

**LEBANON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
LYMAN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
NOVEMBER 21, 2023 - 7:30 PM  
MINUTES**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sarah Haynes (Chair)	Bruce Calef
Alexis Margerelli-Hussey (Vice-Chair)	Andrew Lathrop
Dawn Whitcher	Rachael Archer
Nicole McGillicuddy	Danelle Person

**ALSO PRESENT:** Andrew Gonzalez (Superintendent), Sue Lambert

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Sarah Haynes called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Recognition**

- A. BoE Members** – S. Haynes thanked departing BoE members John Konow, Maureen McCall, and Brian Greene, and welcomed new members Andrew Lathrop and Rachael Archer.
- B. CNA Presentation** – The BoE heard a presentation on the new Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course from instructor Sue Lambert, who outlined course goals, and student Lauren, who highlighted increased post-graduation career opportunities.

**III. Board Reorganization**

**A. Election of BoE Officers**

**1. Chair**

**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to nominate Sarah Haynes as Chair. The motion passed unanimously.**

**2. Vice-Chair**

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by D. Person to nominate Alexis Margerelli-Hussey as Vice-Chair. The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Secretary**

**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to nominate Danelle Person as Secretary. The motion passed unanimously.**

- B. Subcommittee Assignment Input Form** – S. Haynes requested BoE members indicate subcommittee preferences as soon as possible.

**IV. Communication**

**A. Letters of Resignation**

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- 1. Monica James (LES Para)**
- 2. Valerie Belles (Business Manager)**

**V. Public Participation (Bylaws of the Board #9011)**

S. Haynes acknowledged community interest in participation, and noted BoE members will not be responding to individuals or comments during the meeting.

- A.** Julie Valvo (Lebanon) – Stated she is the parent who requested the ASSC, and is a proud Lebanon resident and American. 12 students have signed up, and donations have been received to support the club.
- B.** Elizabeth Wester (Waterbury) – Discussed the image of Satan she and other satanists identify with, and stated the goal of the club is to teach self-love, acceptance, and a scientific explanation of the world, not to speak to children about their religion.
- C.** Christina McKenzie (Colchester) – Stated kids are struggling to be engaged, and the club provides a space for kids, and social interaction and opportunities at a time when they are most needed.
- D.** Pete Howard (Coventry) – Stated he is not a spokesperson for the group, but is a member, and feels there is no cause for alarm. Stated the ASSC exists to support students, with no discussion of religion, and urged others to do more research.
- E.** Tom Buckley (Lebanon) – Is alarmed by the club, and does not want that information in the hands of his 5-year-old, stating this should be kept away from kids.
- F.** Suzanne Gilleese (Lebanon) – Is a foster mom to an LMS student and asserted the Board's right to deny access to the club, stating they advocate hate and violence.
- G.** Sheree Swenson (Lebanon) – Stated her appreciation for the Superintendent, Board, and schools, and for their adherence to policies protecting the town from litigation. She noted flyers sent home with her kids were how her family connected with the community, and feels that value is greater than the outrage seen tonight.
- H.** Larry Lee (Lebanon) – Does not understand why this is in the elementary school, or being sent home with his kids. He feels it is overstepping boundaries, and urged other parents to research the legality of the situation.
- I.** Mark Matkovich (Lebanon) – Thanked the Superintendent and J. Scorso, and stated he does not care about either club, just freedom. He views this as a teachable moment, explaining that people have different beliefs, but if they are not actively abusing anyone, they are fine. He also cited the Supreme Court decision enabling both clubs to exist.
- J.** Jeannine Bessette (Lebanon) – Stated her opposition to the Satan Club, asserting that it is not an atheist group, but the occult, and threatened a lawsuit should satanic symbols be put up.
- K.** Shelly Laibrandt (Lebanon) – Stated both groups have a right to be here, and suggested parents be notified of such programs via email, rather than flyers sent home with students.
- L.** Jordan Brown (Lebanon) – As a resident and local evangelical pastor, he is concerned about the Satan Club's presence. He noted both groups' first amendment right to be

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there, but suggested revising the criteria for programs selected for afterschool, perhaps with parent involvement. He also thanked the BoE for their work.

- M.** Marisa Seng (Lebanon) – Thanked the BoE, and stated she is ok with both clubs staying or leaving, but does not want other clubs to be shut down over the issue.
- N.** Brock Littlefield (Lebanon) – Asked if there was a way to make a motion to revisit what afterschool activities are offered, or if another meeting to discuss the issue was possible.

**VI. Consent Agenda**

- A.** Approval of minutes
  - 1. Safety & Security Subcommittee Meeting - 10/10/2023
  - 2. Enrollment Subcommittee Meeting - 10/10/2023
  - 3. Facilities Subcommittee Meeting - 10/10/2023
  - 4. BOE Regular Meeting - 10/10/2023
  - 5. BOE Special Meeting - 10/23/2023
  - 6. Curriculum/Strategic Plan Subcommittee Meeting - 10/26/2023
  - 7. Safety & Security Subcommittee Meeting - 11/01/2023
  - 8. Curriculum/Strategic Plan Subcommittee Meeting - 11/02/2023
  - 9. Policy Subcommittee Meeting - 11/16/2023
- B.** Approval of Budget Transfers

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by D. Person to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.**

**VII. Student Representative's Report**

None.

