

**Minutes First Meeting of the West Bath School Administrative Unit School Board
Wednesday, April 8, 2015 at 5:30 pm
West Bath School library, New Meadows Road, West Bath, ME**

Note: As the posted agenda was tentative, the elected school board followed a slightly different order. These minutes reflect the true order of the meeting.

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by West Bath Town Administrator Adam Garland at approximately 5:35 pm.

II. Attendance and Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was attended by all members of the newly elected school board:

Dennis Crews – 3 year term

Keith Hinds – 3 year term

Robert McDaniel – 2 year term

Jordi St. John – 2 year term

Meagan Hennessey – 1 year term

The meeting was also attended and moderated by:

West Bath Selectman Peter Oceretko

West Bath Town Administrator Adam Garland

Further, the meeting was attended by West Bath School Principal and West Bath Educational Consultant Emily Thompson and additional members of the public.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

IV. Consent Agenda

1. As the first meeting of the newly elected West Bath School Administrative Unit School Board there were no prior minutes to approve.

2. There were no Warrants to approve.

3. The next regularly scheduled meeting / Workshop of the west Bath SAU School Board will be held on Wednesday, April 15th 2015 at the West bath School, New Meadows Road, West Bath, ME.

V. Public Hearings

None.

VI. Business Items

1. Town Selectman Peter Oceretko thanked the board members for their willingness to serve and assured them the town's selectman would continue to be available for any guidance they may desire. He also shared RSU1 had reached out to him, offering assistance to the West Bath School Board as well.

2. Town Administrator Adam Garland directed the school board members to binders he had prepared for each in order to provide them with the information gathered by the transition team prior to their election. The binder included the following sections, which were briefly discussed:

- a. Calendar of important dates, with ‘difficult to change’ meetings circled.
- b. MSMA new member workshop
- c. Withdrawal Committee Finance Model
- d. School vendor codes and information
- e. School Building / Grounds / Maintenance Contracts
- f. Shared Fuel Contract with Town Hall and West Bath School
- g. Copy of the Final Withdrawal Agreement Dated November 18, 2014
- h. School Board Insurance Information
- i. Executive Session Statutes
- j. Information for the Department of Education
- k. School Choice
- l. Town of West Bath Purchasing Policy
- m. Shared Administrative Position Draft Plan

3. The School Board Oath of office was administered by West Bath Town Administrator Adam Garland to all members of the newly elected school board.

4. After discussion, including the school board’s desire to preserve as much continuity between the Transition Committee as possible, Jordi St. John motioned to elect Dennis Crews to be Chair of the School Board. This was seconded by Robert McDaniel. The motion passed 4-0, with Dennis abstaining.

5. The school board opted to elect a vice chair, after brief discussion. Jordi St. John made the motion to elect Keith Hinds as vice chair, which was seconded by Dennis Crews. The motion passed 4-0, with Keith abstaining.

6. After discussion regarding the challenge of taking adequate minutes while fully participating in the meeting the school board opted to designate a record keeping for the night only, with the option of bringing in a record keeper for other meetings to be explored. Keith Hinds made the motion, which was seconded, to elect Meagan Hennessey record keeper for the evening only. The motion passed 4-0, with Meagan abstaining.

7. With the school board fully established, the moderators ceded meeting authority to the board chair.

VII. Citizen’s Comments

Welcome and congratulations to the new school board were offered by members of the public. Board of Selectmen Chair Paula Nelson reiterated Peter Oceretko’s comments that the Selectmen are happy to assist the school board in any manner possible.

VIII. Committee / Department / Work Group Reports

1. School Budget

Emily Thompson reported that the draft budget is complete. She requested to present it first to the chair and vice chair of the school board, with other members welcome to pick the document up at the school any time after noon on Friday.

2. School Board Meeting times

After much discussion among board members regarding their availability, it was decided the first Wednesday of every month will be the regular meeting of the school board. Meetings will be held at 6:30, in the library of the West Bath School, New Meadows Road, West Bath, ME. This was motioned by Keith Hinds, seconded by Jordi St. John, and passed 5-0.

