

Oyster River Cooperative School District
Regular Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2020

DRAFT

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

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: James Morse, Todd Allen, Sue Caswell, Suzanne Filippone, Misty Lowe, David Goldsmith, Catherine Plourde, Jay Richard

STAFF PRESENT: Kim Felch, Jim Rozycki

GUEST PRESENT: There were 3 members in the audience.

CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Tom Newkirk

Tom Newkirk introduced a 90 second musical presentation by the high school strings students

Tom Newkirk moved to the approval of the agenda and clarified that he will recommend the school Board member to the new committee. There were no additional changes suggested.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

At this time Tom introduced public comment and as there were only three, each would be allotted 3 minutes.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Craig Hirz, a Durham parent has two children in the high school and expressed his frustration for the students not returning in-person. People are frustrated since they do not know the specifics as to why decisions are not being made. He asked what needs to happen for students to return to school.

Deanna Pilkenton is also a Durham resident with four student is the district, two at the high school, one at the middle school, and one at Moharimet. She referred to the letter that she sent to the Board in support of a concurrent model being developed, and that the letter contained approximately 70 names of community members concerned about the state of the learning situation. She also stated the letter included ideas for exploration with a concurrent model.

Brook Keeler has two daughters and lives in Durham. She stated that she is done being a parent and trying to supervise the learning process. She is tired of fighting to get them to do their work. She felt that the Union may be suffering a leadership crisis. She asked the Board to renegotiate the MOA and get the children back in school as soon as possible.

There were no additional public comments and it finished at 7:15 PM.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the November 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes:

Revisions:

Dan Klein stated that the vote on Yusi's motion was 3-4, with Dan also voting in favor.

Michael Williams stated the following corrections: page 1, before his motion to accept the grant funds, we should note that Tom closed the public hearing.

Page 7 note that the student representative left the meeting after the motion to temporarily adjourn.

Page 8 remove the 11/18 meeting information from the Future Meeting Dates.

Tom Newkirk, Michael Williams and Yusi Turell also noted the vote adjustment for Yusi's motion.

Brian Cisneros moved to approve the November 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes as revised, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0. Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

Motion to approve the November 19, 2020 workshop meeting minutes:
Revisions: None

Brian Cisneros moved to approve the November 19, 2020 workshop meeting minutes as written, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0. Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS:

A. District:

Suzanne Filippone, high school principal updated the Board on the past week by having the 9th graders come into the building on Monday and Tuesday. She had 207 freshman, with half on Monday and half on Tuesday. Next week she will again have approximately the same amount of freshman come into the building on Monday and Tuesday. She thanked the members of the National Honor Society that came in and assisted the freshman with finding classrooms and meeting teachers.

Board members asked why some students were not coming in. Asked if teachers are in all week, and the reasons why if they are not there all week. Suzanne answered the Board's questions.

Kim Felch spoke about the targeted learners, and the partnership with the administrators and counselor working together to identify the students in need and the calling of parents and setting up team meetings. She stated that having counselors meeting during these individual times with these students has helped the students show improvement.

Suzanne stated that the hardest part is with the students that cannot come in, and they are individualizing their approach to each student. She also asked if parents are in need to call her. She went on to say that students are advocating for themselves.

B. Board:

Brian thinks we should make a statement on why we are making a decision, lot of assumptions being made, need to share the reason why we are making a decision, frustrating to the taxpayers, we need to make a statement.

Yusi stated that we have several moving pieces that impact the decisions we make, we should decide on a plan and launch it 2-3 weeks later, if we can say what our process is for starting a launch process there will be more comfort in the community.

Megan agrees with having a timeline, so students have an idea of what is going to happen and give them time to plan.

Denise reiterated the need for bus drivers. She stated that we do not have enough, and is reaching out to community members to apply, as it would be a tremendous help for the district.

VI. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA:

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

Dan Klein asked that the list of coaches and volunteers be pulled from the consent agenda for additional discussion.

No other changes suggested.

A vote was taken which resulted in a 7-0 to approve with student representative voting in the affirmative.

However, since there was no motion or second, these policies will be considered again at the next regular meeting on December 16, 2020.

