

**LEBANON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
LYMAN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY  
NOVEMBER 16, 2021 - 7:30 PM**

**MINUTES**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sarah Haynes (Remote Attendee, Chair)  
Alexis Margerelli-Hussey (Vice-Chair)  
Maureen McCall (Secretary)  
Dawn Whitcher  
Danelle Person

John Konow  
Bruce Calef  
Matthew Smith  
Nicole McGillicuddy  
Rachael Springer, Student Rep.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Andrew Gonzalez (Superintendent), Philip Chester (Lebanon Town Planner), Jessica Scorso (Interim LES Principal), Kevin French (Supervisor of Facilities and Custodial Services), Jacques Dulac (Director of Information Technology), Valerie Belles (Business Manager)

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Sarah Haynes called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Board Reorganization**

**A. Election of BoE Officers**

1. Chair – **Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by A. Margerelli-Hussey to nominate Sarah Haynes as Chairperson of the Board of Education for the 2021-2022 year. A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, M. Smith and N. McGillicuddy voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**
2. Vice-Chair – **Motion by M. Smith and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to nominate Alexis Margerelli-Hussey as Vice-Chair of the Board of Education for the 2021-2022 year. M. McCall, D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, B. Calef, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. A. Margerelli-Hussey abstained. The motion passed.**
3. Secretary – **Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by J. Konow to nominate Mauren McCall as Secretary of the Board of Education for the 2021-2022 year. A. Margerelli-Hussey, D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, B. Calef, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. M. McCall abstained. The motion passed.**

- B. Subcommittee Input Form** – S. Haynes provided BoE members with a signup form for upcoming subcommittee assignments.

**III. Student Recognition**

- A. Superintendent A. Gonzalez** recognized three members of the Middle School Girl's Cross-Country team for an undefeated (10-0) season.

1. Hazel DeLucia
2. Sylvie Hiltz
3. Elisabeth Person

- B.** A. Gonzalez recognized LMHS 10<sup>th</sup> grader Allison Giglio for being a responsible citizen and good role model for her work volunteering at the lower schools. In years past she has helped bake cookies that were donated to the Soup Kitchen, and this year is assisting with the homework club.

- C.** S. Haynes welcomed new BoE member Bruce Calef.

**IV. Communication**

- A. Letters of Resignation** – A. Gonzalez read the following letters of resignation

1. Cheryl Biekert (Director of Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator) has accepted a position with Ledyard Public Schools.
2. Andrew Barber (Instructional Assistant at LES) has accepted a teaching position in New London.

**B. Letter regarding Athletic Training Services** – A. Gonzalez read a letter from Girls’ Soccer coach Mark Morello in continued support of a full-time athletic trainer. During a recent Boys’ Soccer game, a Cromwell player suffered a medical emergency requiring the use of an AED and a 911 call. Mr. Morello praised Lebanon athletic trainer Anna Viscuso for her actions in organizing the emergency response, stating he believes had it not been for her, the outcome could have been much worse. A. Gonzalez also thanked Anna for her efforts.

#### **V. Public Participation (Bylaws of the Board #9324)**

**A.** Amy Marx of Hebron stated that she is against masks in Lebanon schools. She also asked A. Gonzalez about his weekly coffee chats. He stated they are held each Thursday at 8:00am at LMS/Central Office and are an opportunity for community members to have a general conversation with the Superintendent.

#### **VI. Consent Agenda**

**A.** Approval of minutes

1. Strategic Plan/Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting - 10/12/2021
2. Policy Subcommittee Meeting – 10/12/2021
3. LBOE Regular Meeting – 10/12/2021
4. Finance/Facilities Subcommittee Meeting - 10/26/2021
5. Budget Transfers

**Motion by J. Konow and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to approve the consent agenda. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, M. Smith and N. McGillicuddy voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**

#### **VII. Student Representative’s Report** – R. Springer reported. A more detailed report was included in the board packet.

- A.** LES – She met with elementary students online. They were excited for Goodies with Grandparents and dressing up for Halloween. There is also a coding with robots STEM/technology activity that is getting underway.
- B.** LMS – Students are enjoying PE Fitness Testing, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders had fun conducting a sugar-water lab. The newspaper club is going well, and a Pokemon Club is starting due to popular demand. Drama club begins on December 13<sup>th</sup>.
- C.** LMHS – Students are stressed about the midterm schedule, so R. Springer has suggested mindfulness breaks in between exams, to aid students’ mental health during midterms. Continued absences due to Covid are still a stressor to students.
- D.** LMHS Sports – Updates were given on soccer, volleyball, and cross country, including the LMHS girls’ volleyball team advancing to the state championships.

#### **VIII. Plan of Conservation and Development** – Town Planner P. Chester provided the BoE with the Town’s Plan of Conservation and Development, which was created by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 2020. The plan is redeveloped every 10 years in order to remain eligible for discretionary state funding. An example of projects funded by the grant is the replacement of the middle school greenhouse. The goal of the plan is to sustain Lebanon’s small-town, historic, agricultural, and rural character. The plan is primarily a land-use document, but does include thoughts on Lebanon schools. This includes the assessment that the schools are able to handle an increased capacity of students over the next decade, and concludes the BoE should deliberately market Lebanon

schools to eastern Connecticut residents. The plan offers five recommendations regarding Lebanon schools.

- A. Development of a professional marketing plan for school system
- B. Expanding farm to school lunch program
- C. Providing agricultural curricula at all grade levels
- D. Considering greater shared services or regionalization strategies
- E. Engaging and utilizing area farmers in ASTE program

## **IX. Committee Reports**

- A. Enrollment/Communications/Goals – D. Witcher stated there is nothing to report.
- B. Strategic Plan/Curriculum – D. Person stated they met tonight (11/16/21). There were several items on the agenda that were not discussed due to time constraints. S. Haynes asked that those items be added to the next meeting's agenda.
  - 1. LMHS
    - a. Continued discussions regarding Goodwin College coursework. Currently 12 Lebanon classes align with Goodwin classes.
    - b. New course proposals, including drone pilot certification, landscape and turf management, and sports nutrition.
    - c. New textbook proposal for British Lit. class, which will be on display in the library for a month. The public is welcome to review the book and provide the BoE with feedback.
  - 2. District – Received a detailed data points presentation, discussing testing results. I-Ready testing is continuing. The Title IV Grant was awarded. A Professional Development day was held on 11/10/21.
- C. Superintendent's Evaluation – J. Konow stated they did not meet, but they will be soliciting input for the mid-year evaluation, probably in December.
- D. Safety & Security – A. Margerelli-Hussey stated they did not meet.
- E. Policy – M. McCall stated they met tonight (11/16/21) and discussed the following policies. All three will be modified and presented for first readings at the next regular meeting.
  - 1. Therapy Dogs
  - 2. Relations between Public and School Personnel, Conduct on School Property
  - 3. Review of Policy #4121, Substitute Teacher Categories. A. Gonzalez reported that Lebanon's current policy requires substitutes to serve a 10-day probationary period before they are eligible to receive the full substitute's pay, and that Lebanon's sub pay rate is among the lowest of those he surveyed. He recommends removing the probationary period and raising the substitute pay rate, as well as using an education/qualification-based pay system.
- F. EASTCONN – M. Smith stated there is nothing to report.
- G. Finance/Facilities – N. McGillicuddy reported they met twice (10/26/21 and 11/16/21). Minutes from the 10/26 meeting are included in the board packet. Further updates include:
  - 1. LES generator fuel tank has been painted.
  - 2. Line striping at LMHS is on hold due to weather, with the hope that work begins in December.
  - 3. Painting at LMS is scheduled to begin 11/29/21.
  - 4. Camera installation at LES and LMHS is nearly done, with a total project cost of \$16,070.
  - 5. Door replacement at LES and LMS has an updated projected cost of \$26,847.72, down from \$29,000.
  - 6. LES received a donated washer and dryer.
  - 7. Catch basin replacement at LMHS will be completed within two weeks (per K. French), at a cost of \$10,900.

8. Several WiFi access points are in need of updating, at a projected cost of \$22,357, proposed to be taken from the tech capital budget.
9. Baseball seating project has raised \$15,000. They are hopeful of receiving additional grants, and are able to begin Phase 1 with the necessary funding. The project could potentially be completed in time for the spring baseball season.

#### **X. Administrators' Reports**

Full reports were included in the board packet. J. Scorso reported on recent successful family engagement events at LES, such as Goodies with Grandparents (200+ families participated) and parent/teacher conferences, which saw participation rates of 85-100%. She also highlighted the engineering STEM units introduced by Jen Olsen at LES, as well as a visit from the UCONN ambassadors on 10/29.

#### **XI. Superintendent's Report – A. Gonzalez reported.**

- A. Enrollment report (as of 11/10/21) was included in the board packet. Total district enrollment is 949 (LES – 342; LMS – 274; LMHS – 333), which is an increase of 14 since October. There are currently 17 students enrolled in magnet schools. N. McGillicuddy asked if additions to the district were due to students returning from magnet schools, or solely from people moving to the district.
- B. NESDEC Enrollment Report – The full report was included in the board packet. It noted the difficulties caused by the pandemic in projecting future enrollment. A. Gonzalez noted the district is currently 11 students higher than the projection for the current year, which is a positive trend he hopes will continue. He also noted the recent decline in enrollment seems to be flattening, and that the district will work to market itself in order to increase enrollment. He then noted that there are no multi-family housing opportunities in Lebanon, which is an attractive option to families that are moving to and joining other districts. Also, there are currently 29 home-schooled students within the district. Lastly, the NESDEC report noted the overall decline in enrollment throughout the region, showing that this is not just a Lebanon issue.
- C. Budget Calendar 2022-2023 – A. Gonzalez and Business Manager V. Belles will be meeting with administrators to hear requests, discuss possible cuts, and develop budgets during the month of November. They will present a preliminary budget to the Board in December.
- D. Covid Screen & Stay Protocol – Lebanon will participate in the state's "Screen & Stay" protocol, details of which were included in a letter sent to Lebanon families (also included in the board packet). D. Person said she feels it's a step in the right direction, but noted some confusing wording in the state-provided documents; A. Gonzalez stated he would bring it up during the next state department public health meeting.
- E. Facilities Tracking List – A. Gonzalez introduced a document created by V. Belles, providing details and status updates of facility projects within the district.

#### **XII. Facilities Report – K. French reported.**

- A. Door replacement at LES and LMS – The 1<sup>st</sup> quote from Dugmore & Duncan was for \$29,165.57; an updated quote (dated 10/6/21, good through 11/20/21) was for \$26,847.72 (to be funded via \$15,000 from SIP and \$11,847.72 from non-lapsing). Materials are 3-5 weeks out. K. French would like to include two additional doors at LMHS in the project. M. Smith asked why the doors were not included in the proposal; K. French responded that administrators had not asked for those to be replaced initially. He also clarified these doors would not be fully replaced, but rather would have proximity sensors installed. He estimates the cost to be a few thousand dollars. This cost is not included in the action item on tonight's agenda, and will be presented at a later date. S. Haynes asked if teachers were propping open these doors currently; A. Gonzalez stated that there had been some leniencies given in regards

to this practice, but that it was discouraged. Installing proximity sensors allows teachers to safely enter and exit the building without propping open doors.

**XIII. Technology Report** – J. Dulac reported, informing the Board that the state’s Emergency Connectivity Fund had provided the district with \$76,497. The funds were used to replace 300 Chromebooks in need of updating, as well as providing WiFi hotspots to eight students in their homes.

**XIV. Finance Report** - V. Belles reported.

A. 2021-2022 Budget – V. Belles provided the Board with the monthly budget report (status as of 10/31/21). A. Margerelli-Hussey asked for clarification on the “Other Purchased Services” portion of the report, which states there is only 7.08% of the budget remaining to be spent. A. Gonzalez said some of those expenses are contracted services, with payment required upfront. V. Belles stated she will check the formula used to create that section of the report as well, and will provide updated numbers to A. Gonzalez if necessary. S. Haynes asked how much remains in non-lapsing; the balance is \$410,648.39. A. Gonzalez noted the Board of Finance (BoF) has not yet approved the return of \$30,000. V. Belles said reconciliations efforts are ongoing. She also informed the Board that she was able to gain approval from the BoF for the district to financially manage the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Once the fiduciary fund is set up, the district can start receiving and utilizing donations for the celebrations. N. McGillicuddy noted 94% of the field trip budget remains, and asked if field trips were still happening. A. Gonzalez reported they are.

**XV. New Business** – Scheduled first readings of the following policies were moved to next month’s meeting. Sample policies from other districts were included in the board packet.

1. First Reading, Policy on Therapy Dogs
2. First Reading, Policy on Relations between Public and School Personnel, Conduct on School Property
3. First Reading, Policy #4121- Substitute Teacher Categories

**XVI. Action Items**

A. Act on Letters of Resignation

**Motion by J. Konow and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to accept the letters of resignation with regret. The motion passed unanimously.**

B. Act on 2022 Meeting Dates

After reviewing the proposed schedule, the November meeting was pushed back to the 15<sup>th</sup> to avoid coinciding with Election Day.

**Motion by M. McCall and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to adopt the schedule as listed, with the adjustment of November’s meeting from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>. The motion passed unanimously.**

C. Act on 2022-2023 School Calendar

Superintendent A. Gonzalez provided highlights of the proposed school calendar, including shorter weeks at the beginning of the year in order to ease the transition back into school. He noted the proposed calendar was designed by EASTCONN, and that Lebanon has the ability to adjust and adopt the calendar as they see fit. He also noted the calendar describes the October 10<sup>th</sup> holiday as “Indigenous Peoples’ Day” and that there had been discussion to changing it to “Indigenous Peoples’ and Columbus Day”. M. McCall stated her intention to vote against a calendar which would remove “Columbus” from the name of the holiday. D. Person also observed that holding parent/teacher conferences in the same week as Veteran’s Day results in several shortened school weeks during November.

- Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to approve the proposed school calendar, with the adjustment of the October 10<sup>th</sup> holiday to “Indigenous Peoples’ and Columbus Day”. The motion passed unanimously.**
- D. Act on Door Replacement at LES and LMS**  
**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to approve the door replacement at LES and LMS in the amount of \$26,847.72. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**
- E. Act on WiFi Access Points**  
**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. Smith to approve the WiFi access point project in the amount of \$22,357.45, to be taken from the technology capital budget. The motion passed unanimously.**
- F. Act on Change in Substitute Pay**  
**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to increase substitute teacher pay to \$14/hour for substitutes possessing a high school diploma, \$15/hour for those with a bachelor’s degree and \$18/hour for certified teachers. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, B. Calef, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. M. Smith abstained. The motion passed.**
- G. Act on Advertising on School Property**  
**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to direct Superintendent Gonzalez to move forward with research regarding advertising on school athletic facilities, and to then refer his findings and recommendations to the policy subcommittee, which will then create an appropriate policy. The motion passed unanimously.**
- H. Act on Funding Stadium Seating Project**  
 Superintendent A. Gonzalez informed the Board that the stadium seating project, which had initially not requested any money from the BoE, has run short on funding. They need \$30,000 to complete Phase 1. A. Gonzalez is asking the Board to decide whether the BoE will assist the stadium seating committee by providing funding assistance. The Board discussed possible sources of funding, including ESSER funds and the non-lapsing account. N. McGillicuddy supports the Board assisting the project, but wondered what other areas would be impacted by the use of \$15,000 in ESSER funds. A. Gonzalez said the district’s data dashboard program had originally been funded via ESSER, with \$15,000 allocated (\$5,000 per year for three years). He stated his desire to move this program’s funding source to the operating budget, rather than using ESSER funds, thus freeing up funds for the seating project. S. Haynes stated her desire to support the project, but is reluctant to use ESSER funds, and would rather use non-lapsing. D. Person and N. McGillicuddy agreed.  
**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by M. Smith to support funding in the amount of \$30,000 to complete Phase 1 of the stadium seating project, with the source of funding to be determined by the Superintendent. The motion passed unanimously.**
- I. Act on Second Reading, Policy #5002 – Student Dress**  
**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to accept the second reading of Policy #5002. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**
- J. Act on Second Reading, Policy #5014 – Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy**  
**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to accept the second reading of Policy #5014. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**

**K. Act on Second Reading, Policy #6001 – Weighted Grading and Calculation of Grade and Quality Point Averages**

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to approve the second reading of Policy #6001. D. Whitcher, D. Person, J. Konow, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, M. Smith, N. McGillicuddy and S. Haynes voted in favor. B. Calef abstained. The motion passed.**

Superintendent Gonzalez requested that voting on coursework proposals at LMHS be added as an action item for the next meeting.

**XVII. Executive Session**

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. McCall to move into executive session at 9:20 p.m to discuss exit interviews and Director of Pupil Services position, inviting Superintendent Gonzalez to join.**

The meeting came out of Executive Session at 9:36 p.m.

**XVIII. Items for Next Agenda**

a. Proposed courses

**XIX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by the chair at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Hannah Walcott (Board Clerk)