Next Wednesday, April 15, 2015, will be the next workshop. It will consist of a presentation by Maine School Management Association (MSMA) and will remain at the previously scheduled time, 5:30, at the West Bath School, New Meadows Road, West Bath, ME. Following the presentation, Emily Thompson and the board will discuss the budget briefly.

Prompted by the request of Paula Nelson, Board of Selectman chair, much discussion occurred regarding the best timeline for presentation and discussion of the budget. It was decided the board will discuss the budget with Emily Thompson on April 23rd during a 6:30 workshop at the West Bath School. The board will then present the budget during the Selectman's April 27th meeting, at approximately 6pm. On April 29th, during the School Board's 6:30 workshop at the West Bath School, the Budget committee and public will be invited to comment on the budget.

3. Contracts requiring immediate attention

A. Building and Maintenance Contracts

Emily Thompson provided the board with packets detailing the many contracts that need immediate attention for the upcoming year. She explained the transition committee had decided to extend the current providers for one year rather than add further complications to the transition by fielding RFP's. The board agreed with the advisability of this approach. The one exception was the fuel contract, as the Town signed a joint agreement when they had the opportunity to do so.

The only unsigned contract which Emily advised the board to delay signing regarded the current custodial contract. The current provider, Benchmark, provides only cleaning services, meaning required facilities work cannot be provided. Options to address this need become a budget discussion and therefore further discussion will be delayed.

Keith Hinds made a motion to accept all but the custodial contract as extensions, which was seconded by Jodi St. John. Robert McDaniel pointed out that two options for mowing were included in the packet Emily had provided. Emily then explained Four Seasons is the current provider, with a weekly and biweekly quote included due to ongoing discussions about our level of need.

Keith Hinds revised his motion to propose the board approve all Building and Maintenance contracts with the exception of mowing and custodial services. This was seconded by Meagan Hennessey and approved 5-0.

Keith Hinds then asked Emily Thompson if she would ask Four Seasons for further options, including weekly mowing in August and September and biweekly mowing in the other months, which she agreed to do. Keith then made the motion to extend the current contract with Four Seasons for bi-weekly mowing, seconded by Robert McDaniel and passed 5-0.

B. Software Contracts.

Emily Thompson explained to the School Board that because some software had to be purchased prior to the election of a school board some software contracts were previously authorized by the Board of Selectmen. Specifically, the "Incode Financial Software" and "Website & Hosting" software were previously approved.

Emily informed the board the about the need for the remaining software programs. The Food Service software allows for menu planning that meets nutritional guidelines and point of sale payment. The Library software, while our current provider, is treating West Bath as a startup cost because it will need to separate West Bath from the RSU1 system. The Student Information System keeps records and grades, which travels with students to the RSU1 easily as it is from the

same provider. Keith Hinds made a motion to approve the Software contracts, with the exception of the previously approved programs. Jordi seconded the motion, which passed 4-0, with Dennis Crews abstaining.

Robert McDaniel then moved to ratify the software contracts previously approved by the transition committee, which was seconded by Keith Hinds and approved 4-0, with Dennis Crews abstaining.

4. Additional items not currently in the draft budget.

Emily Thompson reported she was made aware of a roof problem that was not accepted by RSU1 as part of the bid to fix the West Bath School roof last summer. This had been quoted at \$9,477 previously.

The heating system and heating controls were also discussed. Emily stated they are simply antiquated and do not allow for proper heating control, meaning classroom temperatures can vary greatly. Getting the system automated is of high priority.

The board was informed by Emily of an ongoing frost-heave which creates flooding within the school and prevents the door from being fully opened, creating a fire hazard. Emily brought someone in to provide a quote for this, which was not ready at the time of the meeting.

5. Pre-K

Emily Thompson stated she and the West Bath School had fully intended on implementing a five-day-per-week pre-k program. However, there will need to be two kindergarten classes for the upcoming school year, meaning there is no available teacher or room available for a pre-k program.

