

Oyster River Cooperative School District

Regular Remote Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2021

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Dan Klein, Tom Newkirk, Denise Day, Michael Williams, Al Howland, Yusi Turell, Brian Cisneros. **Student Representative:** Megan Deane

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: James Morse, Todd Allen, Suzanne Filippone, Sue Caswell, Catherine Plourde, Josh Olstad

STAFF PRESENT:

GUEST PRESENT: Andre Kloetz, Anne Ketterer, Steve Laput for Middle School update and Maggie Morrison, Kendall Gray for sustainability report

CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Dr. Jim Morse

Dr. Morse began the meeting by asking the Board for a nomination as Chair for the School Board.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Tom Newkirk nominated Brian Cisneros for Chair, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Dan Klein nominated Michael Williams for Chair, 2nd by Yusi Turell.

There were no additional nominations and Dr. Morse suggested that each party be given two minutes to express their reasons for their interest in being the chair. Dr. Morse suggested that they go by alphabetical order with Brian Cisneros going first.

Brian began by thanking Tom for the nomination. He stated that this has been a rough year for all of us. He spoke about the relationship that has formed with the Guild. During the Board self-evaluation meeting it opened up the communications within the Board and that he would like to continue to improve communications with the towns and taxpayers.

Michael Williams spoke of the challenges during the pandemic and that there are areas that need improvement, but we are making progress. He reiterated his current style as being straight forward in his thinking as a member of the Board. He stated that as a Board it is how we operate and how we make decisions.

There was no additional discussion and a vote was called for.

Dr. Morse asked for a vote for Brian Cisneros for Chair. Voting results were 2-4-1, with Michael Williams, Dan Klein, Yusi Turell and Al Howland voting against and Denise Day abstaining.

Dr. Morse asked for a vote for Michael Williams for Chair. Voting results were 4-2-1, with Tom Newkirk and Brian Cisneros voting against and Denise Day abstaining.

Motion passed for Michael Williams as the Board Chair with a vote of 4-2-1 as depicted above.

Michael Williams opened the nomination for Vice-Chair.

Dan Klein nominated Denise Day for Vice-Chair, 2nd by Al Howland.

Tom Newkirk nominated Brian Cisneros for Vice-Chair, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

As with the process noted above, each candidate will be given two minutes to express their reasons for their interest in being the Vice-Chair. Michael Williams invited Denise Day to go first.

Denise Day thanked Dan for the nomination. She stated that she has served in the capacity of vice-chair previously for 4 years and understands the role. She went on to say that her perspective is opposite to Michael's and that could be a good thing. She has worked in an education setting her entire career.

Brian Cisneros stated that he would not repeat what he had previously said, but that in his current role as a Business Administrator for another town, he has been on both sides of the table and that with this knowledge he could help guide the chair, not in how to do the job, but to help in keeping the Board on track.

Michael Williams asked for a vote for Denise Day for Vice-Chair. Voting results were 4-2-1, with Brian Cisneros and Tom Newkirk voting against and Denise Day abstaining.

Michael Williams stated that this was the majority and that we did not need an additional vote.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Dr. Morse asked if the MS22 report could be moved to the unanimous consent agenda as it was a form that requires signatures. He also asked if the Sustainability Greenhouse Gas Report could be moved to Superintendent Reports following the Bauen Middle School Update.

Brian Cisneros asked if the approval of the two professional development days currently under the unanimous consent agenda could be move under Discussion Items.

Brian Cisneros moved to approve the agenda as amended, 2nd by Yusi Turell. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Motion to approve the March 3, 2021 regular and non-public meeting minutes:
Revisions:**

Michael Williams stated that on page 5, fifth paragraph replace the existing language with, "Michael Williams stated that an additional 30 hours is the equivalent of an additional 2.5 to 3 weeks of contact time."

Tom Newkirk stated that on page 4 after the second paragraph add, "Michael Williams and Dan Klein were selected as Board members for the Communication Committee."

Denise Day moved to approve the March 3, 2021, regular meeting minutes as amended, 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Denise Day moved to approve the March 3, 2021, non-public meeting minutes as written, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Yusi Turell asked about the Committee Assignment Request. Dr. Morse explained that at this meeting it is for informational purposes and if a current Board member wished to remove or change an existing placement. Requests for change need to go to the Superintendent for a future meeting.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS:

A. District: None

B. Board:

Al Howland spoke in the capacity of a Durham resident when he thanked the District for all the hard work that went into making the numerous elections this past year successful.

