

SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
Wednesday, August 12, 2020

School Board Candidates Interviews/Newton Vacancy

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER**- Chair Baker opened the meeting at 3 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Baker stated, we're here to interview candidates and appoint a school board member to replace Newton's seat that Dr. Pam Brown vacated. The appointment runs through to elections in March, 2021. Thank you all for your interest and thank you candidates for your willingness to participate in this selection process and to serve as a school board member. Due to social distancing requirements there's limited seating in the library and masks are required. The public can also attend via YouTube. The link is: www.youtube.com/c/srsdmeetingvideos
The link is also posted on the school website.

The interviews have been scheduled 30 minutes apart with 25 minutes for each candidate and a 5-minute break in between. If any candidate fails to show up at their scheduled time they're disqualified after a brief wait. If the next candidates are available we'll move up interviews to fill the time. There are currently five candidates. One has dropped out. The candidates following the person that dropped out have graciously agreed to move up to fill the respective time slots. At the conclusion of the interviews, the Newton school board members will go into a non-public session to discuss, and then back to public session to vote. I am requesting Jamie Fitzpatrick Chair this meeting as Jamie's in the room with the candidates. I can't see anybody in the audience. I can only see Jamie and who will ever be at the interview, so I'm requesting, I think he's in a better position to run it. Thank you Jamie, please go ahead.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said, there's been times when openings came up on the board and there wasn't a lot of interest in the community. It's not easy to stand up and say, hey, consider me especially consider me for this thankless job in a time when it's going to be even less thankful than it is now, so thank you. It is encouraging to see people's willingness to put themselves forward clearly with one seat and multiple candidates. One person will be pleased and, well maybe all five will be pleased but at least one person will be pleased and the others, we thank you anyway. So, why don't we start right off with Heather? You were the first one to put in, so you were the first candidate to be reviewed. Jim and I plan to alternate with questions. You'll see me writing things down; that's because that's what I do. It helps me to remember what's happened, so if you see me writing things down that's what I'm doing.

2. **INTERVIEWS**

Heather Ingham –I will begin with my prepared statement that I was told I could bring.

Hello, name is Heather Ingham. It is my pleasure to be here today to interview for the open school board seat. I have lived in newton for 15 years with my husband who grew up here, our children ages twenty, twelve and five have attended or will attend Sanborn schools. Our oldest son now resides in North Carolina, our second son will be entering seventh grade here at the Sanborn Regional Middle School and our little girl will be entering Kindergarten at Bakie. My husband and I believe is our duty to give back to our community through volunteer ship. As a Sanborn Youth Baseball Board Member, I am the sponsorship coordinator responsible for raising funds

