

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2016 at 6:30 PM at the West Bath School

Members Present: Dennis Crews , Meagan Hennessey, Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, and Jordi St. John

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Heidi Barber, Emily Booth, Patrick Bowdish, Debb Cashman, Wayne Doyle, Brent Kaler, Rebecca Kaler, Robert Schulz, Kurt Spiridakis, Elizabeth Stilphen, Emily Thompson, 5th grade students from Mr. Schulz's class

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Keith Hinds.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds welcomed the crowd to the meeting, stating that it was the largest crowd at a board meeting in 17 months. He thanked them for coming, recognizing that there were likely other activities and places they needed to be. Mr. Hinds also recognized the West Bath staff for giving up their own time in support of the school, stating he had seen a constant flow of staff working in the afternoons and weekends on the school grounds. He thanked the superintendent for setting that tone and culture and the staff for their work and dedication.

Mr. St. John arrived at 6:31 PM.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 5/4/16:

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the minutes of 5/4/16 as presented. This was seconded by Mr. St. John. Vote (5-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

Mr. Hinds made the following adjustments to the agenda:

1. 11.3.b. Funding request for a 5th grade boat building program.
2. 11.3.c. Resignation

Public Comments:

None

Staff Report:

Mr. Schulz presented to the board with 5th graders Kady Doyle, Madysen Kaler, Sophie Barber, Colleen Cashman, and Sophie Booth. He thanked the board for allowing them the opportunity to speak and shared the following quote from Paul Tough: “In order for a student to truly feel motivated by and about school, he also has to perceive that he is doing important work – work that is challenging, rigorous, and deep.”

Mr. Schulz asked the fifth grade students to participate in a think, pair, share with a board member, with the discussion focused on time when they have worked through something that was difficult.

Mr. Schulz explained to the board his background, and highlighted the Expeditionary Learning teaching practices that attracted him to applying at West Bath School. He explained that as the school and district continues to evolve, he wanted to discuss with the board opportunities for teaching and learning in partnership with organizations such as Chewonki and Maine Maritime Museum.

Mr. Schulz shared an overview of his content curriculum map with the board, explaining that the ecology focus of 5th grade is how our behaviors in our watershed impact the Gulf of Maine. His curriculum map is designed so they first begin in the mountains, and work their way down the Kennebec River, working with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. Then at mid-year, they turn their focus to the Revolutionary War and Benedict Arnold’s March to Quebec and work their way back up the river, and experience what it takes to build an expedition. He said that he would like to add in authentic, experiential partnerships, and shared information about a 4-day, 3-night social science experience at Chewonki, where students would focus on ecology and team building, and would allow for setting the tone for the year. He also stated that ideally in the late fall, the students would then begin working with the Maine Maritime Museum in a boat building experience to support the work around the Arnold Expedition.

Mr. Schulz said that his 5th grade students had the opportunity to take part in a shortened process for this year, building a half-model, and would like to discuss having support for a larger program. Students then shared their reflections on their experiences with the Maine Maritime Museum.

Students provided reflections such as:

- I enjoyed interacting with others who are boat builders.
- It was a fun way to learn because I would rather measure something real, like a boat, than work in a math packet.
- It connected to my heritage because my dad is a boat builder, and his dad was a boat builder.
- I found out that I had skills that I did not know that I had.
- I am proud of the work that we did- measuring the bateau, carving a half model, learning the history of the bateau. It helped me to better understand the time period of the Revolutionary War. I also learned how to be safe around tools and feel more connected to our boat building community.

Kurt Spiridakis from the Maine Maritime Museum shared that he had been working in the boat shop for 12 years and had spoke with Mrs. Thompson in the fall about possibilities of working with the West Bath School. He expressed that students come out of the program having learned team building, confidence building, how to make mistakes, and with a concrete outcome. Mr. Schulz told the board that he is hoping that for the next year we would be able to have a 1 time per week experience for the fifth grade students, where at the end of the year they will have built a boat.

Mr. St. John told the students that they did a nice job speaking in front of a crowd and that they were eloquent. Mr. Hinds asked if students remembered the math concepts more having worked in the boat shop, as compared to working in the classroom.

