

REVISED February 21, 2023

**Oyster River Cooperative School Board
Regular Meeting Minutes**

February 1, 2023

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Michael Williams, Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Yusi Turell, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Paige Burt

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Catherine Plourde, Sue Caswell, Rebecca Noe, Jay Richard, Misty Lowe, David Goldsmith

STAFF PRESENT: Jon Bromley

GUEST PRESENT:

ABSENT:

I. CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Michael Williams

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Michael Williams added two items to the "Discussion & Action Items" of the agenda:

- Rescheduling of the March 15th school board meeting
- Additional non-public meeting "Facilities" before "Superintendent Evaluation"

Michael Williams moved to approve the amended agenda, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Louis Grondin of Lee and Chairman of Lee Energy (LE) committee was impressed by the middle school's net zero. He said it sets a great example to the state and nation and he hopes many school districts follow this lead. His favorite feature is the parking lot solar array, and he proposed that the district install one at Mast Way Elementary school too. He pointed out it is an ideal roof since it is large and continuous with little obstruction, and he felt that after initial funding it would earn money for many years. Lee residents voted in favor to add a solar array at the Transfer Station with 83% of support, so he felt residents would also support one at Mast Way school.

Donald Anderson of Lee and member of LE committee gave his support for a solar array at Mast Way. He felt it's a long-term investment and now would be the time to get it financed. He added that beyond saving electricity, the district can save money and increase its renewable energy certificate credits. He argued that future taxpaying students are outspoken about renewable energy efforts and looked to the board for support too.

Katrin Kasper of Lee seconded the focus on more energy saving opportunities in the town. She reminded the listening audience that Friday will be the last day to submit your name to run for a school board seat.

Carol Doering of Lee and retired teacher gave her support for the solar array proposal. She pointed out it is a great opportunity to promote educational lessons on energy and sustainability. She credited our community for being resilient and adaptable in the climate crisis.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Day moved to approve the January 18th, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Denise Day moved to approve the January 18th, 2023, Non-Public Meeting Minutes, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District

David Goldsmith of Moharimet and Misty Lowe from Mast Way provided a kindergarten registration update to families. Between February 6th – 14th residents will be able to register for the 2023-24 school year at either school's front office. Although they will be accepting registrations into fall, early registration is helpful for planning purposes. Paperwork will be shared between the schools with consideration to school proximity, siblings attending, and class size. Placements will be finalized and released in August. If you are currently living in the area, please register your **upcoming kindergartener** at either school during one of the following days/times (note there is an evening and morning option):

- 2/6 - 10-3pm
- 2/7 - 10-3pm
- 2/8 - 10-6pm
- 2/14 - 8-3pm

Misty shared that during the recent Global School Play Day Mast Way carried on its tradition of incorporating play to instruction across the school settings. Progress reports will be going home this Friday and parents should sign and return the envelope. This year there is an emphasis on writing that goes along with the school wide theme of Communication. Students have been participating in letter writing activities to promote handwriting and writing skills. Students formed pen pals, and letters are mailed at the school wide post office and delivered by student post masters.

David shared that Mr. Davis recently spoke to twelve community members about the history and process of maple sugaring to carry on the longevity of the program. Soon, the school will be celebrating Reading Week with a visit by author Jerry Pallotta who will be speaking to all grades. Progress reports will be sent home on Friday, along with STAR reports. Parents, please sign and return the envelope.

Jay Richard of ORMS announced on Feb. 2nd the Grade 5 Music Concert will feature performances by band, chorus, and strings at 7:00pm. Also, on Feb. 2nd the 8th Grade Info Night at ORHS will take place from 6:00-7:30pm. Progress and STAR reports will be sent home this Friday or Monday at the latest. Students can look forward to the Feb. 13th – 17th Kindness Week which will include guest speakers and activities promoting positive interactions. Dean Rubine, coach of ORMS Math Counts, will take twelve qualifying teams to a state tournament this weekend.

Rebecca Noe of ORHS let parents know that the Program of Studies was published last week, and students have until Feb. 17th to request their classes for next year. In March all students will meet individually with their counselor to have the opportunity to review their schedule and make any changes. Rebecca acknowledged Shannon Caron and the counseling team for their recent presentation to the 8th grade. Students were engaged and asked a lot of great questions. In an effort to streamline classes for families of Freshmen, a Program of Studies tailored specifically to 9th Grade will be published soon. Electronic report cards will be available this Friday and Power School directions to access them will be included in this week's newsletter. On Feb. 2nd there will be an 8th Grade Information Night at 6pm in the ORHS auditorium. It will feature a 60-minute presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. Recently the Boys' and Girls' Basketball teams held their Faculty Appreciation Night with exciting wins. Caitlin Klein made a buzzer beater shot and the boys pulled ahead in the last few minutes of their game. Regarding CTE, students currently taking classes will need to reapply for next year. All students will learn about the CTE opportunities during their class meetings, and they will have until Feb. 17th to sign up for a program of study.

B. Board

Heather Smith announced the Moharimet PTO's annual Winter Carnival to take place this Saturday Feb. 4th from 1-4pm at ORHS. It will feature games, a bake sale, a jazz band performance and more. The event is open to anyone in the community and is free of charge.

Denise Day gave a shout out to the communications staff of the ORHS magazine *Mouth of the River*. As always, she was blown away by the quality of the articles.

Chair Michael Williams reflected on bond rates from 3 years ago. Interest rates have gone from 1.9-2.10% at the time of our purchase to 4.71% as of October, which amounts to \$20 million in interest.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)**

Suzanne Filippone thanked Shannon Caron and the counselors for all their transition work including their recent 8th grade presentation at ORMS. She was excited to be a part of the planning meetings with Jay Richard and faculty for the upcoming Kindness Week.

Youth Climate Leadership Presentation

Suzanne recognized the Sustainability Club members and thanked them for the work they are doing to make a difference for the local and global community. She thanked Mr. Bromley for his commitment to student enrichment.

Representatives from the ORHS Sustainability Club gave a presentation to the board on their experience at Youth Climate Leaders Academy. Emily Walsh, Abby Owens, Caitlin Lynch, Chloe Hawkes, Grace Webb, Avery Merrill, and Hazel Stasko traveled to Vermont and attended the academy's two-day program on climate-based projects. They collaborated with other schools and accessed mentors with extensive knowledge to tackle challenges related to "Transportation", "Food Waste", and "Education, Outreach, and Engagement." Within those topics they identified issues specific to ORHS and created meaningful ideas for solutions.

For example, idling was identified as an area of concern for transportation. They discussed having no idling signs and information about how harmful it is to the environment. They also looked at the root of the problem, which is the bottleneck effect of the parking lot and drop off/pick up areas. They felt the number of single occupancy cars is contributing to this dilemma and felt it would be helpful to reduce cars and encourage carpooling, bike riding, walking, and bus riding. They plan to survey students to find out why single occupancy vehicle use is predominant in order to further address the issue.

Regarding the topic of food waste, to support sustainable agriculture practices they will be presenting at this week's Community Dinner, which will include locally sourced foods. As far as composting goes, while there have been great efforts to increase composting and reduce contamination there is still more work that needs to be done. They discussed a greater emphasis on education through class presentations, drafting curriculum, and social media. Recently the composting bins were improved with clearer signage and a more noticeable bright green color for better identification. Next, they plan to assist students with sorting to teach and reinforce the practice. Currently the school is in contract with Mr. Fox, a composting facility in Lee, however, they wonder if a more local compost vendor with connections to UNH would be possible. For students to see the final product and know how the soil is being used could result in greater buy in and participation.

Lastly, the group looked at how to address the current culture around school sustainability. They plan to create goals and improve communication by expanding their network and using multiple media forms, as well as focusing on greater collaboration. For example, they are working with the district Sustainability Committee to partner on initiatives, and they plan to improve communication through monthly community newsletters, Instagram, and reaching out to the middle and elementary schools.

Overall, students felt their experience gave them valuable skills, teamwork, collaboration, knowledge, and friendships.

Board members expressed their appreciation to the students for their hard work and Yusi asked if their experience connects to classroom learning. Various students responded by saying that public speaking skills, working with surveys and graphs, and approaching issues through different perspectives are all relevant to ORHS classes, especially in science, math, and social studies.

Suzanne reminded the listening audience of the Community Dinner taking place on Feb. 2nd. Currently there are 250 signed up and there is still time to register.

Suzanne said all kinds of community and curricular work is going on within the district and she thanked all the faculty that are involved. She appreciates the before and after schoolwork taking place for students.

