

RSU #63 Board Meeting  
Date: May 20, 2019  
Location: Holbrook Middle School  
Minutes

**Members Present:**

*Town of Eddington:* Rusty Gagnon, Christina McLeod, and Steven Carr

*Town of Holden:* Gavin Robinson, John Hutchins, Heather Charity, and Jennifer Newcomb

*Town of Clifton:* Linda Graban

*Superintendent of Schools:* Susan M. Smith

Chair, Rusty Gagnon called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

At 6:07pm Heather Charity made the motion with a second by Gavin Robinson to enter into Executive Session to discuss Labor Contract Negotiations pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A §405(6)(D).

**Roll Call Vote: 8 Yes; 0 No**

Public session resumed at 6:30pm. A flag salute was conducted and a moment of silence was observed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Christina McLeod with a second by John Hutchins to approve the minutes from the May 9, 2019 Special Board Meeting.

**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

**Recognition and/or Awards of Students, Staff and Others:** Superintendent Smith advised the Grade Eight Promotion Ceremony will be held on Monday, June 17, 2019, the same evening as the next Board meeting. There is no conflict for Board Members. Bright Bytes Group collected technology data over the past 6 years from schools in Maine. Superintendent Smith received an email from a representative of Bright Bytes Group stating RSU 63 is among the Top 20 Maine School Districts when it comes to how technology is impacting students. Superintendent Smith thanked George Cummings, Technology Director, for his efforts to keep technology current and in working order for all students and teachers. Superintendent Smith read an email from Julia Alley. Ms. Alley shared how Wendy Giguere, Eddington Cook, was reading to students during breakfast on a rainy day and filled out Bikes for Books forms for each child who was sitting with her. Ms. Alley felt this was a wonderful display of how all staff work together with students in the district.

**Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:** Kristin Russell, Special Education Teacher at Eddington, received a \$750 grant from Donors Choose for sensory items for her classroom at the Eddington School.

**Presentation:** Superintendent Smith reviewed the bond referendum question. E. William Stockmeyer from Drummond and Woodsum is our bond legal counsel. Mr. Stockmeyer provided us directions and copies of documents that went to towns on May 10<sup>th</sup> (as required for referendum voting). The meeting today is the official public hearing on the bond. The bond referendum is not included in the Budget Warrant Articles that will be voted on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The bond was approved by the Board on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The next step in the bond process is the vote on June 11<sup>th</sup>. If the bond passes on June 11<sup>th</sup>, then we will start the application process with Maine Municipal Bond Bank. Kelly Theriault, RSU 63 Business Manager, reviewed the Maine Municipal Bond Bank application process. Maine Municipal Bond Bank is specifically for Municipal Bonds. They offer lower interest rates than regular banks. The current bond rate is 1.9%. Participants have the benefit of the Maine Municipal Bonds credit rating. They sell bonds twice per year, spring and fall. Applications are due in August

1st with approval at the end of August, and pay outs in October. This means projects that are done during the summer will have to be paid out of the general fund cash flow and reimbursed by the bond once payment is received in October. The application is thirteen pages and requires information from the towns. Superintendent Smith added districts can apply for large or small bond amounts. The cap is 10% of the combined state valuation of the district towns (\$52 million for RSU 63). Bids on the work included in the bond are starting to come in. Most bids are lower than the estimates.

**Questions and Comments from the Board:** John Hutchins, stated his only concern would be starting the projects before the bond and/or budget are approved leaving the district on the hook for payments that we possibly do not have money for. Superintendent Smith advised we will know June 12<sup>th</sup> if the bond and/or budget are approved. The bond application process will be finalized in August. She advised if the bond and/or budget do not pass, we will have to explore more options. Gavin Robinson advised in the past fifteen years, he encountered one time a Maine Municipal Bond has not been approved. Jenn Newcomb stated the Budget and Finance Committee explored the bond option because of the increase in high school tuition and facilities issues. The budget could not absorb the large increases in both cost centers. Removing the immediate necessary projects from the budget and replacing them with one smaller bond payment allowed the committee to present a budget she felt was fiscally responsible with taxpayer money. She stated multiple tax payers have reached out to her regarding why the Board is not using the Capital Reserve Funds to complete the facilities projects. She advised it is not wise to use those funds when there are more potential problems at all of the schools just waiting to happen. The projects proposed to be funded by the bond are just a few of the immediate needs that have to be addressed. The Capital Reserve needs to stay in place in the event other breakdowns happen. Educating the public is key at this point.

