

**LEBANON BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEBANON MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA
NOVEMBER 10, 2020 ~ REGULAR MEETING ~ 7:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Sarah Haynes, Chairperson Alexis Margerelli-Hussey, Vice-Chair
Maureen McCall, Secretary Delton Wentworth, Student Representative
Dawn Witcher Nicole McGillicuddy
Matthew Smith Mark DeCaprio
John Konow Danelle Person

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Robert Angeli, James Apicelli, Principal, Rita Quiles-Glover, Principal, Robert Laskarzewski, Principal, Robert Sirpenski, Business Manager, Kathleen Smith, Teacher, Cheryl Biekert, Director of Pupil Services, Jeannette Picard, Teacher, Kate Cofrancesco, Library/Media Specialist, Kevin French, Director of Facilities, Jacques Dulac, Director of Information Technology

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman S. Haynes called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. BOARD REORGANIZATION

1. Election of BOE Officers

Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. McCall to nominate S. Haynes as Chairperson. There were no other nominations. The motion passes unanimously.

Motion made by M. McCall and seconded by M. Smith to nominate A. Margerelli-Hussey as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. The motion passes unanimously.

Motion made by J. Konow and seconded by M. DeCaprio to nominate M. McCall as Secretary. There were no other nominations. The motion passes unanimously.

2. Subcommittee Assignment Input Form Distribution - S. Haynes handed out the subcommittee input form to the board members to complete and hand them in at the end of the meeting.

III. COMMUNICATION

1. Letter of Resignation - Superintendent Angeli read a letter of resignation from Patricia Hogg, Special Education teacher at LMHS. Patricia reached out to Superintendent Angeli and stated that she understands it could be hard to fill the position so she doesn't want to leave her students quite so soon. She is going to stay on until the end of the first semester, which is January 22, 2021.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - BYLAWS OF THE BOARD #9324

Public participation – 30 minutes; Individual speaker – 2 minutes

Vicktrie Hilario stated that she would like to thank the Board for their passion in education and that she is proud to know that when you vote for someone they take that seriously and they exhaust all efforts to help parents and staff get what is needed. Vicktrie also expressed her thanks for the special education that her boys have received. She spoke about one of her boys that has made huge strides in his educational experience and is grateful for the special education program in Lebanon. She also spoke about her other son who received special education which has helped him achieve Husky of the Month for September 2020.

Kathleen Smith thanked the administration for giving the teachers some social emotional time for professional development. She stated they had yoga to relax, a mile walk and a treat outside where they were able to social distance and just talk.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of minutes

1. Finance/Facilities Subcommittee Meeting - 10/13/2020
2. LBOE Regular Meeting - 10/13/2020
3. Strategic Plan/Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting - 10/21/2020
4. Snow/Ice Removal Subcommittee Meeting - 10/22/2020
5. Budget Transfers

Motion made by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by J. Konow to accept the consent agenda removing item one. Motion passes unanimously.

Item number one, finance/facilities subcommittee meeting on 10/13/2020 did not have the attendee's listed. It will be amended and brought back next month.

VI. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

D. Wentworth stated the high school is distance learning at this time and that online schooling is very taxing. It requires a lot of time management for students and it is a different schedule than what the students are used to. The students always learn better in person. Delton said that some of his peers are experiencing a decrease in mental health from doing online learning because of how hectic it is. They are aware that at this time it is necessary. Delton also said that his peers were upset that sports got cut off and that there was no senior night for the volleyball team. Delton answered some questions from eighth graders at the presentation at the middle school. Delton told the eighth graders to email him with any questions or concerns they have or would like to be brought up at future BOE meetings. In the music department, the musical has started up and they will be singing Christmas carols for the Christmas Tree Lighting on the Green. The musical this year is A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder. There will be in person rehearsals and then the musical will be recorded and released for one night in late February. There is a new video in the works to promote enrollment for the high school.

VII. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES

- Negotiations - M. DeCaprio reported that they are working on two contracts. The secretaries are in mediation. The IA's are meeting this week.
- Strategic Plan/Curriculum - D. Person reported that they met twice. The first meeting was 10/21/20 and the curriculum director position was discussed. The subcommittee discussed using the staff we already have to fill the position, but after much discussion it was agreed upon to fill the vacancy with a new hire. The subcommittee also discussed the effects of COVID-19 on the 19-20 school year. They discussed what kind of assessments we were using and what were required for last years graduates. There was not a significant impact on the graduates. The state assessments were sidelined and there were no state guidelines that needed to be reached for the last part of the year. If there are big gaps in the learning we are supposed to address them as they come up. The subcommittee also talked about the impact of COVID-19 for this school year. A lot of extra kits have been purchased and sent home for distance learners. Teachers are thinking outside the box and rearranging how they taught before. At this point we are meeting the requirements. The subcommittee discussed the new State Department of Education requirements. Smarter Balance, SAT and PE Assessments will be held in the spring. Lebanon has already been focused on social emotional learning. The subcommittee also looked at the new courses such as weight lifting which is an extremely popular force. There are 9 students in the manufacturing and workplace learning course and they are eligible to receive credits from Three Rivers. The subcommittee also talked about how the current events are being discussed in classes such as history and science. The second meeting was 11/10/20. There are two new courses that are required by the State of CT. The first being Health II. Students are required to have one full credit of Health. Currently, Lyman offers a half credit. Mr. Strout spoke at this meeting and stated that he has experience teaching this because he did it at his prior employment. We are looking to implement this at the next school year and may need additional staff for this. The second course required to be part of the curriculum, but not required for graduation, is African American and Latino Studies. Ms. Hisman and Mr. Apicelli spoke about this course. We have 14 electives in social studies so this would make 15. We will most likely need more staff. Not all 15 courses are offered at once. It shifts per semester and year. Officer Kevin Slonski, SRO, spoke at this meeting and provided reading materials about what he can do and will do this year as far as mini courses for each grade level. There are different topics such as street safety and stranger danger at LES, and at LMS some topics were safe dating and

social media. At LMHS there is an idea about having a club for students interested in law enforcement and police officer training which would be available on Friday's for about 20 minutes. Officer Slonksi expressed how much he has enjoyed just being present and talking to the kids. D. Whitcher feels we should be starting these conversations at the elementary and middle school level in regards to the new courses. D. Whitcher also asked what the SRO can offer at this point in our experience to the students that are distance learners or home schooled students that may return once the pandemic is over.

- Superintendent's Evaluation - J. Konow stated they did not meet, no report.
- Safety/Security - A. Margerelli-Hussey stated they did not meet, no report.
- Policy - M. McCall stated they did not meet, no report.
- Enrollment/Communications/Goals - D. Whitcher stated they did not meet, no report.
- Finance/Facilities - N. McGillicuddy reported that the subcommittee met in a joint meeting with the Snow/Ice removal subcommittee. At this time the subcommittee is just gathering data and has another meeting scheduled 12/17/20. The second item discussed was the lighting project. The rebates for the State of CT have been extended to February 2021. Best Practices will have an update on our lighting and proposals by our next BOE meeting. The next item is the ventilation systems. LMHS only has one issue regarding a fan. LMS is all set. At LES there are two fans that need to be replaced. The two fans at LES were planned to be abandoned when the Board did the renovation in the early 2000's so we are bringing those two fans back on. The next item is the Lyman Oil Tank project. There has been no evidence of oil leakage in the soil so KROPP is ready to pump the existing oil out into a separate tank. The tank will now be abandoned and remain in the ground with a filler to go into the tank so it will stay in place. The soil underneath will still need to be tested to make sure there is no contamination. The project should be completed by next week. For the 2020-2021 Budget, preliminary capitol requests are due to the BOF by 1/7/21. The subcommittee will start meeting on a bi-weekly basis starting in December. Capital and Operating expenses are going to be due 1/22/21. For COVID-19 updates, about \$67,000 will be submitted to FEMA for purchases from the 19-20 school year. If we need additional money for purchases that have been made in 20-21, specifically PPE products, we may have to request funding from the town.
- EASTCONN - M. Smith reported it has become challenging for him to attend their meetings. They are in survival mode so looking for additional services is mostly likely not going to happen until further down the road.
- Governance - S. Haynes met but it will be discussed in the executive session.

VIII. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORTS

The reports were in the board packets. R. Quiles-Glover added that Boxes to Boots came by a week ago and they were so grateful for our community collection. LES staff taught about the reason we have Veterans Day. Usually there is an in person ceremony, but this year it was a virtual ceremony that she will share with the Board. J. Apicelli stated Delton did a phenomenal job with the 8th graders and has been invited to all the virtual recruiting sessions. LMHS met with Franklin today; Sprague and Bozrah will be happening soon. There was a drive-thru open house for the ASTE program that was very well attended. J. Apicelli states they are trying to do something next week for the volleyball team for senior night. The winter sports start date has been postponed. There should be more guidance next week.

IX. REPORT OF SUPERINTEDENT

1. Enrollment

The report is in the board packet. Enrollment decreased from 952 to 950. The high school grew by two students, middle school is down 1 and LES is overall down 3. The student enrollment in the Magnet school is the same at 25. The state is producing enrollment reports due to the impact of COVID-19, which is included in the board packet. Our district is down 44 students. Most districts across the state are down in enrollment as well.