Denise Day expressed that with the retirement of Todd Allen, she hoped that later in the spring that the District would pay tribute to Mr. Allen for everything that he has contributed during his tenure in the District for the past 36 years. She also acknowledged and thanked Tom Newkirk for the seven years he served in the capacity of the Board Chair for the District.

Dan Klein re-iterated all that has been stated and expressed the fantastic job that Tom has done representing the Board and acknowledge the time and work that he has dedicated to being the Chair.

Yusi Turell acknowledge Brian Cisneros for stepping up. She also wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the murders that were committed in Atlantic last evening and that it appeared to be racially motivated. She felt that this hit close to home even in New Hampshire. She went on to state that the continued work being done by the Equity and Justice committee will continue to make a difference in the OR community.

Brian Cisneros thanked Yusi for her acknowledgment. He went on to state that when he started on the Board, the first person that called him was Tom Newkirk and that he was always welcoming and helpful with any questions. He thanked him for his leadership and guidance and for his part in hiring a great superintendent.

Dr. Morse also thanked Tom for his support and friendship over his tenure as the superintendent and that he truly appreciates the friendship. Dr. Morse also acknowledged the murders in Atlanta and is appreciative of the racism committee that was formed and all of the work that they have completed and continue to do in the District.

Tom Newkirk passed his copy of Robert's Rules of Order over to Michael. He also took a moment to acknowledge the passing of Liz Whalen who was an English teacher at the high school and who had a hand in bringing women's literature into the curriculum and that she was an advocate for reading, women's rights and diversity.

Michael Williams spoke of a video that he went back and found when Tom was first running for the Board in March of 2012 and relayed the conversation that he had with Roger Dean from UNH.

VI. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve the agenda items as amended listed under the unanimous consent agenda:

Michael Williams moved to approve the unanimous consent agenda to nominate and approve the continuing contract professional staff members as submitted by the superintendent, approval of the Moharimet Maternity LOA from June 3, 2021 to the end of the year and beginning of the year to November 17, 2021, and approval of the MS/22, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

VII. DISTRICT REPORTS:

A. Assistant Superintendent Reports:

COVID Metric

Todd Allen began by referring everyone to the most recent COVID Metric in their folders. He shared that the overall trending is positive and that the only area that is showing an increase is hospital stays. He went on to state that Megan Ward relayed to him the vaccinate rate is 25% for New Hampshire.

The REACH Program flyer is included in the back up and that the district is actively preparing for this program. He went on to state that he spoke with Yusi about other summer programming options and that there will be an ESY program for special education, a variety of academic recovery options and that they are in the process of getting existing staff to run these programs.

Additionally, he wanted to acknowledge that he did watch the end of the last Board meeting after the Board accepted his retirement request, and stated that it has been an honor to have worked the last 36 years of his life as a part of the Oyster River School District and appreciated everyone's thoughts.

Dr Morse moved the meeting forward by introducing the construct manager and architect's working on the new middle school.

B. Superintendent's Report:

Bauen Middle School Update

Andre Kloetz, the construction manager on the project began by thanking everyone for having them come in and report out on the status of the new middle school. He began by stating that they are on schedule and on budget and that they finally have a full building permit from the Town of Durham. As of February 28th they were 40% complete and that they have billed for \$18 million and still have \$800K in the contingency fund that is being held for work on the old middle school and removal of ledge under the ball field.

On the interior construction process the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing is ongoing with a lot of ductwork throughout. They are installing door frames and the insulation and installation of the triple paned windows are complete. The building will be very energy efficient and easier to heat and cool. The exterior is watertight and will have several layers of outside insulation applied before the final layer is attached.

In terms of the demolition of the old middle school, a survey was done, and areas of concern were noted and will be taken care of before the demolition. The demolition of the existing middle school gym building will be done the week of April vacation to make room for the work needed to be done for the access roads.

Andre asked the Board if they had any questions.

The Board asked that with the COVID pandemic is the air tightness of the facility a concern? A question about the financing and the status of the second bond payment was also asked.

Andre and Dr. Morse answered the Board questions.