In regard to progress reports, Heather requested a parent guide to understanding the STAR reports.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Morse announced they have advertised for Sue Caswell's replacement and during the next few weeks he will be screening candidates and conducting reference checks. The board can expect a candidate recommendation on March 1st.

Dr. Morse informed the listening audience that in the second semester there will be changes to the grade 5-12 Quick Tip reporting process for concerning behavior. Due to the seriousness of the reports he is receiving, and the number that were not able to be followed up on, he can no longer promise anonymity. The district is mandated by law to report concerning behavior and to do so, he will only honor confidentiality as legally allowable. Statements made on the laptop will be traced to students and parents calling in will need to provide their name so he can follow up on concerns. Although it is a radical change, Dr. Morse feels it is critically important in order to protect students.

Dr. Morse shared his excitement for the upcoming Community Dinner stating how amazing it will be to have over 250 attendees.

C. Business Administrator

Sue Caswell spoke about the progress being made in the conversion to new financial software noting that over 350 hours were spent in training. Although there have been a few hiccups with the new system they have worked through them, and the process gets better each time they run payroll. She thanked employees for being very patient with the new look of their payroll information. Sue recognized Sabrina Lichtenwalner and Tim Gehling for their long days and hard work. She also gave a special thanks to Theresa Proia for stepping in and helping whenever needed. The district is fortunate to have such dedicated employees at the SAU office.

Sue stated the winter storm presented some challenges with systems being strained. Power from generators to boilers were an issue and there were reports of system failures that needed to be reset. Despite the problems encountered, they were able to successfully fix them and reopen school on January 25th. As a result of the storm, improvements to minimize the risk of further winter challenges have been identified. A better communication plan has been discussed and they have appointed a willing and capable staff member to serve as a mechanical specialist.

D. Student Representative Report

Paige Burt reiterated the Community Dinner starting at 5:00pm tomorrow night at ORHS. The cost of the meal is \$8 per person and \$20 per family. Recently, students participated in the 16th annual Poetry Out Loud contest in which Breanna Clough received runner up and Julianna Cun received first place. Last month's announcement of a Lip Sync competition in February should be disregarded since it has been postponed until to March. Student Senate will be holding a community discussion around mental health during the evening of March 2nd. The event will include panel discussions with students and counselors.

E. Finance Committee Report – None provided

F. Other – None provided

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – Michael Williams asked if any items needed to be discussed separately and the board had no concerns.

- Policy for second read/adoption: BGA – Policy Development System and Procedure BGA-R – Policy Review/Evaluation/Adoption and Policy for Deletion: BGC – Policy Review and Evaluation.

Michael Williams made a motion to approve the Unanimous Consent Agenda, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

School Nutrition Director Letter of Retirement

Nutrition Director Doris Demers submitted a letter of retirement to the district.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve the Nutrition Director's Letter of Retirement, 2nd by Matt Bacon.

Brian stated the motion is with great regret.

Yusi Turell gave her deep gratitude to Doris for providing nutritious, sustainable food not only daily but also during a pandemic, and she thanked her for all her hard work over the years serving the district.

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

Elementary Assistant Student Service Director resignation

Assistant Student Service Director Brian Ryan submitted a letter of resignation to the district.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve the Elementary Assistant Student Service Director Resignation, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Yusi expressed her gratitude to Brian and his time in the district, highlighting his broader awareness of DEI, SEL, and mental health.

Dr. Morse stated Brian is an incredibly heartfelt person who cares deeply about students and staff, and he will be missed.

Procedures for Management of Electric Vehicle Chargers at OR Middle School.

Dr. Morse explained that as part of the ORMS construction project, six electric vehicle car chargers were installed. They are not commercial high-speed chargers, rather they are equivalent to those one would install at their home. For this reason, they charge at a rate of 30-40 miles per hour on a 48-amp circuit. Dr. Morse felt at this time the chargers have little financial impact to the district, but over time they could become costly. Currently, four staff members at the middle school are using the chargers. They are on a timer that comes on at 6am and shuts down at 5pm. He estimated that at the current usage cost of .36 cents per kwh to be approximately \$2 per day.

Dr. Morse asked the board for their thoughts on whether the district should charge or not charge for electricity use.

Denise Day shared she has no issue with staff and visitors using the charger but showed concern for widespread use by the university.

