

MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD (MVSD)

Remotely VIA Google Meet

June 2, 2020

6:30 PM

Present: Board members joining the meeting remotely, Board Chairperson, Chris Shepard, Highgate, Don Collins (Swanton) Vice Chair Devin Bachelder, (Franklin), Steve Scott, (Highgate), Peter Magnant (Franklin), Joanne Johnston, (Franklin), Terri O'Shea (Swanton), Meaghan Conly (Swanton) and Jen Chevalier (6:35pm) (Highgate)

Others Joining Remotely: Julie Regimbal, Superintendent of Schools, Lora McAllister, Business Manager, Jay Hartman, Principal of MVU, Jen Desorgher, MVSD Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Dan Palmer, MVU Co- Principal, Kosha Patel, Dir of Curriculum, Tania Hayes, Dir of Student Services, Wendy Cunningham, Dir of Early Childhood Services and Homeless Liason, Yeshua Pastina, Incoming Highgate Principal, and Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary

Call the Meeting to Order- Chris Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

Agenda Review-Terri O'Shea suggested talking about the performance review for the Superintendent. Chris Shepard stated that they would like to schedule a board retreat, and this could be an agenda item.

Consent Agenda

Approval of the Minutes

Action: Donald Collins moved, seconded by Terri O'Shea to approve the May 19th, 2020 board minutes as presented. The board approved the minutes on an 8-0 vote.

Presentations

MVU Administrative Updates

Dan Palmer explained the graduation process that the administration committee has developed for the High School Seniors. The students have picked up their caps and gowns and the majority of the seniors will be attending. They will have a drive-up graduation ceremony for June 11th and 12th. The ceremony will take place from 5-8 PM at the island in front of the school. There will be a stage that the graduates will walk across, pick up their cover for their diploma, stop for photos and then have their picture taken by Cold Hollow Photography and then get back into their vehicles. They have rented an 80-foot-long tent and the event will be streamed via Facebook. Joanne Johnston thanked the administration for all their preparation that they have done to make the graduation a memorable one.

Superintendent's Updates

Julie Regimbal stated that she had graduation included in her newsletter. Most of the summer programming, tutoring, and Crossroads will be virtual. In person instruction is a challenge between trying to find staff and willing families to bring their child. Carol Lizotte has done a tremendous job with the Crossroads summer programming within person kayaking and mountain biking with the Rec Department but most of it will be virtual. She explained that they are developing a COVID-19 Exposure plan based on the CDC guidelines and the Department of Health. She thinks that they can open school with precautions. They will need action planning teams to prepare for the Fall with curriculum, food service, transportation and well-being as part of the framework. This will include in person instruction with precautions, remote learning and a hybrid of in person and remote learning. They will not get any framework from the Agency of Education until after July 4th. In person learning with a plan for remote learning if there are flare ups or illness. They may have A Days and B Days for students should we have to keep them six feet apart. Meaghan Conly asked if it would depend on a small or large school? Julie responded that things must be done in concert so that even though the school may be small, the footprint of the school coincides with the number of students.

The Swanton Police SRO Grant has been approved. They will meet with Chief Stell and will talk to the Board about using an SRO.

She has included a statement from the Vermont School Boards Association, the Vermont Superintendent's Association and Boards Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, and the Vermont Principals' Association strongly condemning the systemic violence, societal marginalization and oppression that has been put upon Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) since the founding of this country.

Julie reported that there will be a change in the food service program currently being offered. The bus transportation companies, the teachers and support staff have been fabulous. After the last day of school, they will not have access to the buses and staff that we have currently. Lora McAllister thought it was wonderful how the stake holders have come together to make the food delivery happen. Due to reduction of staff available, and lack of bus transportation, they will cease delivery of meals at the end of the school year. They will prepare all the meals at MVU and have meal pick up on Monday and Thursdays starting at the end of June. Franklin is not area eligible for free meals and hopefully a waiver will come through to allow this. Lora asked the board if they would consider subsidizing for Franklin meals so they could continue to receive free meals like Highgate and Swanton. Due to the pick-up of meals, they may find out that they will prepare less meals. They would operate as they have in the past with the 21st Century program and do the usual food summer program. Devin Bachelder asked if there was a plan to have pick up hours outside of 8am to 5pm? Lora responded that they were going to have an earlier time so parents could pick up the meals before going to work. Chris

suggested that they have one morning and one evening time. Dan Palmer said that they will work on a possible morning and evening pick up time.

VSA Trustee

Julie told the board that last Friday she was elected as Secretary of the Vermont Superintendent's Association Board of Trustees. She believe that this role will allow her to represent the needs of our district and influence policy and will be beneficial for our district.

Finally, she wanted to state that she was grateful for the teachers, support staff and administrative staff for everyone's support and help during this crazy school year. She is very proud of the MVSD team.

