

**SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

August 30, 2017

A regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, August 30, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Sanborn Regional School Board Chairperson, Peter Broderick. The following were recorded as present;

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Peter Broderick, Chair
Dr. Pamela Brown, Vice Chair
Corey Masson
Taryn Lytle
Sheila Pierce
James Baker
Tammy Mahoney
Lauren Lanseigne, Student Representative

ADMINISTRATORS: Thomas Ambrose, Superintendent of Schools
Michele Croteau, Business Administrator

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:06 PM by Mr. Broderick with Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.1 Board Chair Broderick and Director of Athletics, Vicki Parady-Guay presented exiting School Board member Sheila Pierce with flowers and a gift to thank her for her service on the Board as well as for her 19 years of service as a Booster Club volunteer. Ms. Pierce expressed her thanks saying how much she will miss everyone but added that she is moving only a town away and plans to come back often. She asked that the Board remember to pay attention and keep their focus on the kids and their education.

2. **ACTION ON MINUTES** –Mr. Broderick asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes of 6-7-17 as recorded by the previous Secretary, April Oprea. Motion made by Dr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Baker. Dr. Brown asked for corrections as follows: Under School Board Members present on page1, Student Representative’s last name is **Lanseigne**. On page 4, under School Board Committee Reports, Item A should read **EISA**. On page 5, under Policy 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence should read “All they are doing is adding a paragraph at the top and this was recommended by **NH School Board Association**”. Page 6, under Policy, 5th paragraph, last sentence, they just appear in different policy **sections**. On Page 7, 1st sentence, “Ms. Lytle advised first they are trying to address the ones **needed**”. On page 9, 2nd paragraph, “Dr. Brown asked if this is **replacing** an old piece of equipment, and why wasn’t this in the budget?” Page 11, paragraph 5, “Dr. Brown stated the RFP discussed how to value the properties which would satisfy the Newton **residents** when we dispose of the property”. On page 14,

Under Communication Received/Sent, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence should read **Dr. Brown asked Mr. Masson, “Is this your company?” She said when one goes to the SAU 17 website; password-protected images pop up, as well as Mr. Masson’s name.** In 2nd paragraph, correct misspelling of **parent** company Schenley Learning. In 5th paragraph, last sentence should read, Mr. Masson has removed all **material**. In 8th paragraph sentence should read, Mr. Masson stated he used it when he was chair of the Board and said he will work on getting those photos **removed**. On page 14, last paragraph should read, Motion made by Dr. Brown to send a letter to the company to remove any reference **to SAU including Facebook**, other social media they use and would like it in writing when it has been removed. Ms. Mahoney asked that corrections be made to page 12, under C, Nominations, 8th paragraph where it should read, Mrs. Mahoney stated she thinks they should follow the policy. **She believes that the public feels that, we have quite a bit of administration and now would be the time to review and discuss for the public’s benefit and to build trust.** Mr. Baker asked that on page 11, questions marks be placed after his following statements, Mr. Baker asked where the authorization comes from the community to issue RFP and what the RFP’s are for? and Mr. Baker asked what the RFP is trying to accomplish? In the 8th paragraph, Mr. Baker asked that the following statement be added, **Mr. Baker stated: A commercial appraisal can cost \$5000-\$20,000. Six months from now, that appraisal is worthless without a plan”.** Under New Business, Poland Trip (same page) Mr. Baker asked that corrections be made to read, **Mr. Baker said this was a great trip, he was able to tour Europe in his 20’s and wished this was something that he was able to do in high school. He asked how this is funded?** On page 12, under Nominations, it should read, **Mr. Baker discussed the Personnel Policy for hiring Assistant Principals and explained how the policy is not being followed.** On page 14, in 8th paragraph the sentence should read, Mr. Masson stated that he used it when he was **Board Chair** and he will work on getting those photos **removed**.

Vote: All in Favor with amendments.