Dr. Morse shared that Bill Sullivan has volunteered to monitor the charger and keep a register of those using it.

Dan Klein suggested an opportunity for users to donate to the cost using the Titan System as a short-term solution.

Brian Cisneros suggested they continue to set a timer from 6am – 5pm to deter residents and UNH students from using it.

Michael Williams felt that the charger created an equity issue since not all schools have one and not all faculty use one. He proposed they adopt a fee schedule and hoped that down the road district vehicles will use the chargers.

Michael Williams made a motion to charge a rate of \$2 a day to use the electric vehicle chargers at ORMS, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion failed 3-4-0 with Michael Williams, Matt Bacon and Dan Klein voting in the affirmative and Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Yusi Turell and Heather Smith opposing. The student rep voted in the affirmative.

Dr. Morse proposed for Bill Sullivan to monitor the usage rate so they will have a sense of how much and long it is being used. The conversation will be revisited at a future time when they have more information.

Comprehensive Update on Status of School Board Goals and to Identify which Goals to Recommend for Changes.

Suzanne Filippone provided the following update on school board goals:

1. Superintendent Transition – A planning committee has been established and Catherine Plourde has been appointed leader.
2. Communications – Josh Olstad and Genevieve Brown have begun meeting with people and looking at calendars to consolidate and organize a district calendar for a soft launch. A best practices handbook is in the making and an update regarding distribution and training will be provided in spring 2023.
3. Curriculum, Instruction, and Competency-Based Learning & Reporting – Jay Richard is working with faculty for a feedback form that will be from parents and students regarding the changes made to reporting this year. Transition planning work for 8th-9th grade continues and HS competencies have been updated. Competencies for middle school have been reviewed and they are discussing publication.
4. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) – Rachael collected data from teachers to devise professional development plans and put a timeline of PD in place. Her year in review includes performances set by the board as well as the initiatives she has taken on outside the scope of the job. Rachael has established networks and has made presentations at the state level.

In response to board members wanting more information about where the district falls in curriculum review and development, it was suggested that the board receive an overview of scope & sequence followed by a full workshop. Suzanne and Dr. Morse will provide an updated to the current curriculum cycle. Yusi requested a list of the main tasks remaining on the way to a stable K-12 competency-based system and each task's percent complete. Dr. Morse said that he and Suzanne would craft a progress report format to share with the Board for review.

Rescheduling of the March 14th Board Meeting

Chair Michael Williams made the board aware that the newly elected members would not be able to attend the March 14th meeting and suggested moving the date. Denise Day proposed moving the meeting to March 22nd and confirmed the space would be available. Board members discussed the importance of including the new board members and not pushing the meeting out any further than the 22nd.

Denise Day made a motion to move the regularly scheduled board meeting from March 14th to the 22nd, 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed 5-0-2 with Yusi Turell and Michael Williams abstaining and the student representative voting in the affirmative.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Manifest Committee met and completed the following manifests.

Payroll Manifest #14 Total is \$931,450.71
 Payroll Manifest #15 Total is \$1,152,613.75
 Vendor Manifest #16 Total is \$1,485,949.93

Denise Day shared that the DEIJ committee met last night and held interesting conversations around topics for the spring presentation.

Matt Bacon announced that the district Wellness Committee will hold a Teams meeting on Monday, Feb. 6th at 4pm.

Michael Williams stated that in terms of full year and half year sabbaticals the faculty is generally more interested in half year. For this reason, the board may want to consider changes to that policy.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None provided

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

A. Future Meeting Dates: February 7, 2023 – Deliberative Session – 7:00 PM MS Recital Hall
February 15, 2023 – Regular Meeting @ 7:00 PM MS Recital Hall
March 1, 2023 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM MS Recital Hall

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

- Facilities (added to the agenda)
- Superintendent Evaluation

NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2 I {If Needed}

Michael Williams made a motion to enter into Non-Public Session at 8:45 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c), for a discussion surrounding facility use, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed 7-0 by roll call vote.

Returned to public session at 9:06 PM.

Michael Williams made a motion to enter into a Non-Public Sessions at 9:07 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c), for a discussion surrounding the Superintendent Evaluation, 2nd by Yusi Turell. Motion passed 7-0 by roll call vote.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Heather Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 pm, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Karyn Laird, Records Keeper