

These minutes are subject to School Board Approval

Goffstown School District
Goffstown, New Hampshire

School Board Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2009

School Board Members, Present

Keith Allard
Sue Tremblay
Phillip Kendall
Henry Boyle
Lorry Cloutier
Jeffrey Tate
Kent Nolan
Philip Pancoast (arrived at 7:36 PM)
(Excused Absence) Ginny McKinnon
(Excused Absence) Kyle Carreau, Student Representative

Administration, Present

Stacy Buckley, Superintendent
Ray Labore, Business Administrator

Teacher Representatives

Peggy Zola, Elementary Representative
Cecile Perretta, GHS Representative
Mary Grasset, Middle School Representative

Call to Order

Keith Allard called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led the Board and public in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Approval of Minutes 12/07/09

Henry Boyle made a motion to approve the December 7, 2009 minutes. Sue Tremblay seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED

Correspondence

Keith Allard passed the Correspondence Folder around for School Board review.

Commendations/Good News

- Peggy Zola stated Maple Ave. had their 4th grade Holiday Concert, the Student Council collected pajamas for needy children, and Dr. Chisholm, reading specialist, just completed her doctorate.
- Keith Allard stated a student lost a parent this week, Jennifer Wentz, whose mother taught in the Goffstown School District.
- Cecile Perretta stated the GHS Band would be performing for MVMS students tomorrow.

Public Comment

Donna Pinard, Goffstown resident, stated she has been waiting for the NEASC report and would like to know if an action plan needed to be written and who would be writing it. Mrs. Pinard mentioned that a high school in Canaan, NH did not receive full accreditation and had to write a report.

Ivan Beliveau, Goffstown resident, stated he would like to share the public numbers for public record for the impact of the 2010 budget. Mr. Beliveau stated last year there was a significant decrease in town taxes due to the impact of an unreserved fund balance of \$3.1 million. Mr. Beliveau stated this year it looks like instead of a local school tax rate of 9.5%, it is going to be 12.8%; a 15% increase which for example would be a \$650 property tax increase on a \$200,000 assessed house. Mr. Beliveau stated if the School Board had a way to generate another \$4.6 million in unreserved funds then there could be something more approaching a level-funded budget. Mr. Beliveau asked if the \$3.1 million reserved fund

balance last year was a one-time event. Keith Allard stated yes. Henry Boyle stated he would like to point out for the record that Mr. Beliveau is a member of the Goffstown Budget Committee.

NEASC Report Presentation

Keith Allard stated the NEASC Report would be available for viewing tomorrow on the MVMS website. Stacy Buckley stated MVMS did receive full accreditation with no action plan needed. A handout was given to School Board members. Jim Hunt gave a power point presentation on the NEASC Report:

- Accreditation Overview (Accreditation – 10 year cycle, process, self-study, peer review, follow-up)
- Seven Standards
- Distribution, Use and Scope of the Visiting Committee Report
- Conclusion
- Commendations (in handout is all the standards, the commendations of each standards, and all recommendations)
- Recommendations
- What it means to be Accredited
- Responsibilities
- Next Steps (Nicole Doherty reviewed this area)

Lorry Cloutier asked about two things mentioned in the presentation: giving more common planning time and re-examining ECB. Jim Hunt stated MVMS' self-study was written prior to last January and while they were doing so they were already in the process of changes. Mr. Hunt stated the Commission on elementary and middle schools meet twice a year to vote on accreditation, the Commission Chair had not submitted her report prior to the meeting in May, and as a result Mr. Hunt is sharing information that is nearly five to six months old. Mr. Hunt stated they had to wait until November for the Commission to review the Report and the Board of Trustees of the NEASC to vote on accreditation on December 3rd. Mr. Hunt stated MVMS has been working on team time, a time when teachers can introduce ECB, trying to grow it and expand it. Mr. Hunt stated they knew communication would show up in the NEASC Report, that it can always be enhanced. Some things that have already happened include an on-line Message Board for faculty and Faculty Focus Group meetings. Ms. Cloutier asked about common planning time. Mr. Hunt stated that was restricted by the Master Schedule, that their ability to move all teachers to have common planning time between teams is very challenging. Mrs. Doherty stated when faculty members go into committees, they can address this as a need, help look at the schedules, and discuss with Administration. The Board thanked Mr. Hunt and Mrs. Doherty for their presentation. Sue Tremblay congratulated the school for receiving accreditation.

