

## OUUSD BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom

April 14, 2021

Present:

Board Members: Maegan Ballou, Angela Colbeth, Danielle Corti, Carol Cottrell, Chelsey Perry

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Robin Wozny, Marla Ianello, Linda Metcalf, Nicole Bell, Melanie Rhoads

Others: Emmy and Rick Hausman, Monique Priestly, Kristen Lang, and other members of the public

- I. Those present were welcomed.
- II. Newly elected Board members Maegan Ballou and Carol Cottrell were sworn in by Justice of the Peace Monique Priestly.
- III. The meeting was called to order at 5:42 PM by Danielle Corti, Chair. An Executive Session was added to the agenda.
- IV. Board Business
  - A. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Chelsey Perry to approve the minutes of March 24, 2021 and April 5, 2021 (informational meetings only). Motion approved with two abstentions for March 24<sup>th</sup> (Carol Cottrell and Maegan Ballou) and one abstention for April 5<sup>th</sup> (Maegan Ballou)
  - B. Communications:
    1. Tuition request from a parent. This will be discussed in Executive Session.
    2. Letter of resignation from Morgan Moore.
- V. Executive Session
  - A. Motion by Carol Cottrell, seconded by Angela Colbeth to enter Executive Session at 5:47 PM to discuss a student matter pursuant to VSA Sec 313 (a) 7. Motion voted on and approved unanimously. Accompanying the Board were Emilie Knisley and Kristen Lang.
  - B. The Board exited Executive Session at 6:03 PM
- VI. Action
  - A. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Carol Cottrell to deny the request for tuition waiver and authorize the Superintendent to reach out to the parent with options and follow-up. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
- VII. Committee Reports
  - A. School/Community Relations
    1. Monique Priestly reported that 448 surveys were received. All role and age demographics were represented. Respondents were very thorough in their responses. M. Priestly has been drafting a report to be ready by May 1. The next step is to meet with administrators of OESU. There were a number of recommendations that we not rush through major budget decisions. There were clear messages to wait and see the surveys before making major decisions for the fall. D. Corti thanked the committee and all who took the survey seriously. She is looking forward to the meeting in May.

B. School and Community Committee reports.

1. Carol Cottrell: Met with Morgan Moore at NES and shared with her what this committee might be able to do to support the school. M. Moore offered to set up a joint meeting with FONES and to also invite C. Cottrell to talk with the staff. C. Cottrell recognized that FONES is the only other group that may have a similar purpose. C. Cottrell and M. Moore were able to tease out what FONES might focus on (focus on children) and the School and Community Engagement Committee's focus to bring the wider community together to work for the common good for Newbury. Some things will dovetail and some things are unique. It was decided to wait to get new members when the committee actually has a charge. They can then make a presentation to the school and to FONES. The suggestion was made of the possibility of a Communications director for the entire OESU to share information in the most effective way.
2. Timm Judas sent word that he had spoken to Jean Wheeler at OHS, and she had sent him some material. They will meet to review that material.
3. Angela Colbeth reported meeting with Marla Ianello at Bradford Elementary. To Ms. Ianello, the role of the committee includes seeking out volunteers, seeking input from community, and sharing with community what is happening in the schools. The only committee currently at BES is the Low Forest Committee. Perhaps the student council can be utilized to get some thoughts. M. Ianello had prepared a chart, which was shared. It included suggestions of possible ways the community could be of assistance.
4. Emilie Knisley spoke of the student news network at BMU, which has a wide following on Facebook. Is there a way to involve a high school program or a tech center program?

VIII. Public Comment: None

IX. Information

A. Superintendent Report

1. Melanie Rhoads: The Principal Search Committee will include the Supt., HR, one OUUSD Board member, one peer principal, 1-2 parents or community member, one central Office Employee. Applications will be accepted through April 23, 2021. They hope to have first interviews May 5<sup>th</sup>, second interviews/forums May 11<sup>th</sup>, the Committee meeting on May 12<sup>th</sup>, and the week of May 17<sup>th</sup>, they hope to make an offer to the top candidate.
2. Motion by Carol Cottrell, seconded by Angela Colbeth to accept the resignation of Morgan Moore with regret, effective June 30, 2021. D. Corti thanked Ms. Moore for her years at Newbury Elementary. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
3. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Maegan Ballour to elect Carol Cottrell to serve on the hiring committee for the NES principal position. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
4. Linda Metcalf reported that we received a check from the State on March 30<sup>th</sup>, so notes have been paid off. The amount of the unassigned surplus is \$282,358.00. The Board will make some decisions as to how to use this surplus.