Mr. Broderick asked for a Motion for Non-Public Minutes of 8-16-17. **Motion made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Baker.** Ms. Mahoney asked that the following statement be added to public comment: **During the public comment section, topics will be limited to items on the meeting’s agenda. Mr. Ambrose requested that members of the public contact him to discuss concerns regarding other matters. The intent is not to restrict the public’s voice, but to streamline meetings, and to provide alternative avenues for resolving issues.**

Vote: All in Favor with amendment.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 Mr. Broderick distributed the Payroll Check Register to the Board for signatures.

- 3.2 Superintendent Ambrose welcomed the new Principal at Bakie Elementary School, Chris Snyder, who informed the group that he has lived in NH since 2001 and has spent all but 3 years of his professional career working in NH. He has 3 children in the Salem School District and has loved every minute of his transition to Bakie, which has been a very supportive environment. He is looking forward to getting to know the students, staff and the Board.

Mr. Ambrose also welcomed the new Memorial Elementary School Principal Patty Haynes who said it has been a wonderful start to the year, with very supportive teachers and staff. Originally from CT, Ms. Haynes has 23 years as an educator and is thrilled to be a part of the Sanborn District.

Mr. Ambrose added that Assistant Principals will be available to meet members of the community at the upcoming Open Houses being held at each school.

- 3.3. Opening Day went well with Mr. Ambrose sharing highlights of riding a few bus routes, greeting the parents and staff at the schools. He has visited all the schools, attended staff meetings and has been struck (as an outsider coming in) by the incredibly positive feeling the school district has, adding that the teachers are excited about seeing the kids and getting focused on teaching and learning. He also met with the AP teachers about the scores they have seen and there will be more on that in the future. Mr. Ambrose gave kudos to Mr. Stack for the smooth transition for the freshmen's first day. In closing, he thanked the custodial staff for their exceptional work in preparing the facilities of the district for the start of the school year.

- 3.4 Resignations: Eric Moore/Art at the High School.
Mr. Broderick asked for a Motion to accept the resignation of High School Art teacher, Eric Moore. Motion made by Mr. Masson, seconded by Ms. Mahoney. Vote: All in Favor.

- 3.5 Nominations: Marissa Vitolo/Art at the High School. Mr. Ambrose explained that Ms. Vitolo originally was approved at the 8/16 meeting as a .5 Art teacher but was moved to full-time with Mr. Moore's resignation.
Mr. Broderick asked for a Motion to approve the nomination of Marissa Vitolo as an Art teacher at the High School. Motion made by Mr. Masson, seconded by Ms. Mahoney. Vote: All in Favor.

- 3.6 School Board Vacancy/Press Release
Chair Broderick informed the group that the press release vacancy posting will be in this week's Carriage Towne News with responses due by the end of the following week (9/8). He is waiting for responses from legal counsel

clarification on the vacancy policy and will have those electronically delivered to the Board ASAP.

Mr. Baker asked if he had sent a request to the Attorney General's office? Mr. Broderick responded that he did and is waiting to get something in writing from them but his general feeling is that the Attorney General's Office is not going to get involved with a decision at a local school board. He will call them if he has not received it by Friday.

4. **NHSBA PRESENTATION-** Mr. Ambrose welcomed Attorney Barrett Christina, the Executive Director of the New Hampshire School Board Association who began his presentation by asking the Board Members how many years they have been on the Board and why they decided to run? Responses were as follows:

Tammy Mahoney- (At Large Member)- 5 months on Board as /to move the District forward academically.

Corey Masson (Newton)- 4 years on Board/originally ran for seat to fulfill civic duty, now realizes sole mission is to improve student outcomes by empowering the Superintendent to do his/her job.

Taryn Lytle (Kingston)- 5 months / As a public-school educator with children, there seemed to be a lack of understanding on the Board regarding where sound educational practices meet practicality and that their focus should stay centered on the students and not on adult-driven motives.

Dr. Brown (Newton)- 2 years/ Community College Professor (also teaches high school students) who has been involved in education since 1987 and would like to see the best outcomes for the students and the best value for the money spent. Whether that involves adding additional technology, online courses, or rearranging the high school schedule, she is interested in whatever it takes to get the best services to the students for the money spent. Other School Board duties such as those related to discipline, classroom misbehavior, dress code and cell phone, etc. are something she is learning about as she has not dealt with them, but is willing to hear suggestions and is not afraid to take a stand if something will work for the students.

