



**Highgate Elementary School
Board of Director's Meeting
February 8, 2018**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER: A meeting of the Highgate Elementary School Board of Directors was called to order on Thursday February 8, 2018 at 7:00 pm by Connie Beyor, School Board Chair. Those in attendance included:

- Connie Beyor, Board Chair
- Chris Shepard, Board Secretary
- David Roddy
- Nola Gilbert
- Patrick Hartnett, School Principal
- Chris Palmer, Assistant Principal
- Lora McAllister, Business Manager (left at 8:10 PM)
- Winton Goodrich, Superintendent
- A Channel 15 representative (taping for public access television)

2.0. AGENDA AMMENDMENTS (2)

1. Departing Board Member
2. Attorney Opinion (executive session)

3.0. COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PUBLIC:

Ty Choiniere was present at today's meeting. Ty requested that the minutes from the HES School Board meetings be posted at the Town Clerk's office. It was noted that they used to be posted in the Town Clerk's office, and the Board will make sure that continues to happen. In addition, it was noted that the Board minutes can be found on the school's website. A suggestion was made to add a link to the minutes onto the town's website.

Ty also raised a question on behalf of Parks and Recreation about the Cassidy property. This property is currently being used by MVUs agriculture program, but Parks and Rec was wondering if a part of it could be used as a Highgate Elementary School 4th / 5th grade soccer field. Currently, the 4th/5th grade soccer field is in the outfield of the baseball field but this space is only available seasonally.

Action: Ty will measure out soccer field and report this information to Win.

Follow-up: Next meeting.

4.0. BUSINESS REPORT:

Deficit Reduction Strategies

The budget report current through the end of January was presented for review. Currently the actual budget is projecting a \$21,000 shortfall due to over expenditures in other areas. We continue to adjust for staffing and benefits, and we were able to recapture some revenue on a student that was an out of district placement. We are currently operating in an "as need only" basis for spending. The biggest unanticipated expense so far has been some alternate seating for a first grade classroom, this to help a new teacher deal with some high energy students. It was noted that the Fiscal Services line

is not reflecting a change in spending, but just more accurate projection based on the actual number of hours required to manage the book keeping.

Action: A motion was made by David Roddy to approve the financial report for period ending January 31, 2018. The motion was seconded by Nola Gilbert.

Vote: 4:0

Solar Credits on the Electric Bill

It was noted that every month on the school's electric bill, the normal usage will be reflected but also a solar adjustment credit. AtlasPower will invoice the school in the amount of the solar adjustment credit, minus 20%. It was noted that the credit will be smaller during the winter time, but larger during times where there is more sunlight. Central office will track the credits to ensure the school is earning 20% of overall credits.

5.0. CONSENT AGENDA

Adopt January 11, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the January 11, 2018 Board Meeting were presented for review as part of the consent agenda.

Action: A motion as raised by David Roddy to adopt the January 11, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Nola Gilbert.

Vote: 4:0

Check Warrants

The January Check Warrants totaling \$409,632.87 were presented for review.

Action: A motion as raised by David Roddy to approve the check warrants totaling \$409,632.87; the motion was seconded by Nola Gilbert.

Vote: 4:0

6.0. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Assistant Principal Palmer reported that there was a training focused on the conflict cycle with a power struggle component provided to the Paraeducators at the last in-service, this in response to challenging behaviors and academic needs of our students. We are working with our NCSS contracted school based clinician to provide consistent training to our Paraeducators, and so far have carved out ½ hour monthly for this training (3rd Tuesday of every month). In addition, a Paraeducator staff meeting has been added, and we're using the restorative circles format for this meeting. Six Paraeducators have had the restorative circles training and will be circle keepers at these meetings.

Principal Hartnett reported that there was restorative circle training at an in-service day in January, and there will be monthly restorative circle meetings going forward. This is our way of sharing information between the staff and the Continuous Improvement Team. It was discussed that the long term goal is to shift restorative circles into the classroom setting, this after everyone is fully trained. It was noted that members of the Board are welcome at any staff meeting.

Five people from the Continuous Improvement Team are working on a plan to provide intervention to kids. It was note that we need to do a better job identifying those students who are not learning, and developing ways to help them learn.