VII. DISTRICT REPORTS:

A. Assistant Superintendent Reports: None

B. Superintendent's Report:

Dr Morse stated that the Barrington School District would like to meet with the Board on December 9, 2020 at 6:00 PM to discuss Barrington Parental concerns related to HS Remote Learning and Tuition Costs. Suzanne Filippone will also be at this meeting. Megan, the student representative asked if she should be there. Dr Morse stated that she is not required, but if she wanted to join that was fine.

Dr. Morse read the memo he sent to the Board on Tuesday, outlining the results of the holiday travel. He stated that out of 415 staff, only 11 staff members traveled over the holiday. He commended all of the faculty and staff for not traveling. He went on to explain how tenuous the elementary structure is now. We have 3 drivers who are out on quarantine, 2 teachers at MOH, 2 teachers and 2 support staff at Mast Way. This impacted a total of 9 staff and 22 students. Misty will need to cover a classroom teacher on Thursday and Friday. He went on to state that Misty and David are doing a great job with their staff and keeping their buildings operating.

Board members asked what will happen if we do not have enough bus drivers and if parents would need to drive students to school? Will we hire additional paraeducators for additional support, and what would that cost be, is the money available in this year's budget, and would the positions be until the end of June of 2021.

Dr Morse stated that it would probably mean there would be tremendous delays in the start of school, and students would show up late. We are transporting a little over 600 students now and normally we would be transporting 1400 students.

Dr Morse asked the Board for permission to hire two paraeducators that could float between the elementary schools at a cost of approximately \$40,000, and that these positions would be until the end of the current school year.

Denise Day made a motion to authorize the superintendent to hire two additional support staff to float between the elementary schools, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0. Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

Dr Morse asked the Board to authorize the negotiating team to meet with ORAA.

He also informed the Board that next Monday night he will meet with the Durham Town Council to update them on the budget. He is also in the process of setting up meetings with the Madbury and Lee Select Boards to do the same.

Dr. Morse continued his report out with review of the NESDEC enrollment report and suggested we look at just 3 years of the data. Beyond that they diverge from those of the long-range planning committee. Denise commented on the birth to kindergarten figures.

There was no further discussion and the meeting moved forward.

C. Finance Committee Update:

Al Howland reported the Finance committee has met twice since the last Board meeting and last night's meeting was with the towns. The Town of Durham was represented by Jim Lawson and Todd Selig. The Towns of Madbury and Lee were not able to attend. The real challenge will be when we meet with Lee and Madbury due to the loss of state aid.

D. Business Administrator: None

Tom Newkirk moved the meeting to the student report.

D. Student Representative Report:

Megan Deane informed the Board that she met with the student senate and asked if the Board was interested in meeting with them. The student senate's next meeting is on Wednesday, December 9, 2020 from 8:15 – 9:15. This will give the Board the opportunity to listen to what they have to say. The District will provide a telephone number to call in if they want to. Students were asked what they thought about the way they are coming into the building. They want to be back in but are not sure if it is worth it to come in for only 2 hours one day a week.

~~F. Other:~~

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Finalize 2021-22 School Year Budget

Al Howland suggested the Michael Williams make a motion to approve the 2021-22 budget and then have a discussion.

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Michael Williams made a motion to approve option 3 using \$500,000 from the emergency fund and reallocating \$50,000 to the SAU budget, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Discussion:

Al Howland went through the adjustments that were made to the budget to make a contingency using the CIP items. By adding these items to the \$100,000 that is already in there for PPE, we would have \$352,000 in the contingency fund. If we do not utilize it in the contingency fund, we will continue to use it for the CIP items. Al went on to say that there was a change by the state in how we can use emergency funds. We now just need to have a public hearing. The only thing added was the \$50,000 for the opportunity to have someone set up a communicating plan. The goal was supposed to be to take expenses with offsetting revenues and develop the 3 options.

To get to 3% we need to use \$250,000 which is option 2. The towns of Lee and Madbury received extra funds last year and will be losing them this next budget year. As a result, the tax impact spikes. There is no way to completely offset this loss, so doing the best we could by using another \$250,000 and apply it to tax relief. Al went through the 2 scenarios. The impact is 2.39% but because of the loss of revenues it is a greater impact on the towns.

Denise expressed her frustration that the updated information from the finance committee was not sent out prior to the meeting so that there would be time to review it. Tom feels that this was consistent with what the Board asked the committee to do. Yusi would have liked to have a cover sheet to explain what was done to change the budget. She asked if we could access the emergency funds this year? Additionally, she asked if we should be budgeting more funds to overcome anything, we need for the spring to bring students back.

There was a lengthy discussion that was followed by Tom Newkirk calling for a vote.

Motion passed with a vote of 6-1 with Denise Day voting against. Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

FY22 Default Budget

Sue Caswell explained the Benefit Stabilization Fund.

Sue Caswell explained to the Board that she took a conservative approach when developing the default budget. She did not include the higher salaries that were in the current budget. You could argue that the salaries for last year are part of the default and she can go back and include them. The default is lower than the proposed budget by \$92,795. The Board agreed that the conservative approach is how it should be calculated.

Draft 2021 Budget Warrant Article

The Board reviewed the draft warrant article and asked some clarifying questions, which Sue answered. The Board agreed to the seven warrant articles and will be given a clean copy at their next meeting.

Tom Newkirk reviewed the committee assignment chart and stated that he would take the policy committee, Denise Day would take the Sabbatical Committee, they would add the equity committee

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representatives: Denise Day and Yusi Turell and add the Instructional Model committee representatives: Tom Newkirk and Yusi Turell under Representatives to Other Groups. Dan Klein would return to the negotiation committee. Michael Williams suggested moving the Finance committee under Public meeting groups.

Tom Newkirk made a motion to approve the revised Committee Assignment List, 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative

Facility Use by Outside Groups

Jim Morse stated that Jim Rozycki will be presenting for both him and Andy, but that Suzanne would be available to answer any questions if needed.

Jim Rozycki began by explaining where we are currently and felt that breaking them up by schools would be easiest way to explain. He stated that Andy has full intentions of using the high school and middle school for practices during the week. Track teams would be using the gym on Saturday which means that only Sunday would be available at the high school. Other spaces would be a challenge to allow for use. The middle school has no parking out back, therefore using the gym would be a challenge. If they park on Coe Drive, they will have to walk through the construction site along a very narrow walkway. Usage of the front door would mean people would be walking in other areas of the building to access the gym and this widens the cleaning and sanitizing that would need to happen. The elementary schools are using the gym for storage so it would be a challenge to allow someone to use them. That being said, the only area for outside usage is the middle school gym. Cleaning would be a challenge and the time needed would be increased. It would involve overtime and HVAC usage and cost would increase.

There was a brief discussion and Tom moved the meeting forward.

IX. ACTIONS

Superintendent Actions:

A. Board Action Items:

Discussion:

Approval of List of Coaches and Volunteers

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve the list of winter coaches and volunteers, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 5-0-2 with Michael Williams and Dan Klein abstaining and the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Approval of List of Policies

REVISED 01/11/21

Denise Day explained that there is only one policy GCRD – Tutoring for Pay for first read and one policy GCQB – Publication of Creation of Educational Materials for deletion. Policy BHE – School Board Use of Emails will go back to the Policy committee at their next meeting.

Tom Newkirk made a motion to move the list of policies as a block for first read and deletion, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

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Jim Morse clarified that the request by Michael Williams to verify that all policies are on the website was completed and that none are missing.

X. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES: None

A. Manifests Reviewed and Approved by Manifest Committee:

Denise Day and Dan Klein reviewed the manifests.

Payroll Manifest #

Vendor Manifest # 12 \$1,986,218.12

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

XII. CLOSING ACTIONS:

A. Future Meeting Date: 12/9/20 Meeting with Barrington – 6:00 PM
 12/16/20 Regular Meeting – ORHS Auditorium

~~**XIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3 {if needed}**~~

~~**NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A:2 {if needed}**~~

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Brian Cisneros made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m., 2nd by Michael Williams. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with student representative voting in the affirmative.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy L. DiFruscio

Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Schools