

MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD (MVSD)

Remotely VIA Google Meet

July 7, 2020

6:30 PM

**Present:** Board members joining the meeting remotely, Board Chairperson, Chris Shepard, Highgate, Don Collins (Swanton) Scott, (Highgate), Peter Magnant (Franklin), Joanne Johnston, (Franklin) (arrived at 6:53pm), Terri O'Shea (Swanton), and Jen Chevalier (Highgate) **Absent from the meeting:** Meaghan Conly (Swanton) and Devin Bachelder (Franklin)

**Others Joining Remotely:** Julie Regimbal, Superintendent of Schools, Lora McAllister, Business Manager, Dan Palmer, MVU Co-Principal, and Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary

**Call the Meeting to Order-** Chris Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

**Agenda Review-**Julie Regimbal requested adding Swanton bid to be awarded

**Correspondence**

**Consent Agenda**

**Approval of the Minutes**

*Action: Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Don Collins to approve the June 16, 2020 board minutes as presented. The board approved the minutes on a 6-0 vote.*

**Administrative Updates**

Dan Palmer reported that they started remote learning for the summer programs. The fencing project around the perimeter has been completed along with additional gates. The perimeter around the Ag Building has been upgraded. The wood chip boiler platform has been completed. The lockers have been removed and are being refurbished in the Ag Building by the custodial staff. Floor tiles have been removed and the re-flooring has begun in J-Pod. Jay Hartman has been working with Paul Gregoire and Jen Desorghers around expanding the Ag Program which has impacted the housing of the Swans during the winter months. As a result of hiring a new Ag Teacher, they are getting three milking goats from an MVU Graduate who is farming. They want to use the pen where the Swans had been housed. They want to use the milk by having a classroom of students make cheese, starting a cheese operation. As a result of tight school funding, they have been reluctant to build a shed or expand the existing shed so that they could house the swans. Peter Magnant thanked Dan for the update and asked if they could get a tour of the changes. Dan said they would make arrangements.

## **Superintendent Update**

Julie stated that included in the board drive is a food service update. Parents must now pick up the food either on Monday or Thursday and the numbers have come down. They had 270 meals the first week and it has increased to 536 on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Dan Palmer stated that parents are appreciative of the later hours for food pick up.

Julie reported that the steering committee opening of school workgroup met today. The committee consists of teacher, parents, facility directors, a lead nurse, administration and the NEA President.

Julie provided results of a parent survey regarding opening of school, remote learning amongst several questions. There was good response representation from each town. She provided some of the questions and survey responses. Some of the questions & responses were as follows:

What is your level of comfort with students returning to in person instruction? The majority of the parents are comfortable. If we had to do a hybrid model, what would you prefer? Most parents responded a full day even if it was a few days a week as opposed to half days. If school bus transportation is available, would your child ride the bus or are you willing to transport? 50% of the parents wanted to transport their children. What were the biggest challenges that parents had with remote learning? There were several responses including missing social interactions at school, distractions at home, difficulty keeping a work schedule, difficulty interpreting and supporting the lessons, and having the children home from school/childcare.

They had a meeting today with Breanna Holmes, the Department of Health leader of the healthy & safety start. They are working on a communications plan for families from Doctors/providers that families will value and trust. Students and staff will need to wear mask and the latest message is strongly recommended that they are six feet apart. The Superintendents want to do the right thing and have a safe, reliable environment for students and teachers. At this time, they will have to be nimble and prepare for in school instruction, a hybrid model and remote learning. The goal is to have in school instruction five days a week. They will need to purchase masks or any donations from anyone or groups that would like to make masks for the schools.

## **New Business**

### **Food Service Paid Meal Pricing**

Lora McAllister reported that the State of Vermont has a paid lunch equity tool that we utilize so that we are not subsidizing our lunch programs with free and reduced paid lunch reimbursements. In order to meet the requirements, it is recommended that we increase the food price by ten cents each year until we meet the target price meal. This year, this would mean that the Elementary School lunch price would go from \$2.65 to \$2.75 and the Middle/High School would go from \$2.95 to \$3.05 for

each meal. Jen Chevalier expressed concern that some students will bring their own lunch with the rice increase. Lora understood the concern, but they have gone from a reimbursement cost to a pay per meal pricing with the contractor, so this does provide some protection for the school. In order to avoid the price increase, the school district would have to subsidize the difference.