We are bringing the Winter Carnival back this year. The PTKO has provided funding to purchase a broom ball game. This will be used during Winter Carnival, and then as a unit in gym thereafter. Winter Carnival will not be a weeklong activity, but instead take place for a period of time one day during the week.

7.0. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Win Goodrich provided the Superintendent's Report to include:

Legislative Update:

- There is a proposal that would change the homestead property tax rate from \$1.59 to \$0.91, but increase income tax.
- There are discussions about shifting Special Education Funding from fee for service to census based model. This meaning Special Education Services would be funded by block grant.
- Changes have been made to the open meeting law, and public record law (both will be tighter)

English Language Learners

We currently 22 ESL students in the Supervisory Union, and Highgate has a higher percentage of these students than others schools in the district. There are 3 students in Alburgh and we are looking into ways to bring these students on board. A concern was raised about sharing the cost of mileage for travel and a recommendation was made that the scheduling be such that the ELS teacher remains in one district for an entire day, instead of traveling.

RiseVT

The RiseVT Statewide rollout happened today. RiseVT is now moving to ten hospitals statewide. This is an initiative that provides primary prevention and wellness programs for schools, businesses, and communities. Results from the BMI baseline data collection are available, and there will be a report out on those results at the March Board meeting.

8.0. OLD BUSINESS

Generator Update

It was noted that the Fire Department will allow us to use their backup generator for the white building in the event of an emergency. David Roddy is working with the Town Clerk's office to secure a grant to help the fire department purchase a stationary generator. This would free up the other generator for our use. It was also noted that we are planning on purchasing the necessary equipment needed to convert our natural gas heating system to a propane heating system. A question was raised about what to do if natural gas is smelled on campus. In the event natural gas is smelled on campus, the fire department should be called.

Roof Update

Two bids have been obtained for the roof, the third is in process. One contractor found some additional issues with the roof that will need to be fixed (for example, the ridge cap does not have sealed ends, which means snow can get in and melt and cause leaks). It was suggested that references be checked prior to accepting any of the bids.

Storm Water Retention Pond

No update at this time.

Board Vacancies:

There are currently 3 Board Vacancies. It was decided that the Board Meeting on March 8th will focus on orienting new Board Members.

Teacher Professional Leave During School hours

There was a lengthy discussion about teacher's having professional leave during school hours. It was agreed that first instruction is the most important, and that the classroom teacher should be the one providing first instruction. This becomes problematic when professional development is scheduled during school time. The Board requesting a professional leave procedure for review that defines ahead of time what leave is taking place when, how many teachers will be gone, and what the plan for coverage is. It was noted that principal Hartnett tries to build a ½ day or full day each month allocated for professional development so that it is not taking place during school time.

Action: Win will bring this up at the SU Alternative Leadership meeting and the Central Office Leadership Team meeting for feedback and report out at the next Board meeting.

Follow-up: Next meeting

Fundraising Procedure:

Deferred

Act 46 Update

A small group attended a meeting at the agency of education today advocating for the Alternative Governance Structure Proposed to the State Board of Education late last year. At that meeting we continued to advocate that we can meet the goals of Act 46 without merging. The State Board of education will make their final decision in November. It was noted that our proposal was submitted one day late, but this does not seem to have impacted anything. The Board indicated that they would be happy to receive additional information about our request at any time.

9.0. NEW BUSINESS

Budget Information Meeting

Highgate Elementary School will have a budget information meeting on Thursday February 22, 2018 at 7:30 PM. A draft presentation for that meeting was reviewed at today's meeting.

10.0. FUTURE BOARD MEETING DATES

Future Board Meeting Dates

- Highgate Board Meeting – March 8th , at 6:30 PM
- FNWSU Board Meeting – March 21st , 6:30 at Highgate School Library
- School Budget Information Meeting – February 22nd , 7:30 pm School Library
- March 6th Pre-Town Meeting Review 9:00 am Principal's Office

11.0. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Action: A motion to adjourn to executive session was made by Chris Shepard and seconded by David Roddy. The Board entered executive session at 9:42 PM to answer the Executive Session Compliance Question "Where premature public knowledge would clearly place the Board or other party at a substantial disadvantage"

Vote: 4:0

Recorded by: Rebecca Fenn, School Board Secretary
Submitted in behalf Chris Shepard: School Board Clerk