

OUUSD BOARD MEETING

River Bend Career and Technical Center and via Zoom

October 13, 2021

Present:

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

Administration: Emily Knisley, Brian Emerson, Jean Wheeler, Linda Metcalf, Robin Wozny

Others: Emily Shipman, Skip Barrett, Michael Wright, Samuel Corti

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Danielle Corti, chair. Those present were welcomed, and the protocols of a Zoom meeting were reviewed.
- II. The agenda was reviewed. The River Bend stocks donation was added.
- III. Motion by Carol Cottrell, seconded by Angela Colbeth to approve the Board minutes from September 22, 2021. Motion voted on and approved with one abstention (Tim Ross)
- IV. Correspondence
 - A. Communication was received from the Newbury Town Clerk about the changes to voting rules. The School Board now has to have approval from each town in order to send ballots to every registered voter. She provided a document highlighting the changes.
 - B. Letters were received from the following students:
 1. Izaak Hathaway regarding length of lunch time
 2. Emily Gordon regarding advisory period
 3. Alexa Kosakowski regarding parking lot issues
 4. Nathan Bachus regarding school lunches
 5. Keghan Keyes regarding wearing of masks
 6. Nora Fahey regarding the need for a foreign language department
 - B. Board members thanked the students for their letters.
 1. Maegan Ballou: really appreciated the letters from the students
 2. Danielle Corti: an earlier letter regarding the dress code resulted in a policy change at Oxbow
- V. Committee Reports
 - A. Community and School Engagement. Going forward, a Board member will be designated as chair of these committees.
 1. Angela Colbeth and Danielle Corti are meeting tomorrow.
 2. Chelsey Perry: 6 people expressed interest in serving on the BES committee. She followed up. One is very interested, another has decided not to commit, and the others have not responded. She has talked with Marla Ianello as to what the school needs.
 3. Carol Cottrell: finished the tour of Newbury. They discussed thinking about members of the staff and parents as members of this committee. Things are moving along.
 4. RBCTC: M. Ballou attended her first River Bend meeting last week. She appreciated the meeting as a former RBCTC student and will share her notes at a later time.

5. Strategic Planning: will be making presentations at the respective schools in October and November. After making these presentations to the schools, there will be a public presentation at a Board meeting, tentatively in December.
6. Emily Shipman: former Bradford Elementary Board member. She is a member of the Low Forest Committee, which meets quarterly. They worked with a forester, completed the logging operation, which brought in some income, so they have a reserve fund. They plan to meet and find what the educators need to use this educational space. They will be looking to the Board as to how to use the reserve funds. This summer they got some grant funding for some projects. The Committee is excited to hear that Newbury got a property for educational purposes. The Low Forest would like to collaborate with the Newbury Forest Committee. Could there be a shared pool of consultants? Perhaps both groups could have the same policies (Low Forest has policies in place.) Last Friday, teachers from BES and NES were together for a training by Project Wild. E. Knisley: if someone is coming in to do a presentation and is not left alone with a group of students, we are still fine, as far as insurance purposes are concerned. E. Shipman: They have come up with some fundraising ideas. They are putting up a deer enclosure to study the impact of keeping the deer out of a certain section of the forest. The Low Forest Committee is willing and interested in being a resource. D. Corti thanked the committee.
7. Public Comment
 - A. Skip Barrett: Bradford had an open meeting with the Select Board. Is there a process for brainstorming ideas for using COVID Funds coming into the school? D. Corti: there was some effort to give an opportunity for community input. The funding is SU-wide rather to individual schools. E. Knisley: ESSER 1 was money for funds needed for COVID. ESSER 2 funds have to be used for mitigation for academic loss, loss of revenue or enrollment as result of COVID, learning outside the regular school day. They have been trying to hire someone, who could oversee that work. It also includes extra nursing costs, contact tracing costs. ESSER 3 is coming. It is the largest amount of money, but the guidelines for that are not available yet. S. Barrett: feels the town should share the responsibility of serving the children and families of this town. They could use about 2 dozen picnic tables at Low Forest, and Checkerberry could too. E. Knisley: asked S. Barrett to send an email regarding the picnic tables, and probably the grants could cover that. D. Corti: She is trying to work with the Select Board to get it on agenda. Funds for investing in the after-school program should be done cooperatively.
8. Michael Wright
 - A. Bradford Parks and Recreation: How can we use property to help students? There is a large section of land (10 ½ acres) that the School District owns. How can we get the community involved? The Rec Dept. is looking at having a trail from the water falls in Bradford to the Bugbee Landing.

