

OUUSD BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom

November 5, 2020

Present:

Board Members: Angela Colbeth, Danielle Corti, Carol Cottrell, Timm Judas, Chelsey Perry

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Jean Wheeler Robin Wozny

Others: Molly Sargent, Marvin Harrison, Bud Haas, Monique Priestly, and other members of the public

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Danielle Corti, Chair. Those present were welcomed, and the protocols of Zoom meetings were reviewed. Upon reviewing the VSBA recommendations, it is recommended that votes be done by roll call, so that will be practice going forward. The Board members and Administration introduced themselves.
- II. Board Business
 - A. The agenda was reviewed and approved
 - B. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Chelsey Perry to approve the Board minutes of October 21, 2020. Motion voted on and approved unanimously.
 - C. Correspondence
 1. Letter received from Oxbow student Taya Sevene regarding the school's dress code.
 2. Letter received from Oxbow student Molly Sargent regarding the importance of offering a course on in-depth personal finance. Jean Wheeler: If it were required for all students, we would be need to hire an additional teacher. There may be ways to do a personal finance class through alternative pathways. She invited Molly to meet with her and talk about a more intentional way of teaching that.
 - a. J. Wheeler also would be happy to meet with some students and discuss updating the dress code into today's world. Emilie Knisley: It's a great idea to modernize the language in the dress code.
 - b. Danielle Corti: The Board handles the policies for the school, and the dress code is more a building policy.
 - c. Timm Judas: A few years ago there was a partnership with WRSB and a person came from the bank and did classes on personal finance. Marvin Harrison: He appreciated Molly's letter, and it was a personal passion of his to have something required in the curriculum. It needs to be a class and not just a guest speaker. Jean Wheeler: There is a personal finance class, but it's not required. Students do get take it, but it's not required for graduation.
 - d. Emilie Knisley: The three high schools have different graduation requirements, so that would be an Oxbow decision at this point. Graduation requirements then go to the Board for approval.
- III. Public Comment

A. Bud Haas: Had requested a proposed change to Article 3. D. Corti: That will be on a future agenda. B. Haas: We need to do that sooner than later. He noted that Article 4 is on the ballot but hasn't been mentioned on the notices. D. Corti: Will add that piece in.

IV. Information

A. Financial Update from 1st Quarter (Emilie Knisley)

1. Comparison of expense and revenue this year as compared to last year

a. Expense is pretty similar

b. Revenue—The District is down \$1,300,000 because it is not getting revenue from the towns nor the full amount from the Ed Fund. About \$350,000 is on hand. Payables that will be paid this week, which will take most of that. The District will need to borrow to meet the November 15th and 30th payroll, as well as pay a few other things that are due. We will need to take another prior expense note, which has been approved by the Board to get through December. It is anticipated that we will require \$1 million to get through the end of December. A second prior expense note has been requested, and it's in process through the bank.

2. MAC grant money—from the Dept. of Health. It is an allocation to the SU and has certain spending priorities around student health—physical, social-emotional, etc. A team from the SU meet and decide how they would like to spend the money. \$271,000 is currently in the fund. \$55,000 is for COVID coordination. Susie Tann is the COVID coordinator for the District, and a good bit of that goes to Susie. Timm Judas: Is every school represented on the committee? E. Knisley: This year it will be somewhat re-formed because there was so much turnover in the nursing staff SU-wide. Members of the committee do not need to be a nurse.

3. COVID--19 funds. Three revenue streams make up the COVID funds. The SU is not sitting on any funding. We have to go through the process of applying for how we will use the COVID funds. Once the document has been executed, we will go through the process of claiming money from the State. Some claims need to be done by December 31st, and others have a longer time period. Timm Judas: Is Susie putting in a lot more hours than were provided in the grant? Emilie: Yes, and we have already taken care of that.

4. Sub Rate: Melanie Elliott's recommendation is \$13.50 per hour. Perhaps we would want to consider an incentive of a higher rate after 10 days. E. Knisley: We could try to claim sub wages as COVID expenses and recoup anything we can. D. Corti: We have until September to make a decision on a rate change. Carol Cottrell: Would it be possible to get a breakdown as to what it would cost for \$11.75 (minimum wage to take effect soon), \$13.50, and \$15.00?

5. Budget schedule—The SU first draft is done at the December meeting, and the 2nd draft will be ready for the January meeting. BMU and Thetford have Town Meeting Day votes. Their budgets need to be warned and in the paper by January 21st. OUUSD votes typically in April. Waits River votes in May. The window to have the OUUSD budget warned is March 4-14. The goal for starting

the OUUSD budget is the beginning of January and finishing in early March. Equalized pupil information comes out in December, and the Common Level of Appraisal will be available in late December.

V. Discussion

A. Committees

1. Finance. T. Judas asked if there are community members present at the OESU budget meetings? E. Knisley: We will try to get more folks to be there this year, since there isn't a clear understanding as to what the OESU entails. It was suggested that the Finance committee include the trust funds. It was suggested that two community members from Newbury and two from Bradford be on the committee. It was suggested roles and responsibilities be spelled out. It was suggested that meetings be posted and minutes be taken and made available. Principals are welcome to be at the committee meetings, but not required. D. Corti will make suggested changes to the Committee's charge and send it to Board members to read.

2. Community/School Engagement: Thinking about student representation on the School Board. Will add roles and responsibilities.

3. Strategic Planning Committee: They want to send an electronic survey to the community and to all stake holders. Suggested "Roses", "Buds", and "Thorns". Would like to have it done before starting work on the budget. Monique Priestly has agreed to facilitate this work. D. Corti feels this can be an extremely meaningful process for our community. E. Knisley: if the committee has a draft of the questions, they can send it to the Board for discussion. Focus on long-term outcome for students. Open ended questions, for example: what do you see as our strengths? What do others say are our strengths? The Chair thanked the committee members for all their work and urged the Board members to read through the documents and offer comments. Special thanks to the Strategic Plan Committee and to Monique Priestly for her work and expertise.

B. Policy First Read

1. B8—Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students

C. Advertising

1. D. Corti will be meeting with any interested voters from 1:00-2:30 PM on Saturday afternoon, November 14th at Elizabeth's Park and then from 3:00-4:30 PM that same afternoon on the Newbury Common to discuss the proposed budget and answer any questions

2. D. Corti will share with other Board members the information she sent to *The Bridge Weekly*. After the members have looked at it, she will send it to the *Journal Opinion*.

a. Emilie Knisley: Suggested a letter to the editor of the *Journal Opinion* from the Board with information on ways this budget is different from the previous budget and some rationale for proposed changes to Article 4.

b. A live Facebook event will be set up for Monday 5:00-6:00 PM with D. Corti and E. Knisley. They will explain implications to the tax rate, talk

about the services happening at the SU, how they are so integral in the schools, and the Curriculum Framework just approved. They will also talk about the collaboration that is happening as a result of the merger, the committee work we're doing, and explain when the next budget work will start.

VI. Action Items

A. It was decided by consensus that a post card with budget update information not be sent out to voters

B. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Angela Colbeth to approve Policy A25 Delegation of Authority During State of Emergency Due to COVID-19 and Policy D22 Modes of Instruction During State of Emergency Due to COVID-19, with the insertion of "quarterly" under Responsibilities of the Superintendent. Motion voted on and approved unanimously

VII. Public Comment—None

VIII. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Timm Judas to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. Motion voted on and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.