**Questions and Comments from the Public:** Susan Dunham Shane, Town of Eddington, asked if the amount listed in the summary sheet are actual bids or estimates. Superintendent Smith advised they are estimates and bids are starting to come in. Ms. Shane asked what the estimate was to fix the second cracked boiler at Holden. Jake Morgan, Transportation and Facilities Director, stated the second boiler is a gasket problem. The cost to fix the boiler is being absorbed by the current fiscal year budget. The pressure has been turned down on the boiler to help get it through until June 7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Shane asked how many questions will be on the ballot. Superintendent Smith advised there will be two ballots. One for the bond with one question and the second ballot will have three questions (one to approve the budget, one to continue the budget referendum process, and the last question is the non-binding opinion question to move to one campus). Ms. Shane asked if the non-binding opinion question passes does that allow the board to automatically take the \$120,000 out of the Capital Reserve. Steve Carr advised that is an option, if voted on by the towns. However, the board does not want to take money out of the Capital Reserve unless absolutely necessary. Rusty Gagnon stated there will be additional fliers and meetings if the non-binding opinion question passes. The next step for the Board would be to identify the needs of the campus. Patrick Lyons, Attorney from Eaton Peabody Attorneys at Law, read a prepared statement on behalf of a client (individual or business) he represents from Clifton, Eddington, or Holden. The statement is included with the minutes as *Attachment B*.

**Dates of Next Committee Meeting:**

RSU 63 Budget Meeting (Public Vote): Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 7:00pm, at Holbrook  
RSU 63 Board of Directors Meeting: Monday, June 17, 2019 at 6:30pm, at Holden  
Budget and Finance Committee: Monday, June 17, 2019 at 5:00pm, at Holden  
Curriculum Committee: Will meet in the fall

**Budget and Finance:** Nothing to add to the Business Manager Report. Superintendent Smith reviewed the Request for Proposals for the Audit. Budget and Finance Committee is recommending Ron Beaulieu & Co. Their bid was the lowest bid received and they have a pass rating in their peer review. The bid is for a three-year term. Ms. Gagnon asked if Ms. Theriault knew this firm. Ms. Theriault advised she did not, however she has received positive feedback from their references so far and has some to more to check. John Hutchins asked if there was any concern with this bid coming in so low compared to the other companies. Superintendent Smith stated, and Kelly Theriault agreed, they were not surprised by the range of the bids received. Some of the companies who responded have the reputation of bidding high.

Christina McLeod asked what type of roof is being replaced at the Eddington School. Superintendent Smith advised it is an asphalt shingled roof. Mr. Morgan advised the roof was last replaced in 1992.

Motion by Steve Carr with a second by Linda Graban to approve the facilities bids and audit bid as recommended by the Budget and Finance Committee. (*Attachment C: Notation \* approved bids*)  
**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

**Superintendent's Report:** Superintendent Smith advised she attended the Superintendent Seminar last week and learned new information from Drummond and Woodsum. A security notice was recently put out as a general reminder, if you see something, say something. Be aware of your surroundings, especially going into the long holiday weekend. Heather Charity asked Susan to put this message on Facebook. Superintendent Smith stated she and Linda Graban attended the Clifton Select Board Meeting last week. There was good conversation and questions asked about the bond and valuation/mill rate. There was conversation about possibly joining the Brewer School District. Clifton Select Board confirmed they are not at the point of petition. They are exploring information internally. Superintendent Smith advised she will be attending the Eddington Select Board Meeting tomorrow. The Holden Town Council meeting is also tomorrow. Jenn Newcomb and John Hutchins will attend the Holden meeting

**RSU #63 Chair's Report:** Ms. Gagnon stated after six years, tonight is her last Board meeting, as well as Ms. Newcomb. When they started on the Board, the District was in financial disaster. Over the years, there have been many changes in administration and she is very proud of all the Board and administrators for the improvements they have made to the District and considers them all like family. She stated the Board is strong and hopes they continue to stay strong in their convictions and moving the District in the right direction. Ms. Gagnon stated she is proud to say she has served on the RSU #63 Board of Directors.

**Acceptance of Reports:**

Motion to approve written and verbal reports from Administrators, Committees, Superintendent, and RSU #63 Chair, by John Hutchins with a second by Heather Charity.

**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

**Old Business:**

**Communication Regarding One Campus Referendum Question:** Superintendent Smith discussed the draft flier. The flier simplifies the question of whether the towns want the board to continue investigating moving to one campus or not. More information on moving to one campus is on the district website noted as "Supporting Documents." The Board likes the flier. Ms. Newcomb thought the flier simplifies the question for the non-binding vote, but needed "locally funded" added

to the wording. Ms. Shane likes the flier and suggested to bold the question and make it stand out to grab the attention of the viewer.