5. Incoming Asst. Supt. Randy Gawell is making plans to move here and start work in July. The SU is working on Transition planning. Allison Kidder has hired two new Special Education coordinators to work across multiple schools. Two internal people are moving into these roles. Sherry Hoyt is planning to stay on in some capacity through the summer. She will be moving to her new home in Maine. The SU will be posting for a new administrative assistant. Melanie Rhoads and Emilie Knisley have been meeting and talking about the job description for that position. The new hire will try to take on some of the communications for the SU.

a. Case counts of COVID are the highest for the districts that they have been. Cases in students are from spread in the community. River Bend, Waits River, and BMU are remote this week. There are higher case counts to the north. Nicole Bell is planning around ESSER funds and looking at forward thinking as to how we will spend those funds. ESSER 2 and ESSER 3 are heading this way. The SU will be receiving \$2.5 million for ESSER 2 and \$6 million for ESSER 3. The funds will last through 2024. N. Bell has been doing a huge data review to see what our needs are. She has submitted the needs assessment to the Agency of Ed. She will be meeting with leadership to prioritize the needs. The themes are: extended learning (after school, summer learning, ways to enrich learning beyond the school day). We will be investing in curriculum, instructional materials, etc. D. Corti: commented on appreciating renaming the new focus "Redesign" instead of "Recovery". We are looking at it as an opportunity to take steps forward. This is motivating. E. Knisley: this is a way to include parents in extended learning. The hope is to start free or very low cost. We plan to start with after school and summer programs.

B. Financial Update: OESU ended with a surplus due primarily to lower costs in Special Education. There was a fund that wasn't labeled correctly in the audit, so that is being corrected. The surplus includes \$296,246 already assigned to the FY '22 budget, \$153,795 reserved and non-spendable, and \$375,977 that can be assigned to future budgets.

7. COVID Vaccination clinics are being held at Oxbow and BMU

X. Discussion

A. Bugbee Landing Trust Fund transfer. When Bradford and Newbury merged, Bugbee Landing was transferred to the town of Bradford. The Bugbee Landing Trust Fund hasn't been transferred yet. This fund is to maintain the landing. OUUSD will probably need to reach out to the Sec. of State as to how to handle the transfer. Linda Metcalf reported that Bruce Williams offered to reach out to an attorney.

1. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Maegan Ballou to charge Linda Metcalf and Bruce Williams to do some research as to how to handle the Bugbee Landing Trust Fund transfer. Motion voted on and approved unanimously

B. Budget/Finance Committee: Bruce Williams will come to that committee to update them on the trust funds. Then the information will be presented to the Board as a report.

C. Newbury Property for Outdoor Classroom: Morgan Moore: NES has used the property, called Checkerberry Lane, for a while with permission from the landowner. This year it went up for sale, and while it was for sale, the students haven't been able to use it. The teachers have done a great job this year continuing outdoor learning. M. Moore asked if there was any way of purchasing the property? Emile Knisley: ESSER 3 might be able to be used for some of these things, but it wouldn't be quick. There are surplus dollars available. We might need to get community involvement in that process. Motion by Chelsey Perry, seconded by Angela Colbeth to authorize Supt. Knisley to move forward gathering information on this property.

1. Carol Cottrell: There is town owned land called Montebello Hill, 6 acres, that has been used in the past for an outdoor classroom. Should we be looking at other possibilities? Morgan Moore: This land has been used, but it's more of a field trip and a longer walk and involves a walk on the road. With the property near the school, it's much more accessible.

2. Motion voted on and carried.

XI. Article 3 final draft.

A. The attorney suggested some changes, and D. Corti and E. Knisley think some state statutes need to be cross-checked. This will be tabled tonight and will be included in a future agenda.

XII. Public Comment

A. Chelsey Perry noted that she will not be at the last meeting at the end of this month.

B. Danielle Corti gave a public thank you to Melissa Gordon as she leaves the OUUSD Board and welcomed Maegan Ballou to the team.

XIII. Motion by Angela Colbeth, seconded by Chelsey Perry to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 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.**