to ensure all youth can participate. I was also on the Memorial PTO board acting as its secretary for six years. I've also donated my time to the Middle School Boosters. My husband volunteers with Sanborn Baseball and Sanborn Youth Basketball. Professionally, I am a program director at NFI Massachusetts. It is a non-profit human services and mental health agency. I've been there for six years starting as a Clinical Director and then being promoted to Program Director. I've been working in the field with families for 18 years. When I was a Caseworker in the field, I provided support and therapies to families helping them gain independence to maintain a strong family unit and as a Program Director, it is my responsibility to oversee Foundations for Families; a community-based mental health program which serves children youth and families and adults. It is also my responsibility to provide sound fiscal oversight by assisting with creating and maintaining the program budget. However, the most rewarding part of my position is supporting my staff to create meaningful, impactful change for our clients. I am interviewing here today as I have a belief if you want to see change in the world, you must be involved and active. Change does not happen just by one individual. We must work collectively as a community to make impactful and lasting change. I have been participating in task forces and parent forums the past three years to increase my knowledge on our district and its educational and budgetary needs. We strive to provide an exceptional education to our children while being fiscally responsible. It is not always an easy balance. As a member on the recent task force, I saw firsthand the amount of teamwork and dedication that is required of our school board members. I have witnessed the positive change recently in the district and I feel I am uniquely qualified to help advance that effort. I am passionate, dedicated, a critical thinker and able to work collaboratively with others. Being able to be respectful and collaborative are important as not all parties are going to agree, but we do need to work together towards a common goal as stated at a recent school board meeting by a current member. We are one Sanborn. I truly believe we all have the same goals at the end of the day and we can work together to achieve them. As a school board member, I will do my best to represent the town of Newton and its constituents. We are in difficult times and need balance and partnership to ensure that we can meet the educational and budgetary needs of our community. I believe my strong organizational skills, my keen eye for detail and creative problem-solving skills will be an asset on the school board and I thank you for your time.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What attributes do you think are essential for a successful school board member?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think the most important attribute is teamwork and being collaborative. There are six other voices on the Board and we're not all going to agree but we all need to work together and come to a common consensus. As a Clinical Social Worker, my biggest job is mediation; helping families mediate, helping staff mediate, helping people come to find a middle ground because at the end of the day, we can agree on things even if we look at things from a different perspective.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-Presently we are looking to fill Dr. Brown's seat vacated because she moved. Dr. Brown has left a legacy behind. Why do you think you are the right person to fill Dr. Brown's seat?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think Dr. Brown and I actually had a lot in common. We both looked at a lot of things in the same way. We looked at things through a clinical lens. We looked at things through how do you educate the youth while still being fiscally responsible, looking at the numbers and the data. When we make decisions as a program, I have to look at the numbers and the data. If I want to hire more staff, I need to have the budget to match that. I have grown my program in the last year from 14 staff to 23 staff and I'm hiring two more staff, so I know how to grow a program how to grow things how to make things happen.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your past professional experience, what criteria do you use to make decisions about hiring people, retaining goods and services or the effectiveness of a course of action? How you use these criteria when making decisions as a school board member?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I usually look at the big picture. I always look at the big picture. How it's going to impact the program. I also take the interest of my staff that works for me, before I hire any new staff I have one of the current staff members participate in an interview. So I know that the district has been doing a really great job with surveys and community involvement and getting task force and forums going. So I would always look at that information. I would also look at how it affects our bottom line; if it will be financially appropriate to take on a new contract or to take on a new staff member. I've currently taken on two new contracts this year that we were able to sustain and actually support the growth of our program. So, I feel that i can look at all of the different data points and all of the different parties and how they can come together to make an effective decision.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your beliefs on the current status of public education and what if anything do you feel needs to change in public education?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I believe in public education. I went all of my school with public education. I went through traditional high school. I went to Timberlane, I went to Keene State for my undergrad and I went to UNH for my Master's degree. So I believe in Appropriate Education and its worth. Not all families are able to afford to go to a private school. I do think that at times our kids' ability to do the competency learning can be hard. I have a child with special needs so the Formative and the Summative are very overwhelming for him and I think for me as a parent, doing more education on how our grading system works and how our competency-based system works. Because as a parent, I can tell you I was very confused our first year in the middle school.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What do you see is the board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- The Board's role is to be the policy makers; you create the policies that the school must follow and to set the tone for the district. For example, for your goals that you have set, which one thing that I definitely could support with as a clinician is helping make the goals more objective and attainable. The goals on the board, they're very broad. There might be breakdown and you might have that somewhere else but for the community, how would we get there? I think implementing the strategy, implementing where we're going as a district, creating the five-year plan, how to improve math and reading programs which I extremely agree with as I said, I think the reading, that is probably one deficiency that I think the school can improve on is reading skills for a lot of our youth. I know my son also struggles with reading so that's something that I'm passionate about.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Can you describe what your position was on the Reorganization at the time the decision was made and is it the same or has it changed from then to now? If it has changed why has it changed?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think when it first started I was concerned. I was in love with Memorial School. My son had an amazing experience with Memorial School and I was worried about my daughter going to Bakie. I was worried about my son having one year at the Middle School and then being sent up to the High School. I can say my belief changed when I saw the interventions being put in, the fiscal savings it was going to as a taxpayer and as a community. I will be honest when COVID first hit, I was concerned that we would be going with the reorganization but after talking to School Board members and Mr. Ambrose, I do believe it's the right direction. We as a community were house poor; we had way too many buildings we didn't have enough kids, we didn't have enough resources. We needed the reorganization to ensure that we're fiscally sound because as we know things happen; the roof in the middle school collapsed with a snowstorm and we had to search for that money. So, I do think the reorganization is the right direction for our district especially as enrollments are going down. In the beginning as a parent I was concerned, but moving forward I am on board with the reorganization.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In the development of a school district budget what goals and objectives would guide your decision making?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- Knowing that the goal of making sure that we're providing our kids an adequate education. I think sometimes a lot of families get really stuck about "well they're getting b's and c's". Well b's and c's are our passing, not all kids need to get a's and b's. We would like that for all kids but when we're looking at creating education that would be fair and consistent across the board that people can attain. I also would look at what things would be available to students that do want to attain more; maybe some AP classes and things like that. I would also look at how to ensure we can access technology and other ways to lessen costs. I think COVID has given us a really great opportunity to look at how technology can be better served to meet more kids. I know we've had VLACS before and we've had other avenues. I can tell you I've onboarded four staff through COVID and we've used our online academy and I've been able to train people remotely from their homes; not have to pay mileage to bring them in, not have to pay for food to feed them. I definitely think with the future, some sort of remote learning is going to be with us because of the cost savings that it can give.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- If you are on the Board, what are your priorities? What do you want to achieve?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think my priorities are making sure that we're providing an exceptional education. I want Sanborn to be known for exceptional work but also making sure that we're being fiscally responsible. I want to ensure that we can increase kids' reading. I know there's a lot of kids that have struggled with reading disabilities and dyslexia and weren't able to get help until they were much older or it might have been too late. That's why I really like the reorganization because it's focusing on the younger kids and it's getting those reading scores up. At a younger age because studies have shown if they don't learn how to read by third grade, it's going to be harder for them as they get older.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What are your thoughts about returning unspent budget dollars at the end of the fiscal year to the taxpayers?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think that's important. I think we would need to look to see there are not any gaps that we might be missing to ensure things like, should we put some more money in the Capital Fund? But I definitely think we should be returning money to the taxpayers if we're not using it or if we aren't able to earmark it for something towards one of the objectives or goals that we're working towards as a district.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What is a time commitment that you expect that you'd have to put in as a Board Member?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I would assume a lot. I see the meetings, they're twice a month, there's the Subcommittees meetings, there's probably other meetings that you have that we don't even know about as community members. I can tell you I am very passionate about the things that I do and if I am someone that is picked, I will prioritize the time. I always make things happen. You now, my boss jokes every time I complete a goal. She's like all right what's next? What are you going to complete next? What are you going to do next? I'm a very hard worker. I'm very dedicated. For those that know me, I come from a family of public servants my mother was a Selectman, my mother was on the Budget Committee. My father was a coach for 15 years. Community involvement is just something that is very important to me as a person. It's just part of my belief system.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your view, what has the district done well over the last few years and what has the district done poorly that you would change?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think the district has done really well to come together. I think previously the community, the school board, there was a lot of at odds and I think the School Board is working really hard to listen to the community and work with the community. I think the schools have done really well at supporting families in need. I think COVID is a great example; when we went into lockdown in March, I think a lot of families were scared. A lot of families were struggling and I think the district did a really good job of responding to that. As I said previously, I think the reading scores and the reading support is probably the one thing as a parent and from other parents that I've spoken to needs to be improved on.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your thoughts on school opening given the COVID situation?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- So, as you know I did speak at the School Board and I was on par. I believed in a hybrid model. I do believe that for some kids they do need to be back at school. I think for some kids and families school might not be a safe place just due to their own medical conditions or their anxiety but I was in support of the hybrid model because I felt it was the best compromise and as I said earlier, I believe in compromise. I believe in meeting in the middle and working together. I can tell you remote learning will be extremely hard for my family personally just because the needs. I have a daughter going into kindergarten and a child on an IEP going into seventh grade. I did have a great meeting with the Principal at the Middle School so I feel better but I am a proponent of the hybrid model.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What benefits do you see if any in the Academic Intervention the district is investing in and do you have any concerns about it?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I think the benefit is kids that kids that might will have reading disabilities or dyslexia or other issues that impact their learning will be identified much sooner and they'll be able to get the proper interventions and the proper skills and they'll be able to do well and that's where we'll have that exceptional Sanborn because if our young learners are getting what they need, they'll become lifelong learners. I'm an avid reader. I mean I've been reading since I was four but my son is not an avid reader because he didn't get those skills and he didn't get identified until much later. The schools have done an amazing job but I think if we can identify those things sooner, it's the same with any clinical work we do. If we can identify what's going on for a child we can make a much more impactful change for them because we can hyper focus our interventions based on what they need.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- As a school board member, would you see yourself primarily as a representative of the community or a representative of the school system or how would you view that role?

Answer/Ms. Ingham- I would view myself as a representative of the community and you know obviously as a parent, that would shape some of my views but I truly believe that I would be part of the voice for the community. I wouldn't be a rogue agent so to speak. I wouldn't be there with my own agenda. It really would be, how can I service to improve the community.

Question/ Mr. Baker- Can you talk about a little bit about the time commitment that it takes to be on the School Board? You've watched the School Board; you've been involved in a lot of different school activities. Can you talk about how you're going to meet that commitment?

Answer/Ms. Ingham-I believe Jamie asked me that but I can repeat my answer. So, I have a very flexible schedule in the sense that I am the program director so I am able to kind of make my own hours. My director is also a school board member community member so she knows the expectations. I can flex my schedule very easily. I'm not worried about my ability to meet the time. I have a very supportive family. I have very supportive community

member friends. I definitely as I said, if I dedicate myself to someone, something I make it work and I give it 100%.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Do you have any last questions for us?

Question/Ms. Ingham- Would I be assigned to the committees that Pam was previously on or would things get re-shifted?

Answer/ Mr. Baker- We are going to try to match abilities to the needs of the community and there may be some re-shifting in the committees depending on the person, the total assessment and what the district needs.

Ms. Ingham- The last points I would like to make is I've been extremely involved in the committee's task force. I meet with Tom for the coffee hours. I'm very invested in our district and our community. The school is the hub of our community; we all come together to the school whether its sports or education or you know academic achievement. This is where our community starts and I truly believe that Sanborn is an excellent school. I could have went back to my district but I chose to stay in Sanborn because I believe in it and this is something that I am truly passionate about so and I would like to thank you for your time.

Dan Guide- As an opening statement, I did just recently run against Mr. Baker and it was a good race. I thought we were both very honest and it was clean. I want to be invested in this district like I was in my last district in Plaistow. I am a local business owner. I have lived in Plaistow all my life. I was on the school board in Plaistow. I served on numerous committees and took numerous classes for serving on the school board. I was the Chair of Facilities, liaison to Finance which is when you sit in on the budget committee. I was very involved in Plaistow. Now I'm trying to do the same thing here at Newton which is my wife's home. She grew up here in Newton. She's an alumna of Sanborn and I'm just I'm looking forward to serving again because I believe it's everybody's job to serve in the local government.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What attributes do you think are essential for a successful school board member?

Answer/Mr. Guide- To be a successful school board member you have to work well with other people. You're in a room and half of you are going to disagree but you have to make concessions and you have to figure it out in that room so you guys can come to a decision and be unified in that decision. Being broken up it doesn't work. You have to be able to work with other people. That is literally the most important thing of being a school or member. It doesn't matter about your background or any of that stuff it's being able to work together.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Presently we are looking to fill Dr. Brown's seat vacated because she moved. Dr. Brown has left a legacy behind. Why do you think you are the right person to fill Dr. Brown's seat?

Answer/Mr. Guide- First of all, she's a teacher and I am not. I cannot take her place. It's not going to happen. I tried teaching. It doesn't work for me, so that's one thing. But I feel as though I can represent my constituents in Newton as Dr. Brown did the best I can. I believe she was fiscally responsible and I'd like to continue that but again, she's a teacher. That's an experience that I can't bring.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your past experience, what criteria do you use to make decisions about hiring people, retaining goods and services or the effectiveness of a course of action and how will you use these criteria when making decisions as a school board member?

Answer/Mr. Guide- Being in business, I know I look young but I've been doing it for a while. You can tell a salesman, somebody that's selling you stuff and they did attempt that with the Timberlane Board a couple times. You could tell that these people were just trying to sell their product whether it worked or not, you could pick up on that and that's something that being in business you can see that on the face because you do it often enough. As far as hiring and firing people you've got to be a good judge a character but you're still going to make mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your beliefs on the current status of public education and what if anything do you feel needs to change in public education?

Answer/Mr. Guide- To be honest the status is going to change, it's changing right now. We're living through history. School is not going to be the same. So, I was fine with it before. What it's going to be, I'm not sure. I'd like to be a part of it but I'm not sure. It is going to be in flux. I believe they don't expect kids to return five days a week this year. If we continue to follow CDC guidelines, it is going to change the face of schools across the country.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What do you see is the board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer/Mr. Guide- The School Board's first responsibility is to set policy. Aside from that you're also the jury in a hearing you know with disputes and whatnot between students and teachers and also setting as Heather had said, setting the tone for the district. You all know how Timberlane was with a volatile Board and it does not bode well. That was the reason that drove me to get on the Board because it was so volatile I wanted to be involved to try to calm that down. It's setting the tone, so if you set a tone of unity that's what you're going to get.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Can you describe what your position was on the Reorganization at the time the decision was made and is it the same or has it changed from then to now? If it has changed why has it changed?

Answer/Mr. Guide- Okay so for the reorganization I just come into this and I did not mention this but I have kids in every school I have six children; there are kids in every school. The reorganization really throws the younger children into flux. I had a sixth grader so from the sixth grade, he was going to the high school after the reorganization and I had a first grader who's now going to a different school because of the reorganization. So it kind of threw my life into flux and I'll admit I wasn't happy with it at all. I understand the view behind it all, but at the time I was not happy because of the effect that it was going to have on my kids. It's being done well and its being done the right way but the effect that it was going to have on my kids who had just moved to this district and just started to make friends and then to have it all kind of thrown up in their faces again, it was a tough thing for us to swallow. But we did and we were going to you guys with the meet and greets, the collaborative things where they had the two schools, the two grades that were coming together meet up and do certain things before all this hit was awesome in helping us prepare for prepare the younger ones for what was going to happen. Now I am for it. I can see that the cost savings that will come to fruition and I'm looking to move forward let's go, let's do it.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In the development of a school district budget what goals and objectives would guide your decision making?

Answer/Mr. Guide- I don't like to spend money where it's wasted at all so part of that is whether it is class size and stuff that only like two kids are taking or three kids are taking. You know stuff like that needs to be really analyzed and you have to prove to me why it's worth it for me to agree with but I also am very kid-first so it's a balance but I understand that balance and I understand that everybody's got taxes on their mind and parents have their children on their mind. It is a tough balance to do but I try to do it the best I can by being fiscally responsible with the kids best interest in mind.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- If you are on the Board, what are your priorities? What do you want to achieve?

Answer/Mr. Guide- My priorities would just be to work collaboratively with everybody as Heather had said. The reading needs to come up and I really, you know just because again I know I hate bringing this up again, but when I was on the Board on Timberlane, Sanborn was always behind with their test scores or whatever metric you wanted to use it was always behind. I would like to see Sanborn with everything up. I'd like to see Sanborn rated as one of the top schools in the area and it hasn't been. It's going up, it's trending up, don't get me wrong. You guys have been doing a great job but let's keep that going, let's keep that trend.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What are your thoughts about returning unspent budget dollars at the end of the fiscal year to the taxpayers?

Answer/Mr. Guide- So, if you guys have something that needs to be done and you can do it with that money, I would do it. With that being said you have to maintain a certain amount of money in your Unassigned Fund Balance. In my opinion and then if there's money left over I'm absolutely for giving it back but it's almost like, and I'm not talking about spent spending the whole thing, but if you have that and you have the ability to do it to encumber it before the next year, do it and get it done because you may not have another chance.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What is a time commitment that you expect that you'd have to put in as a Board Member?

Answer/Mr. Guide- Forty hours a week is what it was before but I was on multiple committees and pretty much on call. You guys only meet twice a month? (Mr. Fitzpatrick-Yes. In the Board meeting itself)

Question/Mr. Baker-Yes there is substantial commitment and there's preparation time for subcommittee meetings and also school board meetings. In your view what has the district done well over the last few years (and be more specific) what has the district done poorly that you would change?

Answer/Mr. Guide-So, I was talking about it before you guys are trending up you know and that's a good thing. You need to keep that path going. I don't know if it's doing more with and I don't want to say standardized testing, I want to say you know we did stuff at Timberlane where every junior took the SATs and that's what it was based off of we paid timberland paid for it, but everybody was taking the SATs and more stuff like that will continue to drive the school up because you will know where your juniors are at. The reading as Heather had said is something that needs to be worked on and it's happening with the Interventionist because they're able to pick it up earlier. We already said it was going to sound like a broken record when it came to this but it's able to be picked up earlier so the kids don't fall through the cracks and that's not what you want to happen. I can see it between my three kids that are already here; a senior, a seventh grader and a second grader. I can see kids that are falling through the cracks and I hate it. It shouldn't happen but it does happen.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your thoughts on school opening given the COVID situation?

Answer/Mr. Guide- So, I was with you and but I much respect you deciding to change your vote to be unified in your decision which is what I like to see. I understood your position completely but I also have a ton of respect for you to decide this is the way you're going because you guys need to do it together. Like I said, I don't think school is going to be the same for a long time.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What benefits do you see if any in the Academic Intervention the district is investing in and do you have any concerns about it?

Answer/Mr. Guide- The program's still pretty new as far as I know and again I'm a newbie around here but I'm still pretty sure it's still pretty new. But it is picking up the kids early that are going to have issues and I'd like to see us not expand on it but maybe concentrate on it a little bit more to maybe less kids falling through the cracks. The interventionists, when they're on with the kids you can see them making big strides but it's the kids that maybe they're not picking up to be able to work with them in order to do that.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-How can you help the Board become more effective?