Peter Broderick, Chair (Kingston)- 1 year on Board /Taught at High School for 20 years, involved in local politics for 20 years and saw test scores dropping which raised the question for him of what value was being provided to the students for the money being spent.

Jim Baker (Newton)- 5 months on school Board/ attended school board meetings regularly for 2 years prior to be elected and thought that although good

work had been done, it was time for new blood based on how he saw the school board going. One concern was community involvement and budgets not reflecting community concerns. He also did not agree with the school district's opinion on achievement and that certain types of testing didn't matter. Using his business background, he thought that the scores could be much better especially with the money we are spending. The RSA's say adequate education according to the means of the taxpayers, so it is a big umbrella we are working under.

Lauren Lanseigne (Student Representative)-As a senior this year and looking towards future involvement in politics, she sees this as an opportunity to pursue that avenue. She also stressed the imperativeness of students having a voice in decisions being made, something she is passionate about.

Sheila Pierce (Kingston)- 1.5 years/felt that the students needed a voice and that the main job of a board member is to advocate for the student and their education. Although everyone talks about money and taxes, but education does not come cheap and to skimp on things because people complain about taxes is not fair to the student. She has had 5 grandchildren go through the Sanborn School District and they are all doing very well and had some awesome teachers. She is very proud of Sanborn and hopes the next school board member is as passionate and caring about the students and their education.

(Please see the 8/30/17 School Board Video at www.sau17.org for the full presentation of NH School Board Association's Executive Director, Attorney Barrett Christina to the School Board)

- 4.1 **School Board Roles**- Attorney Christina expanded on the two platforms he heard from School Board members which are student outcomes and the reality of fiscal concerns. The budgetary concerns and how they play into the primary aspect of what school boards are charged with by state law and Department of Education regulations as overseeing also are a critical part of this
- 4.2 **School Board Responsibilities**- Attorney Christina highlighted that the good thing regarding the aspect of roles and responsibilities is that goals, both individually and collectively, can be achieved by using the vehicle of policies. The second vehicle school Board's use is the budget. **The interplay between policy-making and budget planning is where strategic plans come in regarding district initiatives.** The Department of Education has rules that indicate that policy making is the Board's primary responsibility with employment being first, the purchase of supplies, equipment and services is second and others follow. Policies are ordinances that help govern school districts. A policy process is important to manage the adoption and implementation. Policies are ever evolving based on legislation. Policy updates are regularly released.

Mr. Ambrose asked about the process for balancing local decisions with what is mandated by law? (E.g. the policy for hiring at Sanborn goes through a process whereby it goes to a personnel committee and then to the Board, yet some questions remain about the details of the number of candidate that can be brought forward to interview).

Mr. Masson interjected for clarification asking Mr. Ambrose if it was true that the Board will no longer go ahead and interview Asst. Principals if they were ever to need one? Mr. Ambrose answered that the policy is up for a second read, but right now the subcommittee would interview all for any administrative opening and then nominate candidates to the Superintendent for which 2 would go to the Board. Mr. Masson was not in agreement with the process saying that the vetting should be done by the leadership/Superintendent.

Attorney Christina commented that an established process that works for Sanborn with wiggle room for deviation is important and secondly, the definitive law question depends on the policy itself, e.g. the Bullying Policy which has specific requirements vs. something like a Dress Code policy which is more flexible and NHSBA can answer specifics on flexibility.

Mr. Masson asked about policy interpretations and targeted outcomes as it relates to how the board hold the Superintendent accountable, saying that their job is to set goals and evaluate them through the Superintendent.

Attorney read the *Learning Curve for New School Board Members* which can be steep and the points read will help with recommendations for best practices.