Andre continued by acknowledging Tom Newkirk and stating that it is a pleasure to work with both him and Brian and he is glad that Tom will continue to be with us for the duration of the project. He thanked everyone for having them at the meeting for this update.

Sue Caswell approached the podium and introduced Maggie Morrison and Kendall Gray.

Sustainability Gas Greenhouse Report

Maggie Morrison began by thanking the Board for having them and that she was the Sustainability Coordinator for the District. She went on to state that the report that is in front of you tonight has been in the works since last summer and through to now and that Oyster River is the only school district in New Hampshire to do this. She introduced Kendall Gray who will summarize the report.

Kendall Gray is a UNH graduate and she began by thanking Sabrina at the SAU office for all her assistance in inputting the data that generated this report. Kendall reviewed and explained each slide of the presentation which spanned over a six-year period and included all of the buildings within the OR School district. She went on to explain areas of improvement which included continued communication with the area towns and collection of more tracking data for emissions.

Megan Deane stated that the sustainability club at the high school oversees the composting aspect, but she asked if there was more that students could be doing.

Yusi Turell stated that the report was very impressive and asked what the biggest obstacle was that we are facing to increasing sustainability in the district.

Dr. Morse asked Kendall what her thoughts were surrounding electric buses. She stated that she is not that familiar with electric buses, other than the upfront capital needed to purchase, but urged him to continue discussing the option of electric buses.

Dr. Morse expressed how impressed he was with this report and the amount of details that it contained.

Vaccine Plan

Dr. Morse began by stating that he is hopeful now that a vaccine is available. On Friday, members of the Strafford County Health network are coming down to do a walk thru for the area of the vaccine pod. Once completed he will be able to provide additional details on the vaccine process. He went on to state that we are joining forces with the Barrington School District to share this pod.

Dr. Morse went on to explain that due to this vaccine pod he is bringing before the Board a request to move two teacher workshop days to March 24 and April 19 so that we can hold this pod. He went on to say that initially the first shot does not create a reaction, but with the second shot there is a chance of an adverse reaction and that is why we are looking at an asynchronous day for April 20th.

Yusi Turell suggested making April 20th an asynchronous day combined with a remote day.

Denise Day stated that she appreciates trying to have more direct instruction, but for childcare issues it would be easier to have an asynchronous day.

There was no further discussion.

Dr. Morse stated that he felt that planning for a full return of K-12 would be in anticipation of a possible governor's directive to do so. He would like to request an additional workshop meeting for next Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:00 PM and would also like to invite teachers and support staff to have an open dialogue with the Board about an All-In K-12 option. If possible, we can bring this before the Board at their April 7 meeting as a formal presentation and if needed at the April 21 meeting.

Dr. Morse asked if the Board had any questions.

Denise Day stated that it makes sense to have this workshop so that we can discuss the issue and that she supports doing this.

Brian Cisneros stated that this is great planning for something that is inevitable, and that getting ahead of the game is great. He would support this; however, he will not be able to attend due to a prior meeting engagement.

Dan Klein stated that he is hopeful that we will be able to do this but wanted to clarify that the District would still be following all of the CDC Protocols and Guidelines. He also questioned the change from 6' to 3' distancing and how it would be looked at.

Michael Williams stated that this is one time when there is a three-week span before the next Board meeting, and we have 4 separate issues that we are looking at as a Board to provide guidance to the Superintendent. A school calendar change, add an additional workshop meeting on March 24, a proposal for All-In K-12, and authorize the current negotiating team to remain for now.

Megan Deane stated that she was excited to hear about this proposal and will reach out to students to gauge their reactions and asked if the Board wanted her at the March 24 meeting.

Tom Newkirk stated that the Board recently approved a change in the elementary model to include Wednesdays as an in-person day beginning April 8, are we going to rescind the elementary motion.

Michael Williams asked the Board if there were any objections to adding the workshop on the 24th.

Al Howland stated that he would only be able to attend remotely. Brian Cisneros will not be attending.

Michael Williams asked for a motion to propose an All-In option for discussion.

Yusi Turell made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to plan for and propose an All-In Model K-12 if choose to pursue it to begin May 3, 2021, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Discussion:

Denise Day asked if we needed to rescind the elementary model before moving forward.