Mr. Schulz responded that math is the hardest area to connect with Expeditionary Learning, as concrete math skills do not always lend themselves to expeditions, but that in the boat shop, it was a natural connection. He explained that when working on fractions, students had to measure, determine how to scale up and down in terms of rations, find equivalent fractions, use rulers, and that the volunteers commented regularly on their strong fraction skills.

Mr. McDaniel said that the program sounded “phenomenal”. He stated that as a former teacher he knows that 9th graders can whiz through worksheets but when presented with a real problem do not know how to do it, and that this approach is great.

Mr. Spiridakis said that while they have relationships with other schools, there is little interaction with the school in regards to the curriculum design. He is excited to have a school to collaborate with in regards to program design and curriculum development.

Mr. Hinds asked how the program would work with two 5th grade classes in the next year. Mrs. Thompson responded that the school is still working out the details, but that they are committed on having both classes involved, perhaps at a half-day per week each, with each class building a boat. Mr. Spiridakis said that the limiting factor is how many kids can fit into the boat shop safely.

Mr. Hinds thanked Mr. Schulz, Mr. Spiridakis, and the 5th grade students for attending and speaking to the board.

Committee Reports:

1. Policy Committee

Mr. Hinds stated that he didn't think that the board would ever be done with policies but the board has adopted the majority of mandated policies.

2. Technology Committee

Mrs. Thompson said that we still need to complete and bring the technology plan to the board, and the board should expect to see that during the summer, prior to September 1st.

3. Facilities Committee

- a. Back Parking lot/Playground

Mrs. Thompson commented that Mitchell Construction has been fantastic to work with. The back parking lot was dug up, and it was determined that the reason for the heaving was due to the underground runoff from the neighboring property. Unfortunately, due how low the building is in relation to the land, he was unable to create the underground drainage opportunities that we had hoped to do with this project. To eliminate the heaving, he placed a permafrost mat above the water, which he believes will eliminate the problem. Mrs. Thompson said they were also unable to deepen the oil line due to the ledge.

Mr. Hinds asked about the timeline for the front parking lot. Mrs. Thompson said that she needed to reach out to Midcoast Excavation to see, as they were volunteering their services.

b. Summer Maintenance

Mrs. Thompson gave the board the list of the summer maintenance that was scheduled, which includes repair to the kitchen floor, front entrance flooring, update to 3 bathroom floors, refresh of 5th grade classroom flooring and furniture, replace desks and chairs in 1 classroom, complete last 1/3 of roof restoration, and repair skylights in 3-5 wing. She stated that she has met with the roofer to establish the timeline for the skylight and roof restoration. Today she met with the flooring company to obtain the estimates for 2 staff bathrooms, 5 classroom bathrooms, the office bathroom, and new flooring for the front entrance and a classroom. Those estimates are expected tomorrow. The staff bathrooms will be done prior to June 30th. All others will be summer projects.

4. Finance Committee

Mr. Hinds stated that he felt the school budget portion of the town meeting went amazingly well. He said it was great to see the confidence that the public had with the school budget. There was nickeling and diming and we were able to answer questions succinctly due to the Superintendent's creation of the budget and the board's preparation and knowledge of where the numbers all come from.

He said that the conversation regarding the town bank was interesting, and he was encouraged that the public wants to support the school.

Mr. McDaniel said that it was encouraging to have round numbers of \$1,000,000 in reserve. If everyone continues to buy into the the plan, it will still be there in 20 years if it is needed.

Mr. Hinds said that he would like to remind all board members and for members to remind towns folks that the we need the budget to pass referendum on June 14th. There is also a primary election that day.

Superintendent's Report:

1. Financial Report

Mrs. Thompson stated that with 8% of the year remaining, 1/3 of the budget remains, but to keep in mind that we still have two months of tuition, transportation, end of year expenses, cleaning, maintenance, special education costs to RSU 1 and state special education costs to fund.

She also reminded the board that we had planned for \$169,717.76 in carryover towards the next budget. She suspects there will be more In April she had spoken to the Town Administrator about carrying it over and the two of the discussed that with the attorney. He said that we would need to create new warrant articles that request for carryover funds to be actually carried over year to year. The Town Administrator said at that time it was too late to do that for this fiscal year. Mrs. Thompson asked about moving some of it into the reserve account for capital improvement. The attorney said that was not an option because in theory the educational funds in the general fund have subsidy for education in them, and because the Board of Selectmen run the capital improvement account for the school, the School Board can then not guarantee that the money is going to go towards education. Therefore, all of the funds need to be turned back to the tax payers as tax relief in the new fiscal year.

