T. Maxham said with the recent state issues, South Hero may need to look at this in the future.

C. Approve Policy E11 – Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Procurement

Rob Gess asked that the board approve this policy. It is a USDA requirement for all school districts in the USA. D. Cain moved to approve Policy E11, T. Maxham seconded. Approved 5-0.

D. Review Budget to Actuals

On May 15 -20, the dispersals from the state come to the town clerk. R. Gess will meet with Janet Yates, town clerk, so she understands the procedure since she is new. HRA (Health reimbursement account) reimbursements will be billed to local boards. The process is delayed, and there were 2 significant invoices recently. There will be line items for FY19, and it will look differently.

South Hero is \$83,000 under budget on tuition. The audit has been completed with high school enrollment. Line 74: Early education has a \$32,000 budget benefit. These will benefit the expenditures the school has had for principal and special education. Speech services overage was mentioned. T. Maxham noticed places in the budget where the school has not spent money (student activities, summer program, for example). R. Gess will be talking to M. Brankman about summer programs as money was allocated for the year ending June 30.

Regarding the dispersal mentioned, T. Maxham said that there are two bills a year from the state for "Sending/Gold" towns.

M. Henderson asked if South Hero will still be in the black on June 30. R. Gess said it would be close, but the school will be in the black. All non-essential spending is suspended.

E. Discussion of Act 46 State Plan and GISU Boundaries

M. Henderson said the AOE will meet May 16 in Rutland and will discuss criteria for small schools' grants. There is discussion the Agency will move the rural distance from 15 to 30 minutes. It also is expected to discuss capacity and academics. It is possible the agency will recommend a school cannot receive a small schools' grant if it is below a certain percentage proficiency.

T. Maxham said in the recent GISU board meeting, state Rep. Ben Joseph spoke and did not have new information to offer about Act 46.

D. Cain asked who at the AOE should the board email about this issue. D. Van Nostrand said there are a dozen to email, including the acting secretary and state board members. D. Van Nostrand suggested that actual letters may have some weight.

M. Brankman raised discussion of the company hired to provide special education services: Communication has been challenging. It's a new organization that the school is not familiar with. Additionally, the school needs support for more than the two students who are contracted to be served by this company. The school is trying to address how it meets those needs. He noted it's the number 1 topic for staff at the moment. Teachers have expressed concern to him that the daily situation in their classrooms is not fully understood by those making decisions and that systems are needed. The staff would like to know what the system will be to provide student behavioral support going into next year. D. Cain asked about other students' needs. M. Brankman said there is no one to access to get information on other students who have needs. He mentioned a situation with SBACs when a contracted person had nothing to do but could not help with supervision as he is contracted for only one student. He reported there is confusion and anxiety about how staff can access assistance for their classes and the school needs to have a system. It's bigger than the contracted service. There's no blame, but a lot of this work would typically fall to case managers, but the school's managers are new to the profession. Discussion followed. The board said it would discuss the effectiveness of the contracted services in Executive Session. It was noted the supervisor has been to Folsom a few times and attends meetings.

F. Approval of Bills for Payment.

The bills were approved for payment on a voice vote, 5-0. B. Vaughn moved the board pay bills. D. Cain seconded the motion.

Future Agenda Items & Next Meeting (Discussion)

Looking at the calendar from the board retreat a year ago, the board reviewed its priorities:

- Public comments policy - yes
- Volunteer policy -yes. M. Henderson requested that new parents be informed earlier. D. Cain asked M. Brankman to have Sue McNayr look into that communication.
- Complaint Procedure - yes
- Key Security Policy/ Assessment - bring this topic back up
- Food service education – R. Gess can explain the billing and new requirements, when ready.
- Budget - yes
- Attracting Island middle schoolers - yes
- Busses - Renewal of the contract is automatic, and there is one more year, June 30, 2019. The new district may be able to open it back up. The contract was signed with two additional contract years a possibility. They will reach out in January of 2019 and ask to talk.
- New climate survey: has not done one. M. Brankman said he saw last year's survey and encouraged the board to do one. He said he can gather the feedback, and M. Henderson asked him to do the survey and provide unidentifiable feedback from the staff. Parents and students may not be necessary.
- Town meeting - done
- Leadership consistency planning - come back to
- Audit follow-up - districts pretty much are done, and it is now focusing on special education under R. Gess' guidance.
- Funding education for the board - T. Maxham asked specifically for better understanding of the budget and payments process. D. Van Nostrand said he has a book group on the concept of education funding and budgeting, and he invited the board to join. M. Henderson has been a part of the book group. That book included stepping back and letting administration do more, but it was geared toward much larger districts. There are several books. D. Cain asked D. Van Nostrand to pitch a book to them
- Long-term spending and assets outcome – slated for summer.
- Another retreat? Agreed that it is a good idea.
- T. Maxham suggests for a future agenda looking at over capacity of the parking lot as it happens several times a year. T. Maxham suggested having someone out directing traffic to utilize the old parking lot. Fire access needs to stay open. No shoulders are available.

Next meeting: May 17

-Robinson Scholarship decision. T. Maxham is looking at the account with the town clerk. The school is working off principal, not interest. RJ Sweeney will check on the rubric for applicants. May 15 is the deadline. Also on the agenda will be graduation details. Andre Bertmann requested the board create a subcommittee for coaches. D. Cain asked D. Van Nostrand to add Folsom athletics, exploration of subcommittee, to the next agenda.

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

The board went into Executive Session at 8 p.m. RJ Sweeney made the motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a staff matter. B. Vaughan seconded. Approved.

The board came out of Executive Session at 10:03 p.m.

Adjournment

The board adjourned at 10:03 p.m. on a voice vote. RJ Sweeney made a motion to adjourn. M. Henderson seconded the motion