Answer/Mr. Guide- So, it's a short time that you're going to have the Board for before the election because that seat would be up. I can hit the ground running. I know all and most of the RSAs obviously. I feel like I can get along with anybody. I can work with anybody. I'm courteous. That's how I feel I can help the Board in my experience personally. That's what it is.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What do you think the three biggest decisions the School Boards has made over the past couple years and what do you think of them, of the way the decisions were made?

Answer/Mr. Guide- So, we touched on the closing of the school which I didn't agree with at the time and the way the decision was made though I could disagree with it but I understand it from being a Board member why it was done that way versus putting it to the voters. I understand why the board decided to do that. Selling Sanborn Seminary; I wanted to maybe list it for a year but that would not have mattered this year so I guess I might disagree with that at the time. Now I agree with getting rid of that. Those are the two biggest ones that I remember. I mean if there's a third one that I'm just blanking on it, my apologies but those are the two biggest ones in the last year or two.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- As a school board member, would you see yourself primarily as a representative of the community or a representative of the school system or how would you view that role?

Answer/Mr. Guide- When you're on the board you're both; you're the representative of the school system at all times you can't take your hat off. You are a board member from here on out. But once you have, you also represent Newton but at the same time you represent Fremont and Kingston. You are a representative of your own community and the school at all times once you get elected, that how I've always viewed it. There's no either or in my mind

Question/Mr. Baker- You mentioned your flexibility with your time and that you can commit to the time that's needed. Do you see anything that could interfere with that?

Answer/Mr. Guide- No. There is nothing that would affect me not being able to fulfill a board member role. When I was on the board at Timberlane, I would get a call that they don't have enough signatures and I'd have to run down and sign the check registers or what have you right away and I was able to do that so it's not an issue with time.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-What are your thoughts on our grading system and competency learning?

Answer/Mr. Guide- So your grading system going from a school that had a's b's, c's, d's and f's obviously to the one two three fours there is a learning curve for that but I guess once you equate it to GPA, it kind of makes sense. I'm still getting used to it and competency based is definitely a different learning style than I'm used to and

it's two different styles. I guess what I'm saying is I don't have an opinion on whether it's good or bad just yet. If you can understand that because it's only been a year and a quarter that my kids have been my kids have been involved with it versus you know Heather had ample time. I haven't been here that long. It's just that it's a different style of learning and Mr. Stack's done a great job with helping my daughter who needs it. I guess she strives. Certain kids strive on it and certain kids don't. But I'm not for or against the competency learning yet.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Do you have any last questions for us?

Answer/Mr. Guide- No I don't. After running against Jim and having just run, I feel I am the best person to fill this position and with my experience of being on a school board already and let's be honest, this would be for a very short period of time before the board member had to be re-elected.

Kelley Cullivan- My name is Kelley Cullivan. First and foremost, I'd like to thank Mr. Baker and Mr. Fitzpatrick as well as all the potential school board candidates. This is an unprecedented and almost impossible time not only within the Sanborn community but as well as in our country. My interest to sit on the board comes from an immediate desire and an immense desire to see our district thrive. I have two children that currently attend the Sanborn Regional School District. Lila will be entering her freshman year at Sanborn Regional High School and Laurel will be entering second grade at Bakie. Having two children vastly different in age and education levels contributes to my ability to assess the needs within our district. I can identify the strengths and weaknesses of multiple grade levels. My capability to gather factual information, impartial decision making and firsthand knowledge of how those decisions affect not only our students but our community will allow me to make effective and appropriate choice choices for our district. My goal is to advocate fairly for all parties. I'm known throughout the community as someone who has her finger on the pulse of the happenings in our district. Since moving to Newton almost six years ago, I have continuously been an advocate for the educational needs of our children. I pride myself on that. What I'm also known for is having very strong opinions. However what many people do not see is that those opinions come after an abundant amount of research. I'm always searching for the facts not just the information that agrees with my personal narrative or thoughts and with that I try to make the most logical conclusions. My willingness to have a discussion with anyone who may have a differing viewpoint or opinion has at times brought me insight to a view I wasn't initially considering and many times those conversations have brought me to change my mind. I've been following the board meetings for the past three years diligently, whether in person or online. I'm up to date on the current challenges our district is facing with that knowledge if appointed, I feel as though I can hit the ground running. We have a tremendous teachers and support staff working with our children. As a board member, I hope to re-establish morale among the community and the school district. I understand that being a school member has its challenges. No decision no matter what it involves will ever make everyone happy there will be a lot of criticism. I've seen it firsthand and the many agonizing decisions the Board has had to make as well of some of the backlash from those decisions. This is not and will not be an easy job, yet here I sit wanting to be a part of it. My intention and goal if appointed is to bridge the unspoken gap. Our community is an unchartered territory of enormous proportion. My goal is to help parents and community members have a better understanding and appreciation for one another and make the best overall decisions for our students and community members.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What attributes do you think are essential for a successful school board member?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I think a successful school board member needs to be open-minded, needs to take in all the information that's being given to them to make an educated decision. They need to be able to work as a team and be open to suggestions that might not be what they were originally planning on or thinking about. I think open-minded open-mindedness is a huge attribute.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Why do you think you are the right person to fill Dr. Brown's seat on the Board to represent positions in which Dr. Brown was elected?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- Well, filling Dr. Brown's seat wouldn't be easy. I feel as though I have my finger on the pulse of the community and knowing what's going on in the district. I have a good rapport with the community, the teachers, the students, the administration and I feel as though I'm very trusted in all areas. So I feel as though taking over her seat, it will be different because I am open. I'm open to ideas. I'm open to suggestions.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your past experience, what criteria do you use to make decisions about hiring people, retaining goods and services or the effectiveness of a course of action and how will you use these criteria when making decisions as a school board member?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- In my past experience I have a very long history working in Human Resources as well as staffing. My most current role before being laid off, I worked five years full-time from home in Syndicated Market Research; flexible schedule, pretty straightforward work and my Human Resources experience, it's a lot of times where you have to handle things that you would rather not, especially working in healthcare human resources, as far as interviewing practices. Typically I would ask questions to try and get the actual personality of the person not just the standard, "why did you like this job, why didn't you like this job", I would always try to get down to the nitty-gritty of who the person really is and then possibly have a co-worker or a hiring manager come in and try to do the same thing and tell me what kind of what kind of personality they got from that person if that makes sense. As far as making decisions as a school board member would be taking all the information, listening to everything that's given, listening to the opinions of my fellow school board members and having them explain to me what I may not be seeing. There have been many times even with the reconfiguration that I thought I knew what I wanted and yeah gathering the information I found out that actually wasn't what I wanted so I believe in teamwork. I believe in getting all of the information, everybody's thoughts, and everybody's ideas meshing them together and kind of figuring out a plan together.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your beliefs on the current status of public education and what if anything do you feel needs to change in public education?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- Oh, our poor public education system. Right now the public education system right now! Personally, I appreciate public education. I went to public schools my whole life. I feel as though not our public education system but the public education system as a whole is, I'd rather just kind of focus on Sanborn because we could go off tangents if we're talking about the whole system. I believe that our district is amazing. I thought our district was amazing the moment I moved here. I was bragging to people from in North Andover where we moved from, "oh my goodness you should see the library they have". I was gushing. I feel as though our students are doing very well prior to COVID. I believe that our staffs are absolutely dedicated to these kids. They know them, they know them personally. They know their strengths, their weaknesses. I think our public education, obviously math and reading the skill sets do need to come up a bit but that's going to help once we have the reconfiguration done and we have the enrichment money to be able to help those students who are struggling and I think that's the right thing to do.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I think the board's roles and responsibilities is to set forth a vision and goal for the district and to make sure that those visions and goals are implemented, to look at policies and change policies as they need be, to make sure that we are adopting and overseeing the annual budget; making sure we're making fiscally responsible decisions within our district and implementing that.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Can you describe what your position was on the Reorganization at the time the decision was made and is it the same or has it changed from then to now? If it has changed, why has it changed?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- So the time the decision was made, I was for it. The time the decision was brought forth many months prior, I think I stood in this room and told Tom Ambrose I would not let him do it. After much discussion and many meetings with him trying to explain to me what this was, "Kelley breathe calm down this is why we're doing this" Once the decision was made I was for it I was so for it that when Article 8 was coming about voting-wise I had myself and my girlfriends in town sitting around a table going this is what this means if you vote yes, it means there's a possibility we may do this, the district may do this and it will save us this amount of money and it will go into enrichment to our kids. These are townies, these are people who lived in Newton their whole lives, loved Memorial, loved the Middle School. They were like that makes sense. So I was completely for the reorganization. I'm still for the reorganization even though we're in COVID times, it's going to make it a little bit more difficult quite clearly but I was absolutely for the reorganization because I felt as though it was for the right reasons

Question/ Mr. Baker- In the development of a budget, what goals and objectives would be guide your decision making?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- First and foremost, it would be necessary needs. If we don't have technology for our children to be able to learn on that's a need but an objective would be if we don't have our teachers, we don't have a school. So, I think it would probably start with the absolute needs. What do we need? What can't we live without at this moment? It might move on to okay we have a little bit more where can we implement money into situations that might not need a whole lot right now but it might save us from costing us too much next year.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- If you are on the Board, what are your priorities?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- My priorities would be what any other board member's priorities would be; to make sure that I'm present to make sure that I'm available whenever need be. To be open to opinions, to be open to facts that I may or may not have understood prior. Working collaboratively as a team has got to be the most important thing any school board can do. I've watched a lot of different school boards over the years not agree very much and it can turn into a nightmare not just for the board but for the entire district and we need to have a copacetic board that is willing to hear other people's opinions as well as willing to hear the whys behind what they don't like. If you were telling me something Jamie and I didn't like it I'd say I don't like that can you give me some more information and then you could give me more information and I may still not like it but at least now I have all the information to make sure I don't like it. It's got to be copacetic. It has to be a give and take and no matter what the board chooses at the end of the day it needs to be united.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What are your thoughts about returning unspent budget dollars at the end of the fiscal year to the taxpayers?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I say my thoughts is that if there isn't somewhere within our reserves that could possibly use a little bit more, absolutely the money has to go back to the taxpayers. A portion of the money has to go back to the taxpayers that's exceptionally important but at the same time, I feel as though we need to make sure we have our reserves covered enough that we're not going to put ourselves in the hole if something happens like Memorial's roof going in or just something unexpected. Not all of it I think the majority

portion should go back to the taxpayers but we do need to take a small portion and make sure that we're we've got a reserve fund for projects. You know we've got three buildings now that are, the youngest one is 13 years old you know things start to fall apart things start to come and disrepair. There are only so many Band-Aids we can put on them before it's going to cost us more money in the long run but to answer the question Jim, yes I like getting that check in the mail when I get a little rebate on my taxes. Absolutely we need to send the money back. We pay way too much in taxes but we need to keep a little bit too.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What is a time commitment that you expect that you'd have to put in as a Board Member?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- Much is needed. I have a very, very flexible schedule. My darling husband is home at about two o'clock every day from work. I am currently laid off from my work. My position that I had for five years in syndicated market research, I was working full-time from home but it was a very flexible schedule. There weren't any set hours or whatnot that I had to work and I'm hoping that in the next coming months that I will be able to go back to that position. I've always been very dedicated to anything that has to do with the schools, whether it was being on the task force, whether it was talking about the reconfiguration, coming to the school board meetings. I always make the time. I'm not a really busy person.

Question/ Mr. Baker-In your view, what has the district done well over the last few years and what has the district done poorly that you would change?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I think the district the reconfiguration to me is something that was done really well. I think that could have been a little bit more transparency towards the community as far as what certain aspects of Article 8 meant. I knew what it meant because I attended board meetings; however a lot of people didn't. I think that overall it does not matter at this point what's done is done. I think that that it was a great thing to do. We were very much house heavy. We had way too many facilities. We had too much overhead as far as maintaining those facilities and this was a way to basically get our kids still being with one another and have the financial availability to help the kids who don't necessarily need an IEP but they're kind of falling behind. I don't know many other districts that are putting an enrichment program in like that to support our struggling learners. I mean the intervention support it also helps our average and above average students by supporting the struggling students so that we are not taking away from the students that are doing well.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your thoughts on school opening given the COVID situation?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I would have loved to see school reopen, wide open free as a bird like the beginning of 2019 but that wasn't going to happen. My thought was if I had been on the board making that decision, I would have said remote until October for a couple of reasons; number one the amount of money it was going to cost regardless if it came from a State or Federal Grant for COVID for the schools. It didn't matter. The amount of money it was going to cost for us to have everything in place to open these doors with the almost guarantee that we would have to shut them four weeks later. The risk wasn't worth the reward. Parents are going back to work thinking everything's great, but oh no we're shutting down the schools. I just thought it was more copacetic to sit watch the numbers see if we rise, see if anything get gets crazy, watch the other districts in the area open, see what happens with them and re-evaluate in October. I agreed. I do wish they could be back in school. We all wish they could be back in school.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Do you have any last questions for us or closing remarks?

Answer/Ms. Cullivan- I don't have any questions. I think I get a lot of information that I don't have anything that I don't already have the answer for but my closing statement would just be that if I'm chosen to be appointed to

the school board I'd be a fair, open-minded representative of both the community and the parents and hopefully make some right decisions along with the other board members.

JL Micah Petillo- I do first want to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity and everyone the opportunity to be here. It's one of the things that I was thinking about when I initially wrote the letter. I didn't I actually got to be honest I didn't write the letter. I knew about the opening and I was like, oh that might be interesting. It wasn't until the actual televised board meeting about whether or not we're going to reopen that I was really inspired and thought there was a good place for me here. It was seeing a board that had differing opinions, a board that said well I would open, I would close, the voting unanimously regardless of difference of opinion, the statement of solidarity that made to the community, I thought was inspiring and I think that what I can give to the board and to the community in this moment is the ability to continue to have the board be united and strengthened in in the decision making and in my letter I talk about a few things you know, three kids in the district, one actually on the way but Aleitha and Eli are currently at Memorial. Aleitha would have been at Bakie this year and Benjamin is almost four so he's on the way. So, I have a lot of you know involvement in their school their education and what's best and those kinds of decisions that are made and also the fact that I'm married to a teacher; she's in the Salem School District, Rachel. So she's been teaching for more than 15 years there so I have a lot of perspective on the needs and the desires of teachers, students the kinds of decisions that are made that affect you know learning preparing students for an increasingly global economy, all the things that the kinds of decisions that that are made at these kinds of levels but for me the thing that the reason I was inspired was I said I have a background, there's two parts of my background that I wanted to address. The first is a background in philosophy. I teach philosophy at Southern New Hampshire University and I like to dispense with the idea of philosophy as you know a bunch of people thinking deep thoughts without the ability to make action or take action. I think the skills that I try and give to my students in the classroom about deliberation, about coming up with cogent arguments about questioning and validating assumptions, about establishing clear communication, about getting all the information, these are the kinds of skills even the Socratic Method that the previous candidate talked about; the importance of being open to all opinions on all sides and I think seeking out alternative opinions to strengthen or change your own is important. So the skills that I teach my own students in philosophy class I think would be something that I could bring to the board to help sort of navigate through an extremely difficult time in terms of where sometimes decision seems to be good. We open there's drawbacks, we close there's drawbacks. So having those kinds of skills and that kind of a voice on the board, I think would be important and also my background in Marketing. I work also at Southern New Hampshire University as an Associate Creative Director in the Marketing Department and in that role it's extremely important to weigh all kinds of input. You have people requesting say it's a TV ad; people will say I want this TV ad because I want these results. Somebody else says well I don't like that language and somebody else says well I don't like that image and there's a lot of navigating and a lot of weighing of different opinions that you have to do in order to come up with something that's both effective and makes people feel like they've been represented and heard and actually you know make them represented and heard. I think that's an important part in our of this role for our community is not just making people feel like they've been listened to but actually listening to them actually taking their opinions into consideration so there's something to that active listening, active participation; getting all the information that I think I could you know contribute to the board in a positive way during this this interim period that's pretty much it.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What attributes do you think are essential for a successful school board member?

Answer/Mr. Petillo-I would say listening, being a good active listener and charity. I don't mean that in the sense, the way we normally think about being a charitable intellectual, being a charitable person where you really give a side of a discussion that's not your own the weight that it deserves, looking at other people's opinions charitably and humility I think is and that's part of something that I tried to highlight in my letter that this situation with COVID-19 highlights the fact that we do not have the answers. It is not clear what we should do all the time, so being able to approach complex situations with a level of humility and openness to changing opinions or

collaboration is super important. Apart from that there's the standard diligence and conscientiousness and an interest and a vested interest in the success of our students number one and the thriving of the community.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-Why do you think you are the right person to fill Dr. Brown's seat on the Board to represent positions in which Dr. Brown was elected?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- So I think part of it is that during this time especially I don't think we want somebody who's going to rock the boat per se. I think it's important that somebody can look, at Dr. Brown's seat, Dr. Brown's position and be a uniter of different opinions and be someone who while I certainly have my own opinions and I don't shy away from giving them, it's a situation where the important thing I think now is to come in and not necessarily rock the boat but strengthen the motion the things that are in motion that the board already has going and contribute sort of valuable points along the way and that's something that I feel uniquely qualified to do.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your past experience, what criteria do you use to make decisions about hiring people, retaining goods and services or the effectiveness of a course of action and how will you use these criteria when making decisions as a school board member?

Answer/Mr. Petillo So, the first is I would say is getting objective information right. Gathering information is important. I think it's important to learn from the past but not be defined by past decisions. So we can make sure that we don't want to do something just because we've always done it but there's value; why have we always done it? There's value in that so I think taking a good look at precedent is important but also taking a critical approach to it internally. I've hired a lot of people and made a lot of these budget decisions and buying products for the companies that I work for and I would say a lot of that is being able to establish a good relationship with the people that I'm working with. I always like to ask sort of off-kilter questions you know like in an interview, one of my favorite questions to ask candidates is, how would I know if you're angry? That usually takes people by surprise a little bit but I want to sort of read the reaction. I think establishing something about a person; how they react when they hear something unexpected or need to shift or change gears can tell you a lot about the way that they'll work with you and you know something, the answers range from well I'd be screaming so you'd know or somebody says you wouldn't know and those are the kinds of things I take into account. If I wouldn't know i don't know if I want to work with this person because they may not be a very good communicator but on the other hand I don't know if I want to work with this person because they're going to be screaming and causing problems. Questions like that I think can really draw out the relevant criteria that you want to use for establishing good relationships with people, products or any other decisions that you make.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your beliefs on the current status of public education and what if anything do you feel needs to change in public education?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- In general, I think working at a university now that has sort of rewritten the book on online education like Southern New Hampshire University has, what I've noticed is that public education is doing a good job. It's funny the answer to what's going well and what's not going well are the same thing. It's preparing students for that global economy that's going to be changing. I think we're starting to do a really good job in terms of technology. I was shocked by how well we pivoted to online at the end of last year, even at the elementary school. It was my experience, I don't have experience with the High School or Middle but we're doing a really good job with technology. We're doing a really good job preparing students to have the skills that they'll need but I don't know. I think we could be doing a better job of doing research; looking at global trends years out. What are the kinds of skills that are going to be needed? I am thinking about the fact that you know is the education system going to collapse? How do I prepare my children with skills that they're going to need? What if they choose not to go to college? What if they choose to get a series of certificates or they choose to get a series of

micro credentials? What's that going to look like? How can we give them a better foundation for an uncertain future now? I think that's one place where we can improve public education is sort of preparing for the unknown a little better in terms of what the education landscape will look like over the next 20 years.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer/Mr. Petillo-First and foremost, I think it's to serve people. We a school board exists to serve students the community the residents and ensure that their best interests are served regardless of whether or not they see that. Sometimes like we've heard already today, not everybody will think that that their interests are being served and there may be some situations where you can only serve 80% of the people. You can only do so much or a decision has to be made that some people don't like. But I do think that it's about the more legalistic sense of, yeah we need to establish policies and we need to make decisions about budget and about all these things but I think if we're guided by the idea that everything we do impacts people's lives, then that's the key.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-Can you describe what your position was on the Reorganization at the time the decision was made and is it the same or has it changed from then to now? If it has changed why has it changed?

Answer/Mr. Petillo-So, my initial reaction to it was I wasn't sure about it. I was looking at it narrowly at first I was immediately thinking, oh my that means my daughter's going to go right she's going to be in third grade now she's or she's going to go to Bakie for one year she's going to have to go back and forth and what's that experience going to be like. Then as I do, I employed my own methodologies for thinking through things and sort of took a step back and thought what is going to be the best for her in the long run? Was that going to be the best for all the children and the community in the long run and as usual truth wins the day, facts win the day. So, the more I delved into the ramifications of not reorganizing and the effects of the reorganization and sort of took that more bird's eye view of the whole thing, I support it. But that was like three days so I just had to really dig in.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In the development of a budget, what goals and objectives would be guide your decision making?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- So I would I have to start with understanding what the needs are of the students and Not the proximate needs but the remote needs so if it's there's not enough computers in the classrooms that's not a need. The need is we need students to be well-versed in these things or we need students to be prepared for these eventualities. So then the ultimate needs of the students should guide sort of the budget and then you have to look at the needs of the community. Then you have to look at the balancing that goes on when developing the budget. I also like to establish whether or not, what's the likelihood that we spend money on certain things or we put funds towards certain things that they will you know that the goals will be achieved by that investment. So making sure that the goals that we have, that the budget is meant to address are measurable, are time boxed and can be achieved with that money is important.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- If you are on the Board, what would your priorities be?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- The first is making sure that I help amplify voices and help facilitate conversation so as coming in as the new guy, I wouldn't presume to necessarily try and voice my own perspective on the situation right away, whatever the situation may be. My priority would first be to learn, have important conversations, facilitate conversations, make sure that I can interject where appropriate trying to help people identify assumptions, give my own perspective where it's appropriate and make sure that everyone who's involved in the decisions are informed as well as they can be and have had all sides of the issues looked at objectively and

thoroughly and then of course the idea of that is that if that's the case, then the ultimate objective of my being on the board will be served which is that students and residents and the community itself will have a greater benefit based on good decision making.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What are your thoughts about returning unspent budget dollars at the end of the fiscal year to the taxpayers?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- I think it's important to do that with but with caution. I think we need to make sure that certain funds are allocated for like what the previous candidate talked about like emergencies or anything that might arise where you need a little bit of a cushion but I do think that those are it is important to do but I also think it's interesting to ask how can we reach how can we return them. For example it doesn't mean a check does it mean a deduction on your tax bill or are there ways to take that those funds and reinvest them in things that the schools still need; preparing for next year, having a more long-term vision of what a budget looks like. Maybe it's a five-year budget or you have five year goals. Say, oh we have this left over do we need to do that or do we talk about rolling it over into another initiative? That might be a possibility too but in general, I think it's a good idea to return what can be returned to the community in a prudent way.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your thoughts on school opening given the COVID situation?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- It is one of those situations where there are very few situations especially like when I teach ethics at SNHU, there are a few situations where there are just no good course of action that will leave no one in pain or suffering. This was a really tough one. I can't imagine. I'm working from home so I feel safe enough about my kids not going back but my wife is going back to school and if I were going back to work, I would be like what are we going to do with the kids? I can't imagine what that would be like to not know but at the same time I also can't imagine what it would be like to be putting my kids into a situation where they may be in harm's way. It's just there was no good situation so I think I supported the decision from the beginning. My default position would have been to err on the side of caution and ultimately it's because of the idea of a remedy. There's a lot of ways that we can remedy families that are negatively impacted by not opening schools. We can look at that. There's tons of things we can do we can think outside the box and do that but if somebody dies from COVID-19, there's little remedy for that so I think the cautious decision is the right one in this in this case because of what we can remedy and what we can.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What benefits do you see if any in the Academic Intervention the district is investing in and do you have any concerns about it?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- I will address that as related to both environments. I teach online as well as on campus and you know both formats present themselves with levels of difficulty but also benefits so I think that the investment is a good one. I think that it's important to address those needs and make sure that that these interventions are happening in the environment that we now find ourselves in. I think maybe it's something that we'd have to reevaluate to be honest. I don't know how well some of those interventions will work in a remote format but that's something I would have to think about more. I don't actually know the answer to that.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Any closing comments?

Answer/Mr. Petillo- No, I won't take up too much more time. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with everyone and I look forward to the opportunity to working with you more.

Charles Melvin- I'm going to give you a little bit of a background of myself. I started school in Rowley, MA and from Rowley, I moved to Merrimack. I went to school in Merrimack for five years. From Merrimack, I went to Amesbury. From Amesbury, I went to Haverhill. From Haverhill, I went to Georgetown. From Georgetown I went back to Haverhill and then in the eighth grade, I turned around and I got accepted into Essex County Agricultural School. I felt that I could not stay at Essex because of the simple reason I didn't own a large parcel of land, so I wouldn't have been able to have a farm like I wanted to. So I left and I went back to Haverhill and I stayed in Haverhill I got married when I was 20. I had a son and when he was 18 months old, I decided it was time for me to buy a house and I looked around to all the school systems and I chose the Sanborn and I wanted my kid not to do what I did; jump from school to school to school. I wanted them with the school their whole system. I have put three kids into the school system. I have three grandchildren that have gone through the school system. I have one in it right now. I run my own business which I have for 50 years. I am a State Representative and I'm running for re-election and as a State Representative. I am on environment and agriculture and I've been chosen for five other committees to work on. I'm also a Selectman in the town of Newton. This is my second time. I was on for 2012 to 2015 and at that time I had to deal with problems in the community and I took care of them. I won't mention them because it wouldn't be right and I didn't get re-elected but I just got re-elected again. I'm a Real Estate Broker in the New Hampshire, Real Estate Broker in Massachusetts. I'm a Justice of the Peace. I'm a Notary of the Public and I'm a Level 1 Solid Waste Operator. When I get into something I get into it. I research.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What attributes do you think are essential for a successful school board member?

Answer/Mr. Melvin-Knowledge. Learning as much as you possibly can and listening.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-Why do you think you are the right person to fill Dr. Brown's seat on the Board and to represent the positions in which Dr. Brown was elected?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Well, being a member of the State House, I can bring back information in reference to anything that has to do with the schools which I do now for the town of Newton. If anything if anything's going to happen with the Town Clerk tax collector, I let her know as well as our Town Manager. Anything that happens to go on, any kind of hazardous waste or anything else like that I'm very informative. I get back to them.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In your past experience, what criteria do you use to make decisions about hiring people, retaining goods and services or the effectiveness of a course of action and how will you use these criteria when making decisions as a school board member?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Well, first of all I don't react, I act and I'll turn around and I will investigate whatever needs to be investigated before I'll make a decision, which I do now.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your beliefs on the current status of public education and what if anything do you feel needs to change in public education?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- well I'm not for going backward. I'm going forward. I'd like to see the school system stay in the 21st century. I do the same thing in the town of Newton. I speak with the Fire Chief, speak with the Police Chief and the Road Agent and I believe that we should stay in the 21st century and move forward.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Can you give me a little more as to what you mean by staying in the 21st century?

Answer/Mr. Melvin-Well, keeping up with things meaning for instance, when you have a structure, just because you have a brand new building, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't have maintenance. You have to put money aside to make sure that your structure stays in good shape.

Question/ Mr. Baker-What do you see as the Board's roles and responsibilities?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- The school board's role in my opinion is first thing is the kids. Everything should be in the kids and the second should be maintaining a feasible budget and I do understand that sometimes it has to go up. Sometimes the budget has to go up; you know you just can't keep a flat line budget for years. It just doesn't work. Things go up.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-Can you describe what your position was on the Reorganization at the time the decision was made and is it the same or has it changed from then to now? If it has changed why has it changed?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- It hasn't changed. I don't have a problem with it whatsoever. I think it was a good idea. I believe there's money being saved.

Question/ Mr. Baker- In the development of a budget, what goals and objectives would be guide your decision making?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- It's a pretty hard one to say when you haven't seen it. It's just like the State budget when you when you look at the state budget, to improve the State budget and the County budget; you need to really kind of look at it before you make a decision. Matter of fact, I'm doing that right now on the County budget.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- If you are on the Board, what would your priorities be?

Answer/Mr. Melvin-To make things work, have thing move smoothly and if you could a balanced budget.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What are your thoughts about returning unspent budget dollars at the end of the fiscal year to the taxpayers?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Well if you give back as much as you possibly can but you don't give it all back, you can't. You've got to have some money for emergency situations. We do the same thing in the town of Newton but I'd like to see the taxpayers get money back. I've got to be honest, it makes them happy.

Question/ Mr. Fitzpatrick- Can you talk about a little bit about the time commitment you can dedicate to be on the School Board?

