

SHARON BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019 - 5:30 PM
@
SHARON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Approved Minutes

School Board Member: Don Shaw, Chantelle Brackett.

Staff and Public: Keenan Haley (principal at SES), Tara Weatherell (Business Manager at SU, arrived at 6:46pm), Laura Lewis (teacher at SES, left after the executive session) Elaine Kearns (Sharon resident and volunteer at SES), Nicole Antal (recording secretary)

1. Call to Order
Shaw called to order at 5:47 pm
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
The Executive Session will take place before Board Communication to allow for Laura Lewis to leave early.
3. Assign times/time keeper
Shaw will keep time.
4. Consent Agenda
 - 4.1. Approve the Minutes of Tuesday, November 12, 2019 (Regular)
Brackett made a motion to approve the minutes as written and submitted. Shaw seconded. Motion carried.
5. Board Communications
None
6. Public Comments
 - Kearns wanted to hear from the Board what is their take on what benefits being part of a larger Supervisory Union has brought us.
Shaw explained that there is not much we share with the other districts within the Supervisory Union except for transportation, and special ed.
Shaw explained the models the board explored two years ago, but mergers never came to fruition.
 - Kearns was wondering if the the whole SU on the same snow day schedule? Shaw explained that usually yes, but sometimes, one district has to close while the weather in other districts remain open. The issue is transportation, as students and buses move through districts.
Butler doesn't have drop chains on their bus, making it difficult for them to drive through snowy weather, Haley has heard from the SU. Haley said he will investigate, and Shaw said that this might be something to add to the negotiation for next session.
 - Antal asked about the money put aside two years ago by the districts within the

supervisory union after the mergers were finalized. She explained that after all the mergers were done, the money not used by the districts but given to the district by the state for the study of merger were all put into one account. Shaw confirmed, and said that no district at this point has had a chance to access the money, because Tunbridge and Chelsea haven't finalized their merger. They still have access to that money to finalize it. Once they have finalized their merger, the money will be distributed or accessible via a grant process, Shaw wasn't sure.

The money will have to be used to serve the students. Antal wanted to make sure that this is something Haley knows about, and the board keeps in mind too, as it has been two years, and boards have new members who might not be aware of this money.

- Kearns wanted to share that she volunteers at the school library, and she has been very impressed with how the librarian is talking to the 5th and 6th graders about safety online and in the games they are playing, and starts great discussion with the kids. She can see the kids are very comfortable talking to her about these subjects.

7. Action Items

None

8. Reports to the Board

8.1. Superintendent's Report

None

8.2. Business Manager's Report

8.3. Principal's Report

- Haley reported that the school completed the first round of parent conferences. Haley was very pleased, only 3 parents out of the whole school missed their meetings. He attributes that to good communication from the teachers.
- Our school was awarded the Fresh Fruit and Veggie Grant (\$8054): the grant will provide fruit and veggies for morning and afternoon snacks. All children can access it.
- The staff, teachers, and administration is looking at updating the vision and mission of the school. There are new initiatives, new staff & teachers in the building, and the vision and mission statement hasn't been updated for 20 years. The community will be invited to participate.
- New lead on a school counselor. She has been a counselor in North Carolina, so she is going through the provisional process right now. Haley is hoping she will be approved and can start by next week. There's been a real need for a counselor.
- Winter Concert is December 19th, 6pm - 7 pm.

Policy Review (4 Policies)

Brackett made a motion to approve the policies B22 with an error changed (end of the page,

“compliant” should be “complainant”) and C35 as written and submitted. Shaw seconded. Motion carried.

9. Discussion Items

10.1 Career Change Assistance Program

Shaw wanted to clear up this item for the current contract. There is verbiage in the current contract for individuals to fund a change of vocation. Currently, we don't have any money for this, or have a budget for it.

10.2 Budget Review

- Weatherell shared two reports with the board: the initial draft financial excerpt from the audit (not shared with the public, shared with the board for informational purposes, not yet approved by the board), and the Sharon 2020-2021 Proposed Budget (shared with everyone).
- The Sharon 2020-2021 Proposed Budget was discussed:
Weatherell shared this first draft and includes feedback from Haley. It has a 3% increase in salary, 12.7% increase for health insurance (depending on what the enrollment will be, this number can fluctuate). The parking pavement is not in this draft budget. Shaw asked for Weatherell to look into information for a bond option for the pavement of the parking lot.
- Weatherell informed the board that she submitted our Special Ed expenditure report back to the Agency of Education, after she saw what the initial deficit report was. She relooked at this report who was completed by someone else, and there were a bunch of items missing from the report. She resubmitted, and it will take 4-6 weeks before the AOE can look at it. This report is important as it affects our assessment.
- In the first draft, she bumped up the transportation because she had that information, but the rest of the SU budget is the same as the budget for the SU hasn't been approved at this point.
- Haley highlighted a few changes he has made to the budget from last year: He allocated more money for transportation, as the school has moved to educate students beyond the classroom (more field trips, getting the kids out in the community).
- The first draft, if accepted as is, is an increase of 3.94%, dependent on what happens with the Special Ed assessment and the SU budget pointed out Weatherell.
- Haley asked Weatherell how much money in the Building Reserve Fund? She thinks around \$76,000, in November.

10.3 Building Project Status

Shaw was wondering how the building project going? The Pre-K roof is not done. The builders had a personal emergency which put the project on hold. The structure is up and will be finished soon.

10.4 Insulation Proposal

The insulation above the kitchen is a big issue, according to Haley. The current insulation is not doing anything at this point. Haley had someone to look at it (Central Vermont Insulation) and got an estimate of what needs to be done. Haley said it's a hefty price tag but it will be done correctly, instead of just putting a bandaid on the issue: \$16,345. He has done work at many municipal building. He could do it in about a week. Haley is wondering if we do move forward with this project, where would the money come from in the budget? He has the same question about the Parking Lot. The matter will be discussed when the Business Manager comes in, as she will have more information about the money set aside in the Building Reserve.

10.5 Parking Lot Update

Haley went to the Selectboard to see if maybe the School could bid together when the town in their Howe Hill bid. The Selectboard decided they will not include the parking lot or the access road paving project in their bid . The selectboard respectfully requests the Sharon School District proceed to bid the parking lot paving project. The selectboard further request the School District include as a bid alternate a one-inch shim in overlay for the school driveway from the back corner of Town/TSA parking lot around the circle (where the chain link fence is).

The selectboard proposes reviewing bids and this bid alternate and making the decision on bid awarding in conjunction with the school district, and then the selectboard will further discuss the school district and how the town will pay for its share of the project's cost.

Haley already has a ballpark of what the School is looking at for the repavement of the parking lot \$120,000.

John Harrington will be invited to the next meeting to discuss the project with the board, and possible adjustments to bring the cost down.

10.6 PK thoughts for the Future

Preschool teachers have asked if having a full day program is something the community wants for the future?

They had two main arguments for starting the discussion. First, they think it would be a benefit for the child. They are finding it hard to add enrichment to a half-day, as the second part of the day is less structured and not all kids attend.

Second, contractually, they are finding it hard to make it work. They are contracted as teachers for the first-half part of the day, then there are hourly. They feel it is dismissive of their roe. The full day would also be more competitive to keep staff and teachers here.. They want to survey the community to see if there is a need/want for that. The teachers shared some research about the benefit of a full day program.

Shaw asked what it would do to the childcare program, as it is making money right now for the school. Haley said it will need to be taken into account, but he wants to make sure the students' education comes first. The program also used to be longer, 8-12 instead of 8-11:30, and Haley isn't sure when or why this decision to shorten the day was taken.

The discussion will continue at other meetings in the future.

(Present during the Executive session: Laura Lewis, Don Shaw, Chantell Brackett, Keenan Haley)

Brackett made a motion to enter Executive Session at 5:48 pm. Shaw seconded. Motion carried.

11. Return to Public Session

Return to public session at 6:00 pm.

Action taken: Brackett made a motion to not support any reimbursement for a wellness conference attended in Killington. Shaw seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Confirm Next Meeting Dates

12.1. Tuesday, January 14, 2020 - 5:30 PM @ The Newton School

Confirmed at Strafford. The board might schedule special meetings to discuss the budget.

13. Future Agenda Items

None

14. Adjourn

Brackett made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm. Shaw seconded. Motion carried unanimously.