Administration/Finance Committee Report

Jeffrey Tate made a motion to approve the manifest in the amount of \$954,300.15. Sue Tremblay seconded. Mr. Tate reviewed the contents of the manifest. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED

Jeffrey Tate stated the Committee discussed and would like to bring the default budget forward to the Board with the recommendation to approve as presented. Ray Labore gave a copy of the default budget to each Board member. ***Jeffrey Tate made a motion to approve the default budget in the amount of \$36,430,646 as presented. Sue Tremblay seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED***

Human Resource Committee Report

Lorry Cloutier brought forward the following motions for a first read:

- Policy BEDH (changes: removed section 2 of policy).
- Policy IJOC (changes: defined the definition of a designated volunteer; Ms. Cloutier read this aloud. Ms. Cloutier stated when this is adopted, the Committee would recommend a process of

how to work with the volunteers we have presently. Mrs. Buckley suggested adding to policy that regulations would be developed by the Superintendent so she could develop a process; Ms. Cloutier agreed. Mrs. Buckley suggesting removing principal and adding designee instead in 5th paragraph; Board was in agreement to change to ...superintendent and his/her designee... Jeffrey Tate asked that ...unsupervised... be added to 5th paragraph line 2; Board was in agreement).

Policy BEDH and Policy IJOC will come forward for a second read in two meetings.

The next Human Resource Committee meeting will be on January 11th at 6 p.m. at the SAU.

Curriculum and Education Committee Report

The next C&E Meeting will be on January 11th at 7 PM at the SAU.

Superintendent's Report

Stacy Buckley stated the Dream Keeper and Cornerstone Awards are coming up; has sent out description to Board members. Mrs. Buckley stated the Board members would vote on nominees at the next Human Resource Committee meeting and present the awards at the Deliberative Session.

Stacy Buckley stated Keith Allard has volunteered to attend the School Board Legislative Session and gave each Board member a handout of the currently pending legislative resolutions and her comments/thoughts on them. Mr. Allard stated he would like any feedback from Board members on the resolutions by the first meeting in January. Mrs. Buckley will email handouts to the Board's teacher representatives.

The School Board will meet only once in January - January 11th at 7:00PM; all Committee meetings that were to be held on January 11th will be held on January 25th.

Elementary Facility Renovation Committee Discussion

Jeffrey Tate made a motion to adopt the Elementary Facility Renovation Committee's findings. Sue Tremblay seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED

CAST Committee Discussion

Stacy Buckley stated the CAST Committee is what was formerly known as the Stadium Committee. Mrs. Buckley stated in September the Administration had come before the Board and asked that the Committee look at field usage, co-curricular fields, and fees. Mrs. Buckley stated the Committee was very happy to do this and brought forward what they believed was the charge: *The Goffstown School Board invites the Co-curricular Activities Support Team (CAST) to investigate and prepare a report of the following: to complete a comprehensive review of current co-curricular and athletic facilities (including, but not limited to, GHS, MVMS, Barnard Park, Cemetery Field, and Lion's Field lease) and develop a comprehensive plan for facilities that meets current and future needs. And to investigate a co-curricular fee and identify at what point and under what conditions a parent may be willing to participate and accept a fee structure.* The Board discussed the co-curricular fee aspect further. Mrs. Buckley stated no motion was needed on this charge, just a consensus that this was what the Board was looking for. The Board discussed information that CAST had received from a community member regarding a potential land purchase from Ed Monty. The Board was in consensus that this fiscal year the School Board was not pursuing purchase of land and not endorsing any pursuit of the land.

Administrative Assessment Form

Keith Allard gave Board members a handout of an Administrative Assessment Form and asked for Board feedback on if they would like to start using this form and who would review it. Stacy Buckley stated Administration (Principals) is currently evaluated every year. Sue Tremblay stated she would not be opposed to something like this form, but not called an assessment; that it could be useful for the

Superintendent. Lorry Cloutier stated as a general idea it is a good idea, it could be a help, maybe add a comments area. Henry Boyle stated it could help if you had daily contact with a person, but how often does the average teacher see the administrators. Stacy Buckley briefly discussed how she handles feedback in her evaluation process. Philip Pancoast stated when you ask people for feedback the first thing you get back are the complaints, not the kudos. The Board was in consensus to take time and look this form over; will come back as old business on January 11th.