Legislative Update

Julie Regimbal included a legislative update in the shared board drive. The House Ways and Means Committee discussed setting yields in a manner that does not require dramatically increased property taxes in order to balance the FY 2021 budget. A yield bill has passed the House and she hopes it passes the Senate. Lawmakers are planning to construct a "skinny budget" to fund the first few months of FY21 and then take a recess. In August, the legislature will reassemble to address spending for the remainder of the year.

MVSD is in a good position as a school district and hope the district can use the carryover next year. If there should be a short fall, we have been very responsible in our budgeting and have significantly lower increases than other districts and below the state spending per pupil.

New Business

Award Bid For Highgate Parking Lot & Stormwater Contract

Chris Shepard reported that they had a meeting yesterday to review the Highgate Stormwater and Parking Project Bid Results. They received 4 bids from Gosselin \$451,693, Wrights Construction \$490,427, Partner \$539,702 and GW Tatro \$599,530. Their recommendation is to award the bid to Wrights Excavation because they have worked with stormwater before, have no issues with meeting our timeline and are fully bonded. Our engineering firm does not believe a performance bond is necessary which would be a potential savings of about \$14,000. Don Collins asked if there is a good subsurface? Chris thinks that there is good water filtration and sandy soil. He is comfortable that they will get this done. Lora added that there was soil sampling completed as part of the Stormwater grant.

Action:

Don Collins moved, seconded by Peter Magnant to award the bid to Wright's excavation at \$490,427 without the performance bond reducing it by \$14,000. The board approved the bid on a 9-0 vote.

Property Legal Issue

Julie Regimbal stated that the property legal issue is regarding a fence next to the Swanton Elementary School. She has confidential legal advice regarding the property issue which is a finding for executive session.

Technology Purchase

Lora stated that COVID has had an impact on technology. They typically lease a few hundred devices. The Director of Technology is concerned about receiving the devices before the start of school. Given the financial situation for the next school year, they would like to order the devices (Chromebook and Licenses) now for MVU, Highgate and Franklin totaling about \$102,000. They could use the carryover to pay for them this year or could still lease them over three years. If they allow us a waiver to use carryover into next year, it will be fine, otherwise, they are concerned about receiving them in a timely fashion. Don agreed that due to the timing, that they should order them.

Old Business**Warrants**

Lora McAllister read the breakdown of the check warrants: Accounts Payable: \$600,642.27, Payroll Checks: \$66,108.01, Payroll Other Disbursements: \$2,137,272.93, Payroll Deductions: \$579,446.38, for a total of \$3,383,463.59.

Action

Devin Bachelder moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to approve the following breakdown of the check warrants for the month of May totaling \$3,383,463.59. The board approved the motion on a 9-0 vote.

Financial Update

Lora McAllister provided the board with a financial report. They received \$358,000 more in revenue than was budgeted. The tuition was up by \$200,000 than projected, and she anticipates interest earnings of \$116,000. The Special Ed reimbursement is over \$200,000 and believes that is all we will receive this year. They may get the extraordinary reimbursement this fiscal year. They have under-expended the budget by \$1.7 million and feels they are in a good position with what was budgeted versus unfilled positions. They have had savings in legal costs, substitute teachers' salaries and staffing with purchasing only what was necessary during COVID remote learning order. They did not pay for all the transportation contracts to private schools that was not actually used. Currently, she is anticipating a 2.1-million-dollar carryover into the 20-21 school year. Don Collins said he was proud that the administration did not go over budget and thought we should put something up on the website.

New Hires

Julie Regimbal stated that they have finished hiring for the Elementary Schools and the only position not filled is the Special Education long term substitute in Swanton. They are nearly finished at MVU. She is meeting with the Math Teacher on Friday, met with Cheryl Miller -Special Ed teacher at MVU Middle School and Jordan Browning from Utah to teach Middle School English/Language Arts. The administration has done a tremendous job getting the positions filled.

Other Business

Negotiations Update

Julie reported that the ESP Support Staff agreement has been approved. The Professional Teachers Association and the board committee are meeting Thursday evening.

Retreat Planning

Chris Shepard stated that they would like to schedule a board retreat at the end of June. Julie has been in touch with Mike Deweese who will facilitate the roles of the Superintendent and the Board that is specific to our district. Don would like to have some evaluation tools for Julie that she uses on other administration so it can be consistent. It would be nice to hear her goals and develop board goals. Joanne expressed her excitement to have an opportunity to know the other board members in a board retreat. Terri O'Shea has would like to develop a goal on how to recruit and retain a Superintendent. The board set a tentative date of June 20th for the board retreat and decided to meet with just the Superintendent and the facilitator.

Future Meeting Dates

The next school board meeting has been scheduled for June 16th at 6:30pm to be held virtually.

Executive Session

Steve Scott moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to enter executive session for a legal property issue and invite Julie Regimbal. The board approved the motion on a 9-0 vote to enter executive session at 8:05pm. The board exited executive session at 8:21pm.

Action after Executive Session

No Action

Adjournment

Peter Magnant moved to adjourn, seconded by Steve Scott. Motion passed 9:0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Meaghan Conly, Board Clerk

Submitted by Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary