



**Highgate Elementary School
Board of Director's Meeting
October 11, 2018**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER: A meeting of the Highgate Elementary School Board of Directors was called to order on Thursday October 11, 2018 at 6:40 p.m. by Chris Shepard, School Board Chair. Those in attendance included:

- Chris Shepard, Board Chair
- Lisa Wells, Vice-Chair
- Ryan Young, Board Clerk
- Stephen Scott
- Richard Flint
- Lora McAllister, Business Manager
- Patrick Hartnett, School Principal
- Chris Palmer, Assistant Principal
- Julie Regimbal, Superintendent
- A Channel 15 representative (taping for public access television)

Agenda Amendments: (2)

- Afterschool Program Presentation (1)
- Principal's Report: Rug (2)

2.0 COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PUBLIC:

Charon Fregard, a Franklin County Resident and candidate for the Vermont House of Representative introduced herself to the Board and expressed an interest in the Board's thoughts on Act 46.

An adjacent landowner would like to access school property to remove a tree that borders school property. The landowner was directed to coordinate access with Terry Brace (Buildings and Grounds Director) during a time when school is not in session.

Possible Topics for Future Board Meetings:

- Velco Easements
- Roof Update
- Act 46 Update
- Budget Discussion
- Bond Discussion

3.0. AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING (1)

Carol Lizotte gave a presentation about the Afterschool Program, which receives grant funding from the 21st Century Learning Community Centers grant. 905 children and youth (grades 2-12) participated in afterschool programming in the 2017-2018 academic year, a third of those

attended 30 days or more. After school programming includes enrichment, fitness, nutrition, drama, science, technology, engineering, arts, math, STEAM, literacy and academic support in the form of homework clubs, learning labs and tutoring. It was noted that students who attend regularly have improvements in school day performance, attendance, and overall health and physical wellbeing. The program inspires learning, helps working families by keeping children safe and healthy, and supports Vermont's Vision for Education. Funding for the program is shared across all schools in the district, and its budget (~\$800,000) receives \$423,000 from the grant. It was noted that it is a grant requirement that Carol present to all School Boards in the district to identify whether or not each Board will continue to commit local funds to continue supporting the program. It was noted that only a small portion of the funds come from local dollars.

Action: A motion was made by Richard Flint to continue support the afterschool program; the motion was seconded by Steve Scott.

Vote: 5:0

4.0. FUTURE BOARD MEETING DATES

- Highgate Board Meeting – November 8th at 6:30 PM
- FNWSU Board Meeting – November 7th at 6:30 PM at Franklin

5.0. CONSENT AGENDA

Adopt September 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes: The September 13, 2018 Board meeting minutes were presented for review.

Action: A motion was raised by Lisa Wells to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2018 meeting; the motion was seconded by Ryan Young.

Vote: 5:0

Adopt September 27, 2018 Meeting Minutes: The September 27, 2018 Special Board meeting minutes were presented for review.

Action: A motion was raised by Lisa Wells to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2018 meeting; the motion was seconded by Ryan Young.

Vote: 5

6.0. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Patrick Hartnett gave the principal's report to include:

- There has been noted success with the Math Menu program, now implemented in most grade levels. Math Menu is an approach that allows students some choice in their math work, and provides the teacher an opportunity to work with students in stations or in conference that will address deficiencies.
- The Highgate Spelling Bee Team had a second year in a row come from behind victory over Franklin (96-94).
- For the second year in a row, open houses were held on different nights by grade level at the beginning of the year. While it was noted that these have been more effective than one Open House, administration has received some feedback that the open house covers the same type of information that is also covered at the August Parent Teacher Conference. There is ongoing discussion and planning about holding Math and Literacy night towards the beginning of the year in place of Open House.

Chris Palmer provided the following information as part of the Principal's Report:

- Since March of 2017, a team has been preparing a proposal for the Board to create a Maker Space at Highgate Elementary School. It was noted that Chris Palmer attended a one-week course this summer on designing maker spaces in a thoughtful way that would impact student learning and he has visited several schools to view their Maker Spaces. Chris would like to invite the Board to view the Maker Space in Fairfax to see firsthand what these spaces are like before the final proposal is presented to the Board for action in December.

Rugs (2): Richard Flint noticed that one of the fourth-grade classrooms has a rug that is in poor condition, and recommended that this rug be replaced.

7.0. BUSINESS REPORT

Warrants: Warrants for the month of September totaling \$392,474.95 were presented for approval.

Action: *A motion was raised by Steve Scott to approve the September warrants totaling \$392,474.95, the motion was seconded by Lisa Wells.*

Vote: 5:0

Financial Report: Lora McAllister presented the financial report through the end of September for review. It was noted that the schoolwide technology line item has increased by about \$15,000 to cover some additional tech support. It was noted that this funding is coming from the Tech Integrationist position that was budgeted for but not filled. The person providing the tech support is an existing staff member, and that person will focus on keeping devices up and running and installing additional infrastructure once purchased in November to allow Ethan to focus on working with teachers. It was noted that the Office of the Superintendent line has been updated to reflect projected cost for Special Ed assessments, although it was noted that this line will fluctuate. In addition, it appears like HES is receiving \$27,000 less in offsetting revenue into the SU but this is just reflecting a net prior to the SU assessment happening.