There are currently 9 West Bath students enrolled in 3 year old programs at external providers, with 12 slots reserved. Two of these providers will no longer meet standards for new applicants, and because our students will be viewed as new applicants next year this will affect all but 2 of the 9 currently enrolled. Emily is exploring how to make this situation work.

IX. Policy

1. 1st Reading of the School Choice Policy

Dennis Crews walked everyone through the school choice policy put together by the transition committee. In general, according to the Withdrawal Agreement West Bath will pay at least 75% of enrollment, rather than a set number of students we must send each year. Therefore, if no more than 25% of our students attend schools other than the RSU1 there is no budgetary effect (currently equal to approximately 25 students). If more than 25% of students request school choice, the school board must decide if that will be supported in the budget. If not, a lottery will be held to decide who will be granted school choice, with preference given first to students currently attending non-RSU1 schools and then their siblings. Schools must be non-sectarian in order for West Bath to send them money, according to Maine law.

In order to meet deadlines, letters were sent to West Bath families prior to the election of the school board. This year, fewer than 25% of students requested school choice.

Currently, charter schools would receive funds directly from the state, but would count as “school choice” students under the terms of the withdrawal agreement. This will possibly affect two of our students for the upcoming school year.

At the suggestion of Robert McDaniel, Emily will look to put together comparative costs for the most requested schools as an informational tool for families.

Edits to the policy as written:

- a. Last paragraph: Meagan Hennessey requested that the policy specify that the report shall come from the Office of the Superintendent.
- b. Keith Hinds commented that the first bullet point three should be further explained. Dennis Crews said he would make it a separate policy, since it will only be consequential for a few years and adds confusion to the school choice policy.
- c. A stipulation that families must file out a ‘letter of intent’ to continue (or not) at their current school choice placement must be returned every year.
- d. The first bullet 8 will be edited to read “the student’s guardian” decides they no longer desire school choice.

1st Reading of the 2015/16 West Bath School Calendar

Emily will ask for parent feedback regarding the possibility of taking December 21st and 22nd, a Monday and Tuesday, off and adding those days to the end of the school year. This would create a difference between West Bath’s schedule and RSU1, which could pose logistical challenges for families. Any potential issues with the bus schedule would also need to be verified.

X. Additional Business

1. School Board E-mails set up

Emily Thompson informed the new school board members how to access their new school board emails. Addresses are the member’s ‘first initial last name’@westbathschool.org.

It was discussed that school board members must understand they cannot hold conversations through these emails, as that would constitute an illegal meeting.

2. Next Meeting Time

5:30 at West Bath School, New Meadows Road, West Bath, ME – workshop with MSMA, followed by a brief review of the draft budget.

3. When School Board will allow public comment

It was discussed and informally agreed that the West Bath School Board will allow clarifying and other informal questions from the public during the course of meetings, as it did at this meeting, so long as it does not unduly slow down the meeting. It will then also allow for a general comment period from the public at the close of meetings.

XI. Public Comment

The new school board was encouraged to stay involved in the community, recognizing the unique opportunity to hold on to the reasons the West Bath School Board was formed.

XII. Executive Session(s)

1. A motion was made by Keith Hinds to request to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405, 6, A. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. This was seconded by Robert McDaniel and passed 5-0 at 7:28 pm.

2. The school board voted at 8:56pm to come out of Executive Session.

XIII. Business Items Continued

1. Keith Hinds made a motion to approve engaging Emily Thompson as Interim Superintendent and authorize School Board Chair Dennis Crews to act on the prepared letter, with the noted changes included, to accomplish this. Robert McDaniel seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

2. The availability of funds to bring someone in to take notes was discussed. This person would only be needed at official board meetings but could be engaged at workshops as well.

Keith Hinds made a motion, seconded by Robert McDaniel and passed 5-0, to adjourn at 8:01pm.