#### **Action**

*Terri O'shea moved, seconded by Jen Chevalier to set the food meal price to \$2.75 for the Elementary School and \$3.05 for the middle/high school. The board approved the motion on a 7-0 vote.*

#### **SRO Position Update and Next Steps**

Julie Regimbal has invited Chief Stell to the August board meeting and they would like a decision regarding the SRO. The grant will begin in October. Julie addressed concerns that was expressed by Vermont Legal Aid. They are tying discipline to the role of an SRO. Julie clarified that the SRO will be part of safety team, drug prevention and educational planning. Discipline is the principal's role along with the student management, behavior management input. We may consult with the SRO if the student is experiencing a substance abuse issue but they decision will belong to the school's administration. The SRO will help plan with fire drills, lock down drills and other emergencies that may occur within a school. The schools have mental health and psychologists' personnel to work with students. The SEL curriculum that we are currently engaged in will have an impact on reducing to eliminating suspension of students. Terri O'Shea stated that she has great confidence in our administration and Police Chief Stell in our restorative justice. She just thinks that it will be important that the MOU spells out the role of the SRO.

#### **Swanton Storage Shed**

Lora McAllister explained that they placed in Ad in the St. Albans Messenger in early June to renovate a garage in Swanton and demolish the old shed. They went out to bid and received just one bid from Guilmette Handyman Service in the amount of \$39,500. Jason Butler said that although there is only one quote, this is an excellent bid. Lora explained that this was talked about during the budget process and was part of the budget planning. This is being used for storage and the tractor. The smaller shed is deteriorating, and this was one of the items that Jason had prioritized for Swanton's Buildings and Grounds. Because this item was not on the agenda, the board planned a special meeting for July 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm to make a decision in awarding the bid.

#### **Old Business**

##### **Check Warrants**

Lora read the breakdown of the June check warrants as follows: Accounts Payable \$1,185,313.44, Payroll \$43,069.35, Payroll other disbursements \$1,797,312.68, Payroll Deductions \$136,701.64 for a total of \$3,162,397.11.

## **Action**

*Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve the check warrants as presented totaling \$3,162,397.11. The board approved the motion on a 7-0 vote.*

## **Property Legal issue**

Julie Regimbal stated that they have a property legal issue and a finding for executive session for a confidential legal issue.

## **Schedule Board-Superintendent Goals Work Session**

The board has chosen July 21<sup>st</sup> to work on the goals as the board, district and the Superintendent. Julie will put examples in the folder and create a google doc to brainstorm ideas. The meeting will be held virtually on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm

## **EFinance Transition Update**

Lora McCallister reported that she has asked the state for a waiver to delay the training and transition to EFinance with Power School due to all the complications and added work with COVID this year. The State did not allow the waiver and MVSD District is scheduled for round 6 which is supposed to begin this month. They have already started the Chart of Account conversion and will begin the real work to EFinance in mid-August. The state contracted with a new software system which will eventually save the district money. This will result in extra time demands above and beyond our usual work that may result in paying overtime.

## **Future Meeting Dates**

The special school board meeting is scheduled for July 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm and the MVSD Board Retreat on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm all to be held virtually. Perhaps in the future the board may end up meeting in more of a hybrid model with some physically present and others virtually. Julie explained that there is a tight screening process and the rules state that only students and staff should be allowed in the schools and not open visitors due to COVID.

## **Other**

The board asked varying questions regarding parent conferences, the audit etc. Julie believes that many will need to be held virtually. Lora explained that the FY20 audit was in the board drive for the board to review.

## **Executive Session**

Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Peter Magnant to enter executive session for confidential legal property issue and invite Julie Regimbal into executive session. The board approved the motion on a 7-0 vote to enter executive session at 8:04pm.

The board exited executive session at 8:13pm. No Action needed.

**Adjournment**

**Action**

*Peter Magnant moved, seconded by Steve Scott to adjourn at 8:13 PM. The board approved on a 7-0 vote.*

Respectfully submitted,

Meaghan Conly, Board Clerk

Submitted by Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary