

Oyster River Cooperative School Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2024

DRAFT

**SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:** Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon, Tom Newkirk, Giana Gelsey

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Dr. Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Amy Ransom, Catherine Plourde, Rebecca Noe

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**GUEST PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:** Maeve Hickok (Student Representative)

**0. MANIFEST REVIEW/APPROVAL AT EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

**I. CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Chair Denise Day.**

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the agenda as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Giana Gelsey. Motion passed 7-0.**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None provided.**

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the January 3, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Giana Gelsey.**

Matt Bacon made the following revision:

After the motion to go into Non-Public Session insert the following:

“The regular meeting resumed at 8:37 pm.”

“Denise Day made a motion to enter Non-Public RSA 91-A:3 II ( c ), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0.”

“The regular meeting resumed at 9:19 pm.”

“Matt Bacon made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session until July 1, 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Heather Smith. Motion passed 7-0 by roll call vote.”

**Motion passed with correction 7-0.**

**Heather Smith made a motion to approve two January 3, 2024 Non-Public Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Giana Gelsey. Motion passed 7-0.**

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS**

**A. District**

Principal Rebecca Noe of ORHS announced that art teacher Maria Rosi received notification of winners for this year’s Scholastic Art Competition. It is a huge achievement for students, who will be honored in a ceremony on February 11th at Pinkerton Academy. Student artwork will be on display at the Durham Public Library for the month of March. Rebecca congratulated the following students who received Gold, Silver, or Honorable Mention:

Gold Key Recipients – Claire Carstens, Miruna Dospinescu, Finn Henderson, Autumn Hoffman, Ava Melanson, Elliott Orchard-Blowen, Ella Roberge, Drew Sharp, Lilly Smith

Silver Key Recipients – Elise Bacon, Claire Carstens, Axel Freund, Rose Goldsmith, Kaden Pare, Lydia Shemchuk

Honorable Mention Recipients – Mia Weglarz, Connor Wilson, Lillian Zehetner

Please note the following dates:

- 1/22 Last Day of Exams
- 1/23 TW Day (No School/Voting)
- 1/24 Semester 2/Quarter 3 Begins
- 1/25 Coffee House
- 2/1 Internet Crimes Against Children Presentation (Parents-Only)
- 2/8 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Information Night

## **B. Board**

Heather Smith attended the middle school's performances of *Oliver Jr.* and said students did a fantastic job performing 6 shows! She gave a huge thank you to directors Sarah Kuhn, Julieann Woodbury, and Erin Handwork.

Denise Day also attended and echoed Heather's comments.

## **VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**

### **A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)**

Suzanne Filippone reminded the listening audience of the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) presentation for adults only on February 1<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm in the ORMS Recital Hall.

Due to Tuesday's Primary, the district will hold a Teacher Workshop Day on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Since ORHS and Mast Way will be voting sites, teachers have the option to work in another building. The day will consist of K-12 Curriculum Work and Connect Suicide Training for any staff member who hasn't received it.

### **B. Superintendent's Report**

#### ORMS Principal Nomination

Dr. Morse announced his nomination for Bill Sullivan to be the official principal of ORMS. He has been serving as the interim principal since July 1<sup>st</sup> and the staff is very excited. They gave a standing round of applause upon hearing the announcement.

**Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve Bill Sullivan as the official principal of ORMS, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0.**

In other staffing updates, the Human Resources Coordinator gave their resignation. Since posting the job a week ago, the district has received 8 applications. Dr. Morse has begun the interview process noting that several candidates are strong, and he is optimistic about filling the position. Also, the posting window for the Facilities Director will be closing soon, and there are credible candidates for that position too.

#### Solar Eclipse – April 8, 2024

On April 8<sup>th</sup> there will be a solar eclipse, which is much rarer than a lunar eclipse. Dr. Morse said the State of New Hampshire is considering making it an official day off so students can witness the event. He will inform the board when a decision is final.

#### Barrington Conceptual Agreement

Dr. Morse let the board know the Barrington tuition agreement for FY25 has been finalized. In their recent discussion, several factors were raised for future consideration: 1) Barrington will not pay any more than an OR student, 2) no other School System will get charged less than Barrington (which is current practice), and (3) the district will increase the cap of 200 Barrington students. Regarding enrollment, Dr. Morse said it could potentially go up to 200 until 2028-2029 and then increase by 10 students each year until reaching 280 in 2034-2035. He said these numbers correspond to the enrollment decline projected at ORHS. Dr. Morse reiterated that none of these factors are binding, rather they are concepts that were discussed and tabled for future consideration.

Tom Newkirk suggested a cap of 250 instead of 280 for 2028-29.