GHS – Music Department Request

Stacy Buckley stated the Music Department would like to open the Deliberative Session Meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, the Star Spangled Banner, and one song from the play they are putting on; the Board was in consensus to allow this.

Alternate Budget Committee Representative

Keith Allard stated Sue Tremblay is going to Florida and they need to appoint an alternate Budget Committee representative while she is gone. *Sue Tremblay made a motion for Keith Allard to be the alternate Budget Committee Representative. Philip Pancoast seconded. VOTE 7 yes, 1 no (Keith Allard) MOTION PASSED*

Jeffrey Tate made a motion to allow Henry Tate to be the substitute GTV representative in Sue Tremblay's absence. Phillip Kendall seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED

Sue Tremblay stated there are four Budget Committee positions opening up in March and the filing period is January 20-29, 2010; three School Board positions will also be opening up.

DRAFT 2010-2011 School Calendar

The Board received a handout of the DRAFT 2010-2011 school calendar to review. Stacy Buckley stated students would start school on September 2nd, April vacation would be a four-day weekend instead of a full week and students would get out of school on June 15th. Keith Allard stated the calendar would come back under Old Business on the agenda on January 11th. Cecile Perretta asked if any school districts have already made changes to the April vacation, that students are going to be pulled out of school for the whole week by parents, and from a teacher's perspective it is a nightmare when only half the classroom is full. Lorry Cloutier asked if a poll/survey had been done of parents. Mrs. Buckley stated no. Jeffrey Tate stated there currently are a lot of students already absent on either side of a vacation week. Mr. Tate stated they had talked about changing the week entirely and making one vacation in March, but the problem was coordination with other districts. Philip Pancoast stated change is never easy, that someone has to make the first step.

Budget Hearing Preparation

Keith Allard stated he had asked Stacy Buckley to put together some numbers of where some of the approximately \$691,000 in suggested Budget Committee cuts could be done; Mr. Allard stated some of the recommended cuts cannot be done as they are contracted items. Stacy Buckley stated she went through the spreadsheet with recommended cuts and if they cut all technology, all equipment, all furniture, all field trips, all field trip transportation, auxiliary things, all computers, smart boards, cameras, calculators, \$25,000 overall in books, some maintenance lines, assemblies, and the GHS phone system, those total cuts came to about \$200,000. Mrs. Buckley stated those cuts would stop the school district from growing. Mrs. Buckley stated she next looked at staffing and if she reduced 1½ secretaries, 3 teachers, and 1 assistant at GHS and a teacher at MVMS that would get to the \$691,000 suggested cut. Jeffrey Tate stated there was another option for the Board and that was to present their own budget number. Keith Allard stated that was true, they are just trying to give feedback right now. Lorry Cloutier asked if it was possible to change the SAU budget. Keith stated that an SAU meeting would need to take place, with proper budget process and be completed by December 31st. The Board determined that this

would not be possible. Sue Tremblay stated the document that details where the cuts are was not in the hands of the majority of the Budget Committee when they voted and that she had watched the Selectmen meeting last Monday night when Chairman Gross stated he believed the Right to Know Law was not followed in this process. Mrs. Tremblay stated even without this breakdown, the Committee voted for this and if you look at it, there is no rhyme or reason, as all the MVMS administration was eliminated. Mrs. Tremblay stated she did not think the Board should help this document along. Philip Pancoast stated the Board's decision has to be based on what is the right thing to do for the students, that there has been genuine effort and collaboration in the past years between the Committee and Board to work together, but we have reached the point where someone is going to lose and the people who are at risk are the students that we promised to educate. Mr. Pancoast stated there is not a lot of luxury in the proposed budget, that the decision before the Board is do they move forward with the proposed budget or is there some alternative that is different that they believe is educationally sound. Mr. Pancoast stated he did not think the Board could look at the recommendations someone else had found. The Board continued to discuss this issue. The Board was in consensus to have this item put on the January 11th agenda.