**VIII. Committee Reports**

- A. Curriculum** – D. Person reported they met twice, discussing potential adjustments to ELA curriculum at Lyman, as well hearing as a data presentation regarding attendance and academic achievement at all three schools.
- B. Strategic Plan** – D. Person stated the latest plan, from 2018, was reviewed, and noted the turnover in several positions, including Superintendent and administrators, during that time.
- C. Negotiations** – No report.
- D. Facilities** – N. McGillicuddy reported on discussions regarding Town Meeting-approved funds. Projects to be addressed include asbestos removal at LES, school study, LES gym floor, Lyman roof repairs, and burglar alarm upgrades. A PreK playground from Mansfield will be installed at LES over the summer.
- E. Safety & Security** – D. Whitcher reported they met twice, with minutes included in the agenda.

**IX. Administrators' Reports**

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Written reports were included in the agenda.

**X. Superintendent's Report**

- A. Town Surplus Fund Projects** – A. Gonzalez reviewed funds approved at Town Meeting. He clarified the existing burglar system is still operational, but outdated, with replacement parts increasingly difficult to obtain. Upgrading the system is a proactive effort. Creative solutions to gym floor issues are being explored, including vinyl flooring. Discussions with contractors are ongoing. The school study will be conducted by SLAM, and will take a full year to conduct, with findings unlikely to be received before February 2025 at best.
- B. Non-Lapsing Account** – The BoF recently returned over \$57,000 to the non-lapsing account.
- C. 2024-2025 Budget Timeline** – Initial budget request forms have been received, with further discussions with administrators anticipated prior to the first public budget hearing on December 12<sup>th</sup>. A. Gonzalez hopes to have a budget presented and approved in February.
- D. Paid Lunch Equity Allowances 2023-2024** – Due to a surplus and further changes from the state, the district is now able to offer free meals to all students beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>. It is unknown how long the surplus will last, though A. Gonzalez hopes until the end of the school year, stating they will notify families at least 30 days before any changes.

**XI. Finance Report** – A. Gonzalez reported.

- A. 2023-2024 Budget** – October financials were included in the agenda. It was noted there is about 61.84% of the approved budget remaining, slightly more than the 5-year historical average of 56.08%. The facilities tracking list and current projects were reviewed, as well as technology capital funds.
- B. Non-Lapsing Account** – Prior to the return of \$57,000 (via BoF approval), the projected balance was roughly \$169,000. A. Gonzalez noted a possible upcoming request for special ed costs.

**XII. New Business**

- 1. First Reading - Update – Policy #3541.3/3011, Student Transportation Management**
- 2. First Reading - Update – Policy #3541.5/3012, Transportation Hearings**
- 3. First Reading - Update – Policy #4117.3/4022, Personnel Reduction in Force**
- 4. First Reading - Update – Policies #6161.3/6007, Comparability of Services**
- 5. First Reading – Delete – Policy #3541.6, Transportation to Non-Public Schools**

**XIII. Action Items**

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**1. Act on Letters of Resignation**

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by A. Margerelli-Hussey to approve the letters of resignation with regret. The motion passed (7-0, with A. Lathrop abstaining).**

**2. Act on 2024-2025 School Calendar**

**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by D. Person to approve the 2024-2025 school calendar. The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Act on 2024 Meeting Dates**

**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to approve the 2024 scheduled board meetings. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 4. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9300/9016, Committees**
- 5. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9321/9017, Time, Place and Notice of Meetings**
- 6. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #4133/4018, Travel**
- 7. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policies #4112.4 and #4212.4/4019, Health Examinations**
- 8. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #4153.1/4020, Family and Medical Leave**
- 9. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #6141.311/6017, Limited English Proficiency Program**
- 10. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #1312/1015, Procedure for Handling Citizen Complaints**
- 11. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #6141.312/6018, Migrant Students**
- 12. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #6162.6/6019, Copyright Law Compliance**
- 13. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9010/9018, Bylaws of the Board – Limits of Authority**
- 14. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9160/9019, Student Representative to the Board of Education**
- 15. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9250/9020, Remuneration and Reimbursement**
- 16. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9270/9021, Conflict of Interest**
- 17. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9271/9022, Code of Ethics**
- 18. Act on Second Reading – Update – Policy #9326/9024, Minutes**

**Motion by D. Person and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to approve second readings of items 4 through 18.**

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Discussion: B. Calef noted inconsistencies in the language used in policies 9018 and 9022. The BoE agreed to return those items to the Policy subcommittee for further refinement.

**Amended motion by D. Person and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to approve second readings of items 4 through 18, excluding items 13 and 17. The motion passed unanimously.**

**XIV. Executive Session**

**Motion by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by A. Margerelli-Hussey to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing Safety & Security, and discussing attorney-client privileged communication regarding legal advice pertaining to the use of facilities and distribution of materials, inviting Superintendent Gonzalez to join. The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:50 p.m.

The meeting returned from Executive Session at 9:28 p.m.

**XV. Action Item**

**A. Act on Lens Solution purchase**

**Motion by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to purchase Lens Solution for \$38,778.94 from the Safety & Security Grant with the remainder to come from the non-lapsing account, up to \$31,000.00. The motion passed unanimously.**

**XVI. Items for Next Agenda**

**XVII. Adjournment**

S. Haynes adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hannah Walcott (Board Clerk)