Mr. Bowdish asked from the floor, whether that same statement applies to the \$102,000 as well? Mr. Hinds said that the town has consulted with the attorney and the accountant on the matter.

2. District Updates

- a. Transportation RFP - Mrs. Thompson said that transportation RFPs are due this Friday to be opened at 3 PM.
- b. Celebration of Learning – The Celebration of Learning is next Wednesday, June 8th from 3-4:15. Please come, as it is the biggest event of the year and the culmination of all that the school does.
- c. Volunteer Invitation – Mrs. Thompson invited board members to the volunteer celebration on June 10th at coffee and crew. She said that crew is the vehicle the school uses to ensure that all students are known well by at least one adult in the school. It is used to develop and support classrooms and school norms, to have team building activities, provide opportunities for students to reflect and debrief, celebrate student successes and address issues and learn about and apply the school code of character and to start the day in a positive frame of mind.
- d. Pre-K – Mrs. Thompson announced that 11 of the 12 pre-k slots were filled.
- e. Outdoor Classroom – Mrs. Thompson said she would like to give a special thanks to all of our volunteers and especially to Frohmiller Construction for the support of the build of the West Bath Outdoor Classroom. There is one more build day this Saturday.
- f. Reactors are performing tomorrow night at 6:45. Mrs. Thompson thanked Mr. and Mrs. Bowdish for leading this group of actors.

- g. Extended School Year has been organized by Mrs. Franklin. Staff have been hired, students have been invited, transportation has been arranged. This year's theme will be focused on Peter Pan.
- h. Mrs. Thompson said that it's remarkable to see all of the updates to the school year that have taken place in the last few weeks, and that she invited the board to take a walk to view the upgrades: the butterfly garden, the basketball court, the outdoor classroom, the back parking lot, the new school sign, and thanked all teachers and staff who have gone above and beyond to bring these projects to fruition.

Mr. Hinds requested a recess at 7:31 PM

The meeting resumed at 7:41 PM.

Old Business:

1. Second Reading of Board Policies - The board conducted second readings of the following policies:
 - a. Second Reading of IHBAB – Free Appropriate Public Education
Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Mr. Crews seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).
 - b. Second Reading of IHBAL – Free and Appropriate Public Education for Students with Disabilities under Section 504
Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Ms. Hennessey seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).
 - c. Second Reading of IBHAL-R – Grievance Procedures for Persons with Disabilities
Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Ms. Hennessey seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).
 - d. Second Reading of IHCA – Extended School Year Services for Students with Disabilities
Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Ms. Hennessey seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

New Business:

1. 2016-2017 School Board Meeting Calendar
Mrs. Thompson shared the dates for the 16-17 regular School Board meetings with the board. She explained that meetings will continue on the first Wednesday of the month, with the exception of July and August.
2. Overnight Field Trip Request – 5th Grade Field Trip at Chewonki
Mrs. Thompson presented a request for an overnight field trip for the 5th grade students at Chewonki as presented earlier in the evening, for the dates of 10/11/16-10/14/16. She reiterated that the goals for the field work are:

- Various citizen scientist work on human ecology and environmental systems
- Team building
- Developing survival skills
- Developing estuary/ecology skills

Mr. St. John made a motion to accept the proposal. Mr. Crews seconded that motion. Mr. Crews asked what happens for kids who do not go? Mrs. Thompson explained that the development of the program is still in its infancy, and once the board approves it, she and Mr. Schulz will be able to have those full discussions about procedures. Mr. St. John asked if West Bath has done overnight field trips before. Mrs. Thompson said that for many years West Bath 6th graders spent a week at Kieve. The last time this trip happened was 8 years ago, and ended for financial reasons when consolidation happened. Mr. Crews asked if there was any financial obligations for families. Mr. Hinds said that the next agenda item would be to discuss how we pay for it, if the board pays for it, but that it needs to be approved first. Vote (5-0).