Action: *A motion to accept the financial report was made by Richard Flint and seconded by Ryan Young.*

Vote: 5:0

FY20 Budget: Draft 1 of the FY20 budget was presented for review. It was noted that professional staff are set to negotiate this year so a moderate increase has been projected for draft purposes. Support staff has negotiated already and will add \$0.50 / hour to base on the wage schedule. Also factored into this draft is an increase of 11.8% for Blue Cross Blue Shield Gold CVHP plans; dental is reflecting level funding. A 2.5% increase has been added to all contracted services (only for earmarking purposes). Also included in this draft is a potential Golden Handshake benefit (factored into instructional salaries), contributing to most of the increase in that line. This draft also includes HRA funding (75% of 88%) although this can be adjusted as we move through the year. The assessment drafts will go to the November FNWSU Board meeting and will get updated after that.

Addendum to Food Service Management Contract (FSMC): When Highgate Elementary School entered into the new FSMC, it was assumed that the school would continue to receive funding to support the school supper program; however, in order to be eligible for this program

schools have to have 40% or higher rate of free/reduced lunch participation (based on the year before). It was determined that we no longer qualify for this program based on that threshold. An amendment to the contract was presented for review reflecting a shift to snacks instead of full meals at a fixed price rate of \$0.88 per snack plus \$0.15 management fee. The Abby has already signed the amendment. It was noted that if the school meets the 40% threshold this year, it will move back to providing supper.

Action: A motion to allow the Board Chair to sign the contract addendum was made by Lisa Wells and seconded by Steve Scott.

Vote: 5:0

8.0. OLD BUSINESS:

Act 46 Update and review of Class Action Lawsuit: At the last Supervisory Union Board meeting, it was clarified that schools that any school that joins the class action lawsuit is not financially liable until the suit is filed (after the State Board of Education makes its final recommendation) and can withdraw any time before that. This information was confirmed by the school district's attorney. Joining the suit at this time would allow the school to get additional information about the suit that is not available without joining and this would help the Board make an informed decision. It would also show solidarity across the district. If the school wants to continue in the suit, public dollars cannot be used to support the endeavor – the funding would have to come from private sources. It was noted that around 17 schools have joined the suit so far, including Sheldon Elementary School.

Action: A motion was made by Ryan Young to join the class action suit and to reevaluate participation at each Board meeting; the motion was seconded by Steve Scott.

Vote: 4:1 (Richard Flint abstained).

Bus Update: Principal Hartnett noted that the busses are departing by 3 pm now, but the school continues to fine tune dismissal so that it is more efficient. There was a recent event where a younger student communicated a different afterschool plan, but the school followed the existing afterschool plan which resulted in that younger student being dropped off at a house without an adult home. Because of this incident, a new policy is in place where any time a student communicates an afterschool plan that is different than usual, the school will reach out to a parent to confirm. In addition, it was reiterated that the bus driver will make eye contact with the parent of a young child at drop off before leaving. This process has been formalized in a policy. A suggestion was made to share this policy with parents, so they are aware of the change.

Velco Assessment Update: At the last meeting a Velco contractor spoke with the board about upgrading the existing easements, which would require purchasing a small bit of land from the school. This request was reviewed with the district's attorney who advised that the public has a right to vote whether or not to sell that small piece of land to Velco. The contractor provided reassurance that the size of the easement will not change despite requiring additional land.

Follow-up: Next meeting.

Facility Assessment Update: A quote to complete a full facility assessment came back at \$25,978, which is significantly higher than anticipated. This assessment would identify anything within the facility that needs to be fixed (including drainage and parking) in anticipation of a bond vote. Included in the assessment is a preventative maintenance schedule. Because the quote was greater than \$15,000, additional bids must be obtained through an RFP process before

awarding a contract. A special board meeting will take place on October 26, 2018 at 7 PM in the Library to review assessment bids and approve a contract.

Election Day Update: At the last meeting, a suggestion was made to close school on Election Day given that the school is open to the public for voting. Julie Regimbal reached out the Teacher's Association to approve this request. The Association will vote on this tomorrow and full support is anticipated. Once approved, notice will go out to parents that school will not be in session on Election Day giving almost a month's notice of this change.

9.0. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Superintendent's report provided by Julie Regimbal included the following:

- The Superintendents met with the new Secretary of Education (Dan French) who spoke about his plans to restructure the Agency of Education to create efficiencies.
- The work of the Integrated Field Review Teams (that were trained to assess quality of schools) has been put on hold. No additional information is available.
- There is a Vermont Education Health Initiative (VHEI) meeting taking place at Lake Morey (as part of the School Board Association meeting)

Action: A motion was made by Richard Flint to authorize the Superintendent to represent Highgate Elementary School if there is a vote at VEHI; the motion was seconded by Ryan Young.

Vote: 5:0

10.0. NEW BUSINESS:

FNWSU Board Representative Change: Richard Flint requested to step down as Supervisory Union Board representative, Steve Scott would like to replace him.

Action: A motion was made by Ryan Young to authorize Steve Scott to represent Highgate Elementary School on the Supervisory Union Board; the motion was seconded by Lisa Wells.

Vote: 5:0

Board Member Resignation: Ryan Young accepted a job out of state and will be resigning from the School Board effective 10/31/2018. The School Board vacancy is currently posted and an interim replacement will be recommended within 30 days of today. The Board will have the opportunity to interview any interested candidates and then formalize the appointment. The interim Board member would serve until Town Meeting Day and then would go on the ballot for formal election.

Action: A motion was made by Lisa Wells to accept Ryan Young's resignation effective 10/31/2018; the motion was seconded by Steve Scott.

Vote: 3:1:1 (Ryan Young abstained, Richard Flint Opposed)

11.0. ANTICIPATED EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

12.0. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Richard Flint to adjourn the Highgate Elementary School Board of Directors Meeting; the motion was second by Ryan Young. The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Recorded by: Rebecca Fenn, School Board Secretary
Submitted on behalf of Ryan Young, Board Clerk