Proposed boardwalks would cross the plant bed. Some protected plants are on the property, along with many birds and butterflies. The trail would go through the wetlands. RBCTC building program could maybe help with some of the construction. The building would take place over years. There are no regulations from zoning. Bird boxes and bat boxes could be added. M. Wright talked privately with two Select Board members, and they didn't think there would be any tax implications. S. Barrett: Over the years, it was too much of a wetland for the school to go down to, so it has never been used. M. Wright: if the school doesn't want to be responsible for the land, it could be sold to the town. It would probably be three years before get the trail could started.

9. Financial Update (Linda Metcalf)

A. Unaudited Financials FY21 YTD. Oxbow: slight increase in revenue but larger decrease in expenses. Ended up doing very well at end of budget year Newbury: revenue is down a little and expenses are pretty much flat. Showed a loss of about \$58K. Bradford Elementary: Decrease in revenue. Expenditures are pretty flat. Loss of \$80K. RBCTC: enrollment down, so revenue was down. They did a really good job of controlling their expenses. \$30K loss in revenue. In totality, revenue is very close to budget. Expenditures are close to budget. There is a surplus of \$185K unaudited.

B. Brian Emerson: RBCTC has gotten a lot of donations in its 50-year history. They had an offer of stocks and brought this to the RAB. Their motion was that the gift be accepted from the anonymous donor, and they will be giving a scholarship in memory of the donor's Dad. The RAB voted to apply 50% of the stocks into River Bend scholarships for agriculture and forestry, and to use the other 50% to pay off the tractor and to buy the ton truck that Oxbow is trading in. B. Emerson ran this by the donor, and she is fine with that. The tractor is used for agriculture purposes, and the ton truck will also be used for agriculture and forestry purposes. Motion by C. Cottrell, seconded by M. Ballou to accept the donation of stocks and authorize the RAB Board to use 50% to fund a scholarship and 50% to pay off the tractor and to buy the ton truck, as RAB recommends. Motion voted on and approved unanimously

10. Superintendent's Report

A. A Flu clinic is planned with Little Rivers and Dartmouth School of Medicine. We have seen a pretty big uptick in COVID cases throughout OESU. This places a demand on school staff. It is a challenging period, more challenging than last year. Contact tracing has become more complicated because of tracking vaccination status, because that impacts how people are quarantining. We are starting surveillance testing. There are concerns about the Test to Stay program. Instead of staying home, a child can do a quick swab when they arrive in the morning. If OK, they can stay at school. School nurses are so busy trying to contact trace and surveillance test. They have money to hire extra help, but there is nobody to hire to help. E. Knisley talked with Dr. Simone at LRHC. They will have vaccination clinics in the schools as

soon as vaccine is available for younger students. Hopefully it will be available in early November. This is the third school year of this. A lot of the positive test results are not coming back through surveillance testing.

11. Committees
 - A. Sick Bank: Chelsey Perry was elected on a motion by C. Cottrell, seconded by M. Ballou
 - B. Finance: Tim Ross and Danielle Corti were elected on a motion by A. Colbeth, seconded by C. Cottrell
 - C. Facilities: Maegan Ballou and Danielle Corti were elected on a motion by C. Cottrell, seconded by T. Ross
 - D. Newbury Forest Committee: Tim Ross was elected on a motion by C. Cottrell, seconded by C. Perry.
 - E. Low Forest Committee: Angela Colbeth was previously elected
12. Annual Report Format
 - A. The Supt. has been notified that there is a slot available with a company that sets up reports. This company prepares and sends the report to all in the community, as well as a digital copy for the website. It can be used it as a recruiting tool. We can include statements from alumni of what the school meant to them. The Board was asked to think about this. We could also do a hybrid. They could do an insert of financial information if the Board wished. Cost is pretty comparable to what we are spending now. The Board asked Supt. Knisley to have this company save the spot.
13. Policy for Second Read
 - A. Policy A20: Board Meetings, Agenda Prep and Distribution. This will be updated with the Board meeting schedule as the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month at 5:30 PM. The designated spaces where the agenda will be posted are the Bradford and Newbury post offices. This will be brought up for a vote at the next meeting
14. The Insurance company is drafting a letter to Tim Woodworth and Sukie Knight. It will be sent to them via registered mail.
15. Public Comment—None
16. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41PM

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes

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