3. Funding Request for 5th Grade Field Trip at Chewonki

Mrs. Thompson shared the details of the contract with Chewonki, and how it is suggested that the school pay for a portion, and that parents pay for a portion, or that the PTO pays for a portion. She suggested that in this case, as the program is in its infancy that the board pay the full amount. Mr. Hinds asked if we would need to access Chewonki's bus, to which Mrs. Thompson said that she would intend to use Bath Bus Service. Mr. Crews said that if the board supports it, he feels they should pay the full amount and not ask families to pay, as some of the children who could benefit the most may not have the opportunity to attend. Mr. Hinds said that he agreed, but that they could not bind future boards. Future boards will have to decide if they want to move forward, but that he recommends they pay the full amount.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion that the board authorize \$8,100 and sign the contract with Chewonki. Mr. St. John seconded that motion. Ms. Hennessey said that she has worked with Chewonki both as a chaperone and a student, and they do an amazing job. Mrs. Thompson reiterated that she was fortunate to have the experience as a 6th grade student, and it sticks with you. Mr. Hinds said that the timing for the fall is great, allowing students to forge relationships and that he felt it was a great opportunity. Vote (5-0).

Mr. Crews said that he hopes that they will have as close to 100% participation as is possible, as not having full participation will make it harder to fund in the future.

4. Funding request for a 5th grade boat building program

Mrs. Thompson presented the fund raising request for a 5th grade boat building program with Maine Maritime Museum, as presented earlier in the evening. She explained that with the two other schools who work with Maine Maritime, one has shared funding with the town and grants, and the other has a town endowment to support the program, and the children sell raffle tickets and raffle off one of the 2 boats they build.

Mr. Crews said that he still uses the tool box that his child built in 7th grade.

Ms. Hennessey asked how much they get back for the raffle, and Mrs. Thompson said she would inquire. Mr. Hinds said that in the future this might be a good opportunity for the Senters grant. Mr. Crews said that his only concern about the cost is the sustainability, and he does not want it to be a 1-time splurge. Mr. McDaniel echoed that sentiment and suggested the board table the discussion, and find grant options.

Mr. McDaniel noted the time and suggested the board delay the first readings until next month. Mr. Hinds said that could be discussed after this agenda item.

Mrs. Thompson said that she felt that we needed to give the program a chance, develop a partnership, show that has positive outcomes, and then seek grant funding for future years. Mr. Crews said that he would like to investigate funding options to keep it sustainable year to year, and that he is 100% behind this program, but does not want it to be a 1-year thing. Mr. Hinds said that the board can only focus on one year, that they can not bind future boards. Mr. St. John said that it is something that the board can afford to do right now, and that they can look for grants for the future.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to authorize expenditure of up to \$20,000 for the program. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

5. Authorize the Superintendent to hire staff during the summer months on the Board's Behalf

Mr. Hinds made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to hire staff during the summer months on the Board's behalf. This was seconded by Mr. St. John. Vote (5-0).

6. Adjustment to the agenda

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to drop the first readings from the agenda due to time. Mr. St. John seconded. Vote (5-0).

7. Personnel Item:

- a. Resignation: Chelsea Coffin – 5th grade teacher

Mr. Hinds stated that the board has received a resignation from Chelsea Coffin. He made a motion to accept her resignation and wished her well in future endeavors. This was seconded by Mr. St. John. Vote (5-0).

8. Approve Library and Media Specialist Job Description

Mrs. Thompson provided an overview of the position and description.

Mr. Crews made a motion to approve, with one edit of the word Media. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

9. Approve Intervention Teacher Job Description

Mrs. Thompson provided an overview of the position and the description.

Mr. St. John made a motion to approve the job description. Mr. McDaniel seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

Public Comments

Ms. Hennessey stated that a member of the public recommended that we reach out to individuals in RSU 1 to thank them for the help that individuals and the district have provided during this first year of separation. Mr. Hinds said that he and Mrs. Thompson would discuss this at their meeting on Friday.

Next Meeting Dates and Locations

Wednesday, July 13th at 6:30 PM – West Bath School Administrative Unit Board of Directors Meeting

Adjourn

Mr. Hinds made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 PM. Mr. Crews seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Thompson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emily Thompson