2. Summer Reading

There is some data in the board packets. Jeannette Picard reported that she and Kate Cofrancesco worked really hard on summer reading this year especially. When she first came to the district there was only 20-30% of the middle school students participating, but that has gone up to about 80% participating. In the last few years there has been a little bit of a drop. Last year 70% of students participated and this year was about 71% of students fully participating. J. Picard states that they are

concerned about the significant drop of participation once the 8th graders move on to high school. K. Cofrancesco stated this is especially concerning because of the distance learning in the spring. This year they tried a little bit harder because the spring was difficult for students so some things they did were a video kick off with pictures of the staff reading, online book shares that teachers shared in their Google classrooms, all the incoming fifth graders received a copy of one of their favorites books. Reading lists were mailed home to every middle school student and incoming fifth graders with their report cards. There have been email blasts sent out and the information was on the library's website over the summer. In the fall every reading or language arts teacher had a project. There were articles in school newspaper and parent newsletter. There were special modifications due to the pandemic. An online reporting form was created to make it easier for kids that were distance learning. There was curbside pick-up at Jonathan Trumbull Library. This year Farmer's Cow gift cards were purchased instead of the regular ice cream social for an incentive. The CT State of Education gave Lebanon an extended time to report participation. The free library bench was stocked with new books, snacks and masks. The three schools will be partnering with Jonathan Trumbull Library to create permission slips for students that don't already have a town library card. E-Books are allowed for this program but they encouraged reading print books when they can. There has been outreach to students as to why they are not reading and J. Picard feels a lot of it is that students are more interested in on screen activities as opposed to reading a book. N. McGillicuddy suggested read-a-loud for students.

3. Board of Finance 2021-2022 Budget Calendar and Communication

In the packet there is a letter from the BOF stating budget goals for the year. There are examples of capital request forms. There is the finance calendar for 21-22 budget where the dates that are important to BOE are highlighted.

4. School Updates Re: COVID-19

Learning under COVID-19 conditions is very hard. The administrators focused on SEL initiatives at each of the schools today for professional development. There will be a presentation by the social worker that will be shared for each of the schools. There have been some cases at LMHS and LES. Lyman is in their second week of distance learning. LES had to quarantine a small number of students and one classroom teacher. The close contacts that were tested have come back negative. The response at the high school to put them into distance learning was due to the numbers of close contacts. The goal is to keep the schools open for in school instruction as long as possible. There is no recommendation from the state to move to distance learning from Thanksgiving - Christmas time. The third CNA position was never filled so there are two CNA's shared among the three schools. The CNA position has been re-posted because we will be receiving a resignation letter from one of them. The hours of the part time secretaries at the schools have been increased. The funding for all of this is currently being found in the operating budget, but we may need to go to the BOF for some of these expenses. D. Person asked for more mask breaks and more lunch periods to be held outside.

X. FINANCE REPORT

1. 2020-2021 Budget

At this time we are in good shape. The first end of the year projection report should be ready for the December meeting. Some of it will be contingent upon FEMA funding and the potential for additional federal money. There is a potential for the substitute account to be overspent. We are not seeing that yet, because there is a lack of substitutes.

2. COVID-19 Relief Funds

Superintendent Angeli is not overly confident that FEMA will reimburse for all the expenses that are being put through. R. Sirpenski has been working with the Town Finance Department to generate the request and submit it to FEMA.

3. 2021-2022 Budget

R. Sirpenski and Superintendent Angeli met with all the principals and the central office administrators on their budgets and a first draft is being compiled. There will be more on that at the December meeting.

XI. DISCUSSION

1. 7th Grade Science

The position went from a 1.0 FTE to a 0.6 FTE. There was a reduction in that position based on a schedule change that went into effect at the middle school this year. It is a reduction of one science teaching period and a reading period. In the seventh grade science classes the enrollment is in the low to

mid-twenties. There has not been a recommendation yet to increase this position. All the seventh grade classes would have to be rescheduled not just in science classes but in other subjects in order to accommodate this change. R. Laskarzewski stated he would have to take 17 students and put them into a new science section.

XII. ACTION ITEMS

1. Act on letter of resignation

Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by D. Person to accept the letter of resignation with the new date. The motion passes unanimously.

2. Act on 2021 Meeting Dates - In the board packet there is a list of meeting dates for this coming years meeting dates.

Motion made by M. DeCaprio and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to accept the 2021 meeting dates.

Discussion: The April meeting date does not fall on the April vacation. **The motion passes unanimously.**

3. Act on new courses at LMHS
 - a. Health II
 - b. African American and Latino Studies

Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. McCall to accept the new courses presented at LMHS: Health II and African American and Latino Studies. Discussion: Both of these courses are required by the State of CT for Lebanon to offer but we will implement them into next school year. This will not impact the graduating class of 2021. There will be enough time and scheduling for this to happen. **The motion passes unanimously.**

XIII. ANTICIPATED EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged Communication Concerning Steps in Addressing a Personnel Matter.

Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. DeCaprio to move into executive session and inviting Richard Mills. Motion passes unanimously.

After a short break, the Board was called into executive session at 9:11 p.m.

The Board returned from executive session at 10:00 p.m.

XIV. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

XV. ADJOURNMENT

S. Haynes adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Hashem
Board Clerk