Parent Request

Stacy Buckley brought forward two parent requests for School Board approval:

- A request from Christine Biron who used to live in the Maple Ave. school area now lives in the Bartlett area and would like to have her 3rd grade child continue the rest of the year at Maple Ave. Elementary. ***Philip Pancoast made a motion to approve the request. Kent Nolan seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED***
- A request from Mr. Lunderville whose son currently attends Bartlett Elementary and has moved to the Maple Ave. Elementary area and would like his son to remain at Bartlett Elementary for the remainder of the school year. ***Philip Pancoast made a motion to approve the request. Kent Nolan seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED***

Student Teachers/Student Intern

Stacy Buckley presented the following Student Teachers and Intern to School Board members:

- Amanda Meenan, Maple Avenue, Pat Packard
- Meghan Boardman, Maple Avenue, Cheryl Brown
- Lauren Ferreira, Maple Avenue, Jackie Hamilton
- Sara Ann Raymond, Maple Avenue, Nicole Magoon
- Amy Collard, Maple Avenue, Pat Swank
- Christina Michele Bandy, Maple Avenue, Deb Prive
- Caitlin Govoni, Student Intern, Bartlett, Sociology

Other Business That May Legally Come Before the Meeting

None

Public Comment

Donna Pinard stated she noticed that communication was part of the NEASC, how some public and staff don't understand and if after 18 months you have staff that still does not understand, then you have a communication problem. Mrs. Pinard stated Mr. Hunt also stated the reason the report was so late was because it was reviewed only twice a year, but she had repeatedly asked over the summer about it and wondered why she was not told that then.

Ivan Beliveau stated he wanted to follow-up on what he had said earlier and asked if the Board thought it was inappropriate or unruly to draw attention to a 27% increase in a budget. Mr. Beliveau asked if the Board thought no one in town would be interested in that number, that it was a huge increase. Mr. Beliveau stated this is not personal or about the quality of the schools, it is strictly about numbers. Mr.

Beliveau continued to discuss impact of 27% increase and the contractual portions. Mr. Beliveau stated Goffstown residents are confronted with losing their homes, not getting retirement programs, and they are hurting. Mr. Beliveau asked the Board to take a look at what is happening in the community and then take a look at the 27% increase.

Keith Allard stated, in regards to the 27% increase, that part of the number Mr. Beliveau is calculating is the \$1.3 million saved in the budget last year and returned to the taxpayers. Mr. Allard stated the budget is not going up 27% that last year's budget reduced the tax burden last year, but the Board is not able to do that again this year. Mr. Allard stated the schools made many cuts last year on supplies, etc. in order to get by and they cannot necessarily do that again as they have the responsibility to give a sound education to our students. Mr. Allard stated the Board did not say they were not going to look at the Budget Committee's recommendations, but unfortunately some are on contractual lines that cannot be changed and a good chunk of the staffing increase is in health insurance rates. Mr. Allard stated the Board is trying to be financially responsible and are operating \$200,000 under the default budget this year. Sue Tremblay stated she has heard this 27% increase talked about at Budget Committee meetings and she does not understand it. Mrs. Tremblay stated this year the school had a \$31,300,000 budget and next year, the proposed budget is \$33,620,000, which is not even a 10% increase. Philip Pancoast stated he thought if you were to poll each teacher/administrator in the district, that they would tell you that the greatest thing we could do for kids would be to reduce class size and if we could do that we would have to double the number of teachers. Mr. Pancoast stated you have to look at what we are doing with greatest asset in district, the teachers, and that is where bulk of money comes from. Mr. Pancoast stated he believes the Board has always been judicious and its goal is what is in the best interest of the students while being fiscally responsible. Mr. Pancoast stated the Board has a fine record of looking at the numbers and doing less with more and recognizing that there are some in the community that struggle to pay their taxes, put food on table, fuel, and wood in their stove.

Non-Public Sessions – RSA 91-A:3 II(c)

None

Adjournment

***Lorry Cloutier made a motion to adjourn at 9:13 PM. Henry Boyle seconded. VOTE All in Favor
MOTION PASSED***

Deborah Jore
School Board Secretary

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