



Lunenburg Public Schools

Dr. Kate Burnham, Superintendent of Schools

MEETING NOTICE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Regular Session, **LHS Collaborative Room #D132**, 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

School Committee

Heather Sroka, Chair
Wendy Bertrand, Vice Chair
Brian Lehtinen, Secretary
Carol Archambault
Jim LaVeck

Superintendent

Dr. Kate Burnham

Business Manager/ HR Director

Michael Cassidy

Recording Secretary

Susan Somers

Student Representative

Kyle Weiss

Guests: Karyn Savell- Primary School Guidance Counselor, Patty McCarthy-Guillette-School Linked Services Director, Jessica Beardmore-LHS Foreign Language Teacher, Peggy Proctor-LHS Foreign Language Teacher, Lynn Radford-LHS Foreign Language Teacher

A. In accordance with the requirements of Open Meeting Law, please be advised that this meeting is being recorded and broadcast over the Lunenburg Public Access channel.

B. Mission Statement: The Mission of the Lunenburg Public Schools is to provide all students with the skills, confidence, and passion for life-long learning so that they may find their own paths to successful careers, active citizenship, and rewarding lives.

C. Pledge of Allegiance is Recited.

1. **Call to Order** by Ms. Sroka at 7:00pm.

2. **Chair's Report:** decision made to move on directly to presentations.

3. **Presentations-Kinship Care Presentation:** Patty McCarthy-Guillette made a presentation about the care and kinship support group. This is something they can bring to grandparents and other non-biological caretakers. They have seen a tremendous spike in these caregivers in the last three years. Grandparents are from another generation of parenting and can be unsure of what they can do. Karen in primary and Amy in middle school have spearheaded this initiative. Patty has fielded three calls about this in the last few days, and this is definitely needed. It will be self-driven, and plans are for a speaker every other month and a support-style group in between. Please refer people! It starts Monday 10-11am at the senior center. Refreshments are included. Also open to non-Lunenburg residents. They also had an early childhood resource fair, with 20 agencies, both public and private, preschools, early intervention, etc. in attendance. 35 families attended, and it was a success, and is planned to be an annual event. A great way to encourage community engagement.

4. **Public Comment-Agenda Items:** Dave Rogers of 82 Highland St. asked if they will be able to ask questions about/after the budget presentation? Ms. Sroka responded that they will be answered next meeting at a Q&A . Mr. Rogers expressed his concern about the budget's 4 million projected shortfall after the 5th year and exponential increases. Sustainability is key, and he doesn't think this is sustainable. Mr. Rogers disagrees with the budget as it pertains to the school, and wishes the town manager would have approached this differently. We need to go into this with reasonable expectations - ie: we can't spend what we don't have. Population in Lunenburg is getting older and this is hard on Seniors.

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5. **Review and Approve Warrants, Line Item Transfers** - none noted.

6. **Review and Approve Minutes**

- Regular Session 1-8-20 LaVeck motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Bertrand, all in agreement.

7. **Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Burnham would like to highlight the care and kinship support group starting on 1/27 from 10-11am at the senior center. Acknowledgements to Karen, Patty and Amy for spearheading this. School registration is set to begin in February for pre-K, K, Summer Extended Day, School Year Extended Day and Early Learning Center. More information to follow with specific details. We expect registration up on the web 2/1. Town Manager gave the 5-year forecast yesterday to the board of selectmen. She will be presenting again this Thursday 1/23 to the Finance Committee at Town Hall. She asked that Dr. Burnham and Mr. Cassidy attend to address any questions regarding the schools. For the first time a 5 year staffing plan was included. We've also been asked to attend the Board of Selectmen meeting on 1/28 where there will also be a Q&A on forecast.

8. **Student Representative's Report:** Students enjoyed a homework free break, except for the AP classes. Winter sports are fully involved, with track winding down. Sophomore, Junior and Senior class plays are coming in February. In March, a group of 6 students are attending the Hyannis student council conference. NHS students need first 13 hours of service by the end of the month. Time is in the works to be spent packing food with Kylee's Kare Kits. LHS students went to the Second Science Olympiad on January 9th.

9. **New Business**

Action

a. **Seal of Biliteracy (Jessica Beardmore presenting):** The seal is a sticker from the State of Massachusetts that will be affixed to a student's diploma indicating biliteracy in two languages. It's purpose is to reward high achievement in two languages; to promote language study beyond two years; and to recognize and value the first language of English learners as well as their mastery of English. This program started in 2011 and is now all over the country in 36 states. Students must demonstrate an intermediate high level of proficiency by graduation. Up to 120 schools will participate this year. There is an ever-increasing demand for bilingual literacy. It is a voluntary test costing \$20 (free and reduced lunch students are covered). A three hour test, it covers speaking, listening, writing and reading. A medal is available, as well as the sticker. Some colleges may offer credit for the seal. Plan is to offer this to juniors and seniors - at the moment around 8 students in Spanish, 20-25 students total. ELL students are included in this. The focus is to drive proficiency-based learning and that this is a challenge achievement. Mr. Lehtinen asked how the conversations will take place with ELL students? Ms. Beardmore advised that everyone in the district will get a letter. One of the potential challenges that will be faced is if we run across a language that doesn't have a test. In that instance the student will be required to assemble a portfolio and have it evaluated. There is a network for teachers to assist in this. Mr. LaVeck made a motion to approve. Ms. Archambault seconded, all agreed. Dr. Burnham acknowledged the entire department for investigating this. We can see your passion about this project, and feel it is a great opportunity.

b. **FY21 Superintendent's Proposed Budget:** presented by Dr. Burnham and Mr. Cassidy. Key points: State mandates and reporting since 2010 have increased and have placed increased demands on us. We have seen an enrollment increase, and it is expected to continue. Despite this, we are classified as not needing assistance. This budget process strives to meet student needs and align with our strategy. There are of course extended staffing needs, but boiled down they come to 1 assistant principal, 1 special education teacher and 1 school psychologist. The intent is to have a stable team at the primary and elementary schools where currently these staffing needs are shared. Mr. Cassidy noted that the town has supported us in a 3% increase in budget. Current contracts expire June 30th. Health insurance is a great impact - a proposed 6.5% increase - although the amount will be clear at the end of February. The governor has not released Chapter 70 funding at this time. It is unclear what Lunenburg is going to get. Mr. Lehtinen asked if we would see funding return to us during the year. Mr. Cassidy noted that we do see increases and decreases. Future needs are difficult to plan for, as there are no predictors. Unexpected things arise - this is the first year we have had to pay a fee for baseball at Marshall Park, for example. TC Passios is an unknown - all the things it is currently used for (extended day, community links, offices, business offices, IT, etc.) - Where are they all going? Turkey Hill is an unknown - are we anticipating a series of renovations? A larger renovation? A new building? Dr. Burnham noted the need for professional development. A discussion of the timeline followed. Considering moving the March meeting from the 4th to the 11th in order to have numbers, Could have a meeting as early as February 26th if we have health insurance numbers. Ms. Sroka expressed concerns that the focus feels solely on the

lower grades and do we run the risk of losing high school students? She had been hoping to see a Dean of Students for the High School. Discussion followed regarding the need for a consistent and stable team at the younger grades. Taking care of issues at the lower grades will ultimately result in fewer/solving issues at higher grades. At issue, of course is the limited resources. Mr. LaVeck commented that the presentation seems well thought out, and makes perfect sense - but that there are some nagging questions. He liked that this proposes adding things back in. Dr. Burnham agreed that there are many positions that if other funding sources can be found, could be added back in. There has simply been no hint of guidance. Mr. Cassidy noted that we could have a hard time filling some of these positions. Mr. LaVeck asked that the changes be on the website before the meetings for Q&A. As Round 1, Mr. LaVeck made a motion that we accept this presentation. Ms. Bertrand seconded, all in agreement. Dr. Burnham ended with noting that the leadership team is here at this meeting and acknowledging their hard work.

c. **Donations:** \$500 from Exxon Mobil for science at the High School. \$601.20 from BoxTops to Turkey Hill in the Gift account. Ms. Bertrand noted that you can now do BoxTops from your phone. Ms. Sroka asked that this be put up on the website. \$1,000 for the Kindness Garden at the Primary School in memory of Denise Galloway. Square 1 Art fundraiser brought in \$1,274.62 to the PTO. Ms. Archambault made a motion to accept, seconded by Ms. Bertrand, agreed by all.

d. **Appointment of School Committee Member for Paraprofessional/ Custodial Negotiations:** Dates are scheduled for 2/25 and 3/16 with 2/27 and 3/19 as backup. Ms. Archambault is suggested as a representative. While she cannot attend 3/16, Mr. Laveck makes a motion for Ms. Archambault as representative. Seconded by Mr. Lehtinen and accepted by all.

10. Old Business

Action

e. **Extended Day/ELC Recommendations Vote for SY 2020/2021:** Mr. Lehtinen makes a motion to accept, Seconded by Mr. Laveck. Agreed upon by all.

f. **Third Reading Policies # 3102, 3306-struck completely, 3401,3402,3406,3701.1, 3000 Appendix A-struck completely, 3203.01:** Ms. Sroka questioned if a letter goes out to parents regarding account balances of a graduating senior going to a sibling's account. Ms. Bertrand added that Mr. McGrath had a process for this. Dr. Burnham suggested talking to the Director of Food Services. Mr. LaVeck made a motion to accept policies as read, Ms. Archambault seconded, all agreed.

g. **School Committee Goals Facebook Page:** Mr. Lehtinen has been working on this. Decision was made to make this a Facebook group instead of just a page as this would allow us to turn off comments. Mr. LaVeck suggested having both an admin and a moderator to prevent having a quorum. It was moved by Mr. LaVeck that we establish Mr. Lehtinen as publisher and admin, and Ms. Bertrand as moderator. Seconded by Ms. Bertrand, agreed upon by all. Ms. Sroka thanked Mr. Lehtinen for working on this.

11. Reports

a. **Athletic Advisory Committee:** next meeting is in March.

b. **Finance Committee:** met 1/9. Committee is in need of another member. Issues: the snow and ice account is in the red. Town has received a \$250,000 grant to make Memorial Drive more accessible and safer for pedestrians. Tomorrow evening there will be a meeting where the 5-year forecast will be presented. Anticipate level funding and level service.

c. **Policy Sub-Committee:** meeting next Tuesday.

d. **PTO:** Ms. Sroka advised that they will be looking for a new president. Perhaps starting with a VP who could shadow the president. Next meeting in March.

e. **School Councils:** Mr. Lehtinen advised that the primary met on 1/15. Budget.Review handbook. Next meeting 2/12. Ms. Archambault added that the elementary council met yesterday. Mostly discussed MCAS and increasing the positive climate at the school. 52 Kylee's Kare Kits are distributed district-wide every week. Four NHS students helping. Mr. LaVeck advised that the middle school has not met. Ms. Sroka added that High School discussed NIASC accreditation. We are being interviewed. Sunday, 3/8 Budget. HS needs to not lose any staff. Next meeting 2/25.

f. **Capital Planning Committee:** funding all requests using free cash and revenue from taxes. \$1, 329,133 that includes the three school projects: AC at the Primary School, AC and asbestos abatement at Turkey Hill Elementary.

g. **Wellness Advisory Committee:** Ms. Bertrand advised that they met 1/14. Results of a survey of Middle/High school students (696). Focus is currently on Middle School. Middle-schoolers are stressed, don't get enough sleep; 32% have witnessed vaping in school and 9% have used alcohol. We need to continue to gather data looking at both High and Middle School and share with administration with intervention plans included. Next meeting 3/17.

h. **PAC/SAL:** Ms. Sroka is requesting that the meetings be posted on the website, as she (and most likely others) needs the information to be able to attend.

i. **Lifelong Learning Advisory:** has not met.

j. **T.C. Passios Building Design Committee:** Mr. Lehtinen noted that this group met on 1/16. Three architect design firms will be presenting on 1/29 at 6, 7, and 8pm, open to public comment. We will potentially select one and they would complete work potentially in March/April to potentially present to the town meeting in May.

12. **Public Comment-Open:** Lisa LeBlanc LEA - Education Association member as well as the Mock Trial advisor. We had our first trial yesterday. Lost to Groton by only 2 points. Next Wednesday and following Tuesday there are new trials coming. Takes place at the Leominster Courthouse, and is comprised of 10-12 kids. Ms. LeBlanc wanted to say thank you for your thoughtful deliberation on the budget. As a unit, we are in support of looking at the younger grades. Mr. Lehtinen added that when students get more opportunities (such as mock trials) they will feel that they fit in and will get in trouble less. Ms. Sroka volunteered that the girls varsity basketball team has hit 100 wins, and they have a Juvenile Diabetes Awareness game coming up on Monday.

13. **Topics for Future Discussion:** Budget.

14. **Adjournment:** Ms. Bertrand called for adjournment at 9:34pm. seconded by Mr. LaVeck, agreed upon by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Somers