Answer/Mr. Melvin-In the summertime, 24/6. In the wintertime, 24//7. I have, I do it now. I do it with everything else I have right now and everything comes in on my phone and I take care of it immediately. The only thing is in the summertime, I go bike riding on Sunday.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- no concerns about the meetings?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- No. I have perfect attendance in the house. I have perfect attendance in the County and I have perfect attendance at the Selectmen and when I was on the Planning Board, I was on the Planning Board for

30 years and I was on the Zoning Board for 15 and I had perfect attendance except for once; I did take my birthday off

Question/ Mr. Baker-In your view, what has the district done well over the last few years and what has the district done poorly that you would change?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Well what they've done good is this right here. They've got this new high school and I can't say poorly. I don't have anything for that.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- What are your thoughts on school opening given the COVID situation?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Well like anybody else I would like to see it open. I am a little bit worried that if we stay the way we are, if we finished up this year going on remote I believe that you're going to have a lot of pressure from citizens to let people go or lay them off and maybe not come back at all. This is transpiring throughout the country which would eliminate your kids interacting and kids need to interact. My grandson's begging to come back.

Question/ Mr. Baker- What do you think about the Academic Intervention the district is investing in and do you have any concerns about it?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Not at this particular moment. I haven't gotten into it as deep as some of the other people have but I've got to be honest with you, I turned around and I had a conversation last night with Tammy Gluck and she gave me a website that I can go on and show you everything you need to know about being a school board member. I haven't gone on it yet. I intend to later on even if I'm not chosen.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick-How can you help the Board become more effective?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Because of the experiences that I've had in life as well as what I would learn in the State. I feel as though that I might be able to if I'm put on this position, I might be able to get on education which would be a great help. The school board would get first-hand information that's coming down.

Question/ Mr. Baker- Do you see yourself primarily as a representative of the community or as a school board member?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- Whatever hat I am wearing, I support. I feel as though I am retired. I don't work in my garage any more. I have plenty of time.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Do you have an opinion on the competency based learning and how we are doing our grading?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- I have to be honest with you, that's something I am starting to learn. I discuss it quite a bit with my grandson.

Question/Mr. Baker- How would you apply your business experience to a school board position?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- I've had being on the Planning Board. I've done zoning ordinances and being on the ZBA, I've had to make decisions in reference to whether you can do it or whether you can't do it. I'm very familiar

with the law. I'm at this point they still come to me and they ask me questions about the zoning in town because I like I said, I've been there for 50 years and when I moved to Newton there was no zoning whatsoever and I got on the first Master Plan and worked on that, Master Pan and then went from there to the ZBA so I feel as though that the knowledge is there. Grant you I don't know the complete aspects of the school but it will be a learning process and in the learning process what I would like to do is run for the position in March, so this would be an education.

Question/Mr. Baker- What is your fiscal philosophy?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- The first term as Selectman the Fire Chief came in and the Fire Chief wanted he had a Purchase Order for thirty five hundred dollars for fire nozzle and I was not familiar with this particular fire nozzle so to be honest with you, when I had the Chief come in and do a show-and-tell, he brought in a nozzle showed me exactly what it would be used for and an incident that I was on a tow and kind of hit a propane tank and he showed me he said we could have used this nozzle there. Immediately I signed the Purchased Order.

Question/Mr. Fitzpatrick- Any closing comments or questions?

Answer/Mr. Melvin- No. Thanks for considering me. I can help, that's what I am here for.

3. **NON-PUBLIC SESSION-RSA 91-A:3 II**

Chair Baker made a Motion to enter Non-Public Session at 5:35 pm.to deliberate per RSA 91-A: 3 II Motion seconded by Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Roll Call Vote- All in favor

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SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
Wednesday, August 12, 2020

School Board Candidates Interviews/Newton Vacancy

CONTINUING PUBLIC MINUTES

1. **Chair Baker made a Motion to exit the Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A: 3 II. Motion seconded by Mr. Fitzpatrick at 5:55 PM.**

Roll Call Vote- All in Favor

Chair Baker Made a Motion to seal the Minutes of the Non-Public Session in perpetuity, moved by Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Roll Call Vote- All in Favor

2. Newton Candidate Decision /Comments

Mr. Baker -This was a difficult decision. I think everyone interviewed has qualities that could benefit the school district; people have executive experience, there are some that have volunteer experience. Many did not support the direction we're going in but do now. People are concerned about accountability of programs, about being careful with taxpayer dollars. Some people refer to collaboration and active listening and I think that those are all things that we need on the board school board member that we're replacing and that she was a fiscal conservative and a teacher and she cared about the outcomes for kids. She supported intervention but she also looked out for the taxpayers so I'm looking at I'm listening to what everybody tells me and I'm aware also of people's statements during elections and after hearings about school board matters and being familiar with people's fiscal philosophies, I have to I say who's going to have the chops to stand up and make the difficult decisions that are going to support the direction that that we've been going in and that we critically need to continue with and people have said they support that and that's great that we've arrived at that place where people are recognizing the value of the consolidation and the closing of the Middle School and the merger. But in my mind the fiscal conservative part is very important. Taxpayers in our towns have been overpaying for years and we also need to reduce our cost per student. We need to support the academic intervention we've been doing. We've figured out a way to do that without adding the burden on the taxpayers. We need to keep going forward. People talked about going forward not going backward so in my mind the person that has the most chops to do that is someone who's been self-employed for years, has the critical skills to analyze and collect information, listen to a lot of different points of view and come up with something that may not be popular in some cases but is the right thing to do and we'll stand behind it and based on my knowledge of all the people that we've interviewed including and very importantly their statements here tonight but also their record. I support Charlie Melvin and the reason is that he's a long time Newton resident; he's got a public service heart. He's volunteered countless hours to Newton and now he's working in the State House. I think he's going to be extremely valuable to us on the school board. His experience is decades in the making and he's got the chops to stand up and make the tough decisions so that's who I'm supporting, Charlie Melvin.

Mr. Fitzpatrick-So I came out of quite differently to where I am when each person was interviewing and I was taking my notes. I was trying to visualize, can I work with this person?

Can I not work with this person? Will they continue in the direction that we want to go as a board or will they not? It was encouraging to hear I think in all cases that most people could support the direction that the board's going in. Some people were not able to do that until the board got there, so some people were opposed to some of the board positions when those decisions had to be made but at least everybody supports the direction that the board is going. I thought the by and large, I thought the interviews, each of the candidates did a very good answers that weren't overly helpful; thinking Charles, but I look at this and I say we have a seat that Dr. Brown has won and she's won well for two elections and there's an election coming up in the near term and in the end, the people are going to make their choices; who's the right person for this? I would encourage the people that interviewed to run. I think each one of you can bring different skills to bear and I think that each one of you can help the district in their own way. So, where do I come down and why? So, I'm also going to come down in favor of Charlie but for a very different reason than Jim. We are in a very unique and unprecedented time. I don't know what is or isn't going to happen with COVID. I do know that there are issues that are going to be happening at the State level. The state level issues are going to impact us for this period in time for this moment in time. Charlie brings to the table something that nobody else brings to the table and namely Charlie brings to the table his role as a representative and so I am looking forward to Charlie hopefully being able to get onto the education committee and being able to help us influence the State government to work in favor of what we need to have done in Sanborn. I don't think anybody else gives us that capability and that to me is a single biggest thing that we face as a district in the near term before the people will make their decision and if the people choose any one of the candidates, I will be more than happy to work with that candidate. I thought that the candidates did themselves great justice tonight and so that that's why I'm making the decision that I'm making because I think that Charlie is unique to the time and place and that he can provide something to the school board that others are not able to at this point. That is my goal so Jim, I think officially we need to have a vote.

Mr. Fitzpatrick made a Motion to select Charlie Melvin as the school board candidate, seconded by Chair Baker.

Roll Call Vote- All in Favor

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM

Recorder,

Phyllis Kennedy
School Board Secretary