UNH Survey Update

Dr. Morse met with UNH to finalize the survey, which should be delivered next week. Communications Specialist Gen Brown will distribute it via email and responses will go directly to UNH, making the survey completely anonymous. The Survey Center will tabulate the results and a presentation will occur at the February 21<sup>st</sup> board meeting. Dr. Morse thanked Giana Gelsey, Tom Newkirk and the UNH Survey Center for working hard to help meet this district goal.

**C. Business Administrator**2024 Warrant Article

Amy Ransom announced there were no changes to the 2024 Warrant Article.

**Heather Smith made a motion to approve and sign the 2024 Warrant Article as presented at the Public Hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Giana Gelsey. Motion passed 7-0.**

Board members signed the document.

FY25 Budget and MS26

**Brian Cisneros made a motion to adopt the FY25 Budget and sign the MS26, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 7-0.**

Board members signed the document.

**D. Student Representative Report {Maeve Hickok} – None provided.**

**E. Finance Committee Report**

The Finance Committee recently met and discussed the Facilities Fees Agreement and a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) scoring system proposed by Brian Cisneros. Brian said scoring will not only help identify priorities, but also identify items that have been on the CIP and not addressed. The idea is that the Finance Committee, along with Board Administrators, would work as a group to assign items with a score based on safety, funding, and liability among other factors.

**F. Other – None provided.**

**VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – None provided.**

**VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**Facilities Fees [Procedure KF-R1] – Current and Revised

Brian Cisneros thanked Amy Ransom for putting together a huge database of information in a short amount of time. The Finance Committee used the information to revise the Facilities Rental Fees and after a comparison to surrounding districts, determined that OR's costs are competitive. They are not the highest, nor the lowest. In an effort to simplify and be fair, Brian said all non-profits would be treated the same in the new pricing. He noted that school needs will always come first in prioritizing use.

Denise Day wondered about the PTO and if they would be charged as a non-profit group. Brian explained that independent non-profits not school-related would be charged, but non-profits like the PTO that are part of the school district would not be charged. Denise suggested clarifying any exceptions, so it is clear to the groups.

Dan Klein pointed out that some sports boosters groups are non-profit, and some are profit. He wondered about defining groups by their mission. He wanted the public to know that the point of facility use fees is not to profit from programs, but rather recoup costs that are incurred from usage, such as field turf wear and tear, and district expenses for facilities to set up, take down, and clean. He worried there was a community perception that the district was profiting from charges, however, the fees are justifiable to recover costs. When the schools are not using the buildings, Dan said the district wants to support community use.

Tom Newkirk wondered if the HS Turf Field & Track and Other Fields cost of \$120 per additional hour should be a smaller rate.

Brian said a new change to renting the Turf Field & Track is that all of it will be rented out, not just a portion.

### School Board Self Evaluation

In accordance with policy BA, board members will perform an annual self-evaluation. Chair Denise Day provided questions so they can prepare for an open discussion at the next board meeting.

## **IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Heather Smith announced that the Sustainability Committee will meet on Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30 pm.

Dan Klein announced that the Policy Committee will meet Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm.

Giana Gelsey announced that the Wellness Committee met on January 9<sup>th</sup>. It was attended by Dover Mental Health representatives who spoke about community action around mental wellness. Since teachers already have full workloads, schools don't have the capacity to deliver the mental health that communities need. Giana felt the meeting was informative and a good starting point for talking about a community mental health initiative. She felt our surrounding communities would benefit from a group that pooled resources and had an actionable plan.

Denise Day shared that she attends the Dover Mental Health [Alliance](#) meetings, and they get a lot of people representing regional agencies. She would love to see something like that in Oyster River with monthly meetings featuring a different focus and presenter.

Tom Newkirk shared that the Sabbatical Committee met, and they are in the process of selecting sabbatical proposals. It was brought up that current sabbaticals may be a better fit for middle and high school, but not for elementary school. They are wondering about summer or a different time structure that would better fit elementary teachers who don't follow semesters.

**X. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None provided.

## **XI. CLOSING ACTIONS**

**A. Future Meeting Dates:** January 23, 2024 – Joint Board Meeting w/Barrington @ 6:00 PM – Barrington SAU  
February 6, 2024 – Annual Meeting Session I @ 7:00 PM @ ORMS Recital Hall  
February 7, 2024 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM @ ORMS Recital Hall  
February 21, 2024 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM @ORMS Recital Hall

## **XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II (c)**

- Superintendent Evaluation

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I {If needed}**

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Denise Day made a motion to enter non-public session at 7:56 pm, pertaining to the Superintendent Evaluation, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed via roll call vote 7-0.**

The board returned to public session at 8:15 PM.

**Heather Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM, seconded by Brian Cisneros with a vote of 7-0.**

The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karyn Laird, Records Keeper