Yusi Turell suggested that we bring in Dr. Harvey and Scott Schuler at a future meeting.

Michael Williams suggested that if anyone had any questions that they wished to pose at next Wednesday's Workshop to send those to Dr. Morse.

There were no additional questions and a vote was taken.

Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Michael Williams moved onto the current negotiation team remaining as is with Tom Newkirk, Al Howland and Dan Klein as the committee members.

Tom Newkirk asked how the conversation would be constructed at the workshop.

Al Howland felt that it would be more of a discussion and also to determine the comfort level of the faculty and staff.

Yusi Turell asked if the timing of the committee assignments could be accelerated.

Megan Deane reminded the Board that they needed to have a motion to rescind the elementary plan.

Michael Williams asked for a motion for the elementary plan.

Denise Day made a motion to rescind the prior motion for the elementary model that added Wednesdays as an in-person to begin April 7, 2021, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Discussion:

Dan Klein suggested that this be contingent on the All-In decision and asked if it should it be tied into the current motion.

Dr Morse stated that by doing this, it allows for the administration and staff to plan for a full in, and that if it does not work the Board can come back and re-instate the elementary Wednesday in-person model.

There were no additional questions and a vote was taken.

Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Tom Newkirk asked if the plan was contingent on the Governor mandating this or if not, would we still implement this plan.

Denise Day questioned the transportation of bringing all of the kids in.

Yusi Turell asked about the impact to remote families.

Dan Klein asked if there was a way to determine how many of the eligible staff have been vaccinated, and if that is information that we can know about.

Dr. Morse stated that we have been collecting that information and that we will have a general sense of the parties that have been vaccinated.

There was no additional discussion and Michael Williams asked for a motion of the change for the professional development days.

Denise Day made a motion to move the two professional development days from the end of the school year to March 24 and April 19, 2nd by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Assistant Superintendent Vacancy Timeline

Dr. Morse stated that he is sad to do this as Todd is an awesome partner. He updated the Board on all that has happened so far with Todd's position. He referred to the timeline that they will be following for application deadline, resume review, interviews, reference checks, picking the candidate and a May 5 Board agenda item. Dr. Morse also informed the Board that Todd would be willing to assist the new person to get acclimated to the position.

Megan Deane took this opportunity to thank Mr. Allen for all that he has done for the students of the District.

Michael Williams appointed Tom Newkirk and Yusi Turell to be a part of the Assistant Superintendent search committee.

ORHS Master Schedule Plan 2021-22

Suzanne Filippone began by stating that this plan has been in the works since early fall. She wanted to assure parents that students have a choice. This plan will have the freshman and sophomores together and the juniors and seniors together, basically it allows us to create a school within a school. She referred the Board to the letter that is in their packets that outlines the process. She went on to say that this model allows more collaboration for teachers and for working together.

Denise Day asked what the student responses are so far.

Michael Williams appreciated all of the work that went into this.

Tom Newkirk asked if the high school would have a lower and higher-level faculty.

Yusi Turell asked if a sophomore would be able to request an advanced class if they want something higher.

There were no additional questions and Dr. Morse invited Josh Olstad to the podium.

ERate Bid

Josh began by stating the outside connectivity of the new middle school to the service building was not part of the original bid process. He stated that OR uses the federal ERate program and that it is based on our free and reduced lunch numbers. He went on to say that this Bid covers two projects. Wireless access points and the switches they will connect to in the new middle school, and upgrade of the district firewalls.

Al Howland confirmed that this was for the external connection to the service building.

Josh recommended that the District go with Omada for both bids and would need a motion from the Board to get quote approval.

Denise Day made a motion to approve the quote from Omada for the wireless and switch in the amount of \$93,395.20, and to approve the quote from Omada for the firewalls not to exceed \$108,274, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

C. Finance Committee Update: None

D. Business Administrator: None

MS/22 was moved to the Unanimous Consent Agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

E. Student Representative Report:

Megan Deane began by thanking Tom Newkirk for being a wonderful Board Chair and for making her feel comfortable on this Board. She also reiterated her thanks to Todd Allen and that she is glad that they are leaving together. She extended a thank you on behalf of all students. She additionally congratulated the alumni on the Board. She went on to state that the student senate response was positive to the March 8 model change and felt that it has gone well. She went on to extend a thank you to all teachers, and especially anyone listening this evening, for the wonderful job everyone has done with this change.