**New Business:**

**Approval of Proposed 2019-2020 RSU #63 Budget:** Superintendent Smith advised Draft 5 was reviewed on May 9, 2019. Since that meeting, the Budget and Finance Committee met and reviewed the bids received. Most were lower than estimated. The second flashing light at the Holbrook School (\$6,000) will be funded with this fiscal year budget and was removed from next fiscal year budget. \$45,000 from current budget balance forward was added into FY20, if needed, for a half-time Pre-K Teacher. Ms. Gooding, current half-time Pre-Kindergarten Teacher has been reassigned to Grade 2 next year. Pre-K enrollment for next year is currently lower than this year. If enrollment numbers increase, this balance forward will allow the option of adding a half time Pre-K Teacher next year.

Draft 6 was created after making these changes and is being presented today. Hard copies of the Draft 6 Budget and Budget Summary were provided to all Board members and audience. We anticipate this to be approximately a 1.05 mill rate increase to Clifton and 1.1 mill increase to Holden and Eddington. This is down quite a bit from the original drafts.

Motion by Gavin Robinson with a second by Steve Carr to approve the proposed 2019-2020 Draft 6 Budget.

**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

**Vote to Call and Approve the Warrants for the Budget Meeting and the Validation Referendum and to Authorize the Notice of Amounts Adopted:** Motion by Gavin Robinson with a second by Steve Carr to "Vote to Call and Approve the Warrants for the Budget meeting and the Validation Referendum and to Authorize the Notice of Amounts Adopted," be approved in the form presented to this meeting and that a copy of said Vote to be included with the minutes of this meeting as *Attachment A*.

**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

**Parent and Community Survey for Feedback and Evaluation of Superintendent:** A draft copy of the survey is included in the Board Packet. Ms. Gagnon advised this is an expansion on the Superintendent Evaluation process. Ms. Smith stated the Policy Committee felt the survey should be done toward the end of the school year while things are still fresh in people's minds. The feedback would be handled by a Board Member. Christina McLeod offered to enter the hand answered survey responses. The survey would be due back by June 28<sup>th</sup>. George Cummings and Ms. Wyman will get the survey up and running online. Ms. Gagnon suggested the information should come back to the Board Chair and the Board Chair be the owner of all responses. Gavin Robinson wanted to know if there was a way to make sure responses are from people who live in the district so the information is not skewed and people only answer once. Superintendent Smith stated she is comfortable with the process as long as the Board is aware there is a possibility the responses are not from District residents only. Ms. Gagnon suggested adding check boxes at the top identifying the status of the responder (ie: resident, parent of student, etc.).

**Personnel Actions:**

**Resignations:** Jessica Russell, Special Education Educational Technician III.

**Reassignments:** Rita Lovejoy, Grade 5 Teacher to Grade 5-8 Special Education Teacher (2019-2020); Sarah Gooding, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher to Grade 2 Teacher (2019-2020); Ashley Bean,

Grade 4 Teacher to Grade 5 Teacher (2019-2020); Steve Goulette, Educational Technician III to Long Term STEM Substitute (May 28 – End of School Year, Temporary Reassignment).

**Elections:** None

**Appointments:** Michele Archambault, Summer School Coordinator; Kasha Robertson, Special Education Teacher Extended School Year; Inez Laverdiere, Special Education Educational Technician III Extended School Year; Debra Walsh, Summer School Educational Technician III; Nikki Goss, Summer School Teacher; Desiree Doughty, Summer School Teacher; Sandy Adams, Summer School Bus Driver; Cindy Smith, Summer School Bus Driver; Pam Bull, Summer School Bus Driver – Dedham; Donnette Cameron, Summer School Van Driver; Leianna Spratt, Summer School Van Driver; Jacob Gould, Summer School Substitute Van Driver; Hannah Cote, Summer School Occupational Therapist; David Randall, Substitute; and Holly Knowles, Holbrook Evening Custodian.

**Searches:** Searches continue for Substitutes, Summer School Staff (four Teachers/Educational Technician III, and Speech/Language Therapist), and Grade 4 Teacher.

**Questions and Comments from the Public:** Ms. Shane referenced the One Campus Survey responses. She was concerned the number of responses does not match the number of responses noted on the top of the sheet and asked how the survey was distributed. She did not receive it via email and did not know anything about it. Superintendent Smith advised the survey was sent out via email and distributed at a public meeting. Ms. Shane stated she is concerned communication could be a barrier when distributing information moving forward. Heather Charity advised the information was sent out to multiple locations, towns, district websites, etc. Russell Smith, Town Manager of Eddington advised the towns are sending out the information, unfortunately unless the information is controversial, response is small. Superintendent Smith is going to work with Mr. Cummings and Towns to merge the email lists to try and reach more people.

**Adjournment:**

At 8:15pm a motion was made by Steve Carr with a second by Christina McLeod to adjourn the meeting.

**Vote: 8 Approved; 0 Opposed**

Respectfully submitted by,



Susan M. Smith  
RSU #63 Superintendent/Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Approved: June 18, 2019