Megan relayed the spring activities that are being planned to include a junior and a senior outside prom on the field.

Dr. Morse also included that an outdoor strings concert is being planned.

Michael Williams requested a 5-minute break at 9:07 PM and returned to the meeting at 9:12 PM.

Other:

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Quarantine Guidelines

Dr. Morse explained to the Board that Catherine Plourde and the District nurses had prepared a presentation on this topic, but as of last night major changes occurred and he asked the Board if this could be moved to the April 7, 2021 meeting.

IX. ACTIONS

A. Superintendent Actions: None

B. Board Action Items:

Discussion:

Committee Assignment Requests

Michael Williams stated that this agenda item was moved here for discussion by the full Board and asked the Board if they had a specific request to move from an existing committee or want to be

considered for another committee. He asked that the Board think about this and we will bring it back at the next meeting with their suggestions. He asked the Board if they had any questions.

Al Howland suggested that two of the existing committees could be consolidated into two other committees. He suggested moving the District Tech committee into the Finance Committee and also move the Wellness into the Negotiation committee.

Yusi Turell stated that she would like to nominate Brian Cisneros to the Negotiation committee, she felt that with his background he would be a good fit on this committee.

Tom Newkirk stated that he would be happy to step off of that committee.

List of Policies

Denise Day moved to approve the list of policies for first read JLCJ – Concussions & Head Injuries, GEA – Hiring of Coaches, DGA – Authorized Signatures, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Discussion:

Dan Klein had previously abstained from voting on any policies related to coaches as he felt it was a routine appointment, but he heard from Dr. Morse at the policy meeting the reasoning behind making nominating coaches yearly a Board decision and asked Dr. Morse to explain.

Dr. Morse explained that a yearly appointment of coaches never places them in the category of a coach thinking that they are in a continuing contract position, and that it protects the District from a coach filing a legal claim to the job. Additionally, yearly renewals allow the AD to evaluate and determine if they are meeting the District standards of being a coach.

Brian Cisneros stated that he is in agreement that coaches should be nominated yearly by the School Board and gave an example of a recent situation that he encountered.

Dan Klein asked if in the future additional information be provided during the nomination process that would allow more detail about the coach.

Dr. Morse said that this is an easy fix and we will start to provide the additional details.

There was no additional discussion and a vote was taken.

Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

X. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Manifests Reviewed and Approved by Manifest Committee:

Denise Day and Dan Klein reviewed the manifests.

Payroll Manifest: #19 \$938,229.73

Vendor Manifest #20 \$901,186.50

Denise Day began by stating that the Long-Range Planning Committee is continuing to meet and that they still have an opening for a Madbury representative.

She also reported out on the Equity and Justice Committee and that subcommittees have formed and that different initiatives have been developed. There is a lot of positive energy and they are currently working on a charge and a mission statement.

Yusi Turell stated that the committee is also looking at not having black history month be contained to just one month, but to have it continue throughout the year. She also stated that they hope to have a leadership model by the end of the school year.

Dan Klein reported out on the Communication committee. He stated that they have already met twice and that they are an amazing group of people who are talented and wise. The committee is focused on narrowing the charge that the Board had given them. He went on to thank Holly Stark for taking on the responsibility of the meeting facilitator and getting us on track for our next steps and goals.

Dr. Morse stated that the next step is a SWOT analysis. He also wanted to recognize Amy Sterndale, Millissa Gass and Tom Elliot who are also community members that are on the committee. Dr. Morse stated that it has been great that we can tap into the expertise and strengths of the community.

Michael Williams added that the charge was very broad and asked for feedback from the Board as to whether we are on the right track.

Yusi Turell made some suggested changes to the charge that will be brought to the committee.

There was no further discussion.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

XII. CLOSING ACTIONS:

- A. Future Meeting Date: 3/24/21 – Additional Board Meeting – 7:00 PM ORHS Auditorium
3/31/21 – Manifest – 3:30 PM SAU Conference Room.
4/7/21 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM ORHS Auditorium
4/21/20 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM ORHS Auditorium

XIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3 II {If Needed}

NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A:2 {If Needed}

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Al Howland moved to Adjourn the meeting at 9:40 PM, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy L. DiFruscio
Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Schools