- 4.3 **Goal Setting/Superintendent Evaluation-** Attorney Christina compared the Board's policy-making role /responsibilities and the Superintendent's role of implementing the school board policies within the parameters and guidelines set by the school board. Evaluation of the Superintendent annually via goals keeps this in check. Polices touch on every aspect of duties of Superintendent. Periodic evaluations are recommended every 3-4 months. He stressed that Board members need to have goals as well.

Mr. Ambrose said that he has asked Mr. Broderick if he can add a Superintendent's report to every agenda for updating the Board on his progress.

Mr. Masson wonders whether we (the Board) understand the process of evaluation.

Mr. Baker thinks that we have do have an understanding given the meetings and trainings they have attended as well as the policies that are in black and white which are also evaluated by the NHSBA.

Attorney Christina commented that things take practice and time to get going.

Mr. Broderick added that changing the agenda to efficiently run the meetings has helped and keeping in mind that policies are put forth by the Board to be implemented by the Superintendent, knowing that we have the flexibility to change things.

Mr. Masson commented that the Board members are not educational experts and that they should allow the Superintendent to do his job.

Dr. Brown commented that the goals we all share are the same goals; to turn out successful, creative, independent adults, whatever their goal is in life is, whether it is trade school, the arts, biotech, college or not. The policies and the budget are the means to that end, but in her opinion, education in the US has been sliding downhill for the last 30 years. It is an emergent situation for her and she cannot just set a goal and sit back and watch outcomes. For every policy and budget, there is a white paper or research paper with clashing interest groups and all studies /critiques should be evaluated before making decisions. Sanborn students are brilliant but careful oversight is critical for going in the right direction.

Attorney Christina added that Board Goals and Strategic Planning factor into all of that as well.

Jim Baker asked about the Mission Statement for the School Board Association which states as an item under their Vision that they *represent the interest of local school boards in the development of state and federal education policy*. With Sanborn being a small district, there is a problem of unfunded State mandates. In terms of competitiveness for teachers, other towns have accessed values between 124% and 243% higher than ours and we are losing teachers to those towns. What initiatives are in place to balance or offset some of this?

Attorney Christina answered that communities are losing people and thus enrollments and he wishes he had better news. There is research going on at the State House but many communities have not recovered from the recession.

Mr. Ambrose added that finding ways to have teachers not lose steps when the teachers' contract doesn't pass. Is there anything in the works to rectify that? There is a correlation between math scores and teachers leaving which should be addressed.

Attorney Christina mentioned different remedies other districts have done and it is worth discussing.

Mr. Baker commented that asking the legislature to increase salaries circumvents the RSA and respecting the abilities of taxpayers to fund a system.

Attorney Christina agreed that there is nothing that obligated a pay raise that it goes back to the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Strategic Planning process belongs to the entire District and not to the School Board. Look at Best Practices that have worked well in the past.

4.4 Q & A- none

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tammy Gluck (Newton) - Having been involved with Sanborn since 2000, the teacher turnover at 43 is the highest she can remember. Despite the competitive contract passing this year and amending a million-dollar proposed budget cut at the Deliberative session we still had this drastic exodus. In her opinion, it is due to the culture, tone and animosity of the School Board towards the community and how that resonates to the teacher staff. She praised the efforts of the Mr. Ambrose and other new staff who are invested in building rapport and shared an anecdote regarding Exeter's Chair of the Joint Board, who has reached out to the community for their input regarding the search for a Superintendent and hope that same inclusiveness happens here.

Cheryl Gannon (Kingston) - Would like to see hard data regarding staff turnover this year and to do an analysis on the history to find reasons and ways to retain qualified staff. She asked if the results of the Smarter Balance and PACE assessments will be presented at the School Board meetings and that analysis be done as well on the results so that we will know students are performing and what the trends are and how they correlate to graduation rates, etc. Also, the Budget Planning Policy is out of date (2003) last reviewed, so please up-date that.

Mr. Ambrose commented that the policed are all being reviewed by Attorney Christina. Also, when contract don't pass, teachers don't get raises and those teachers that have given feedback say the culture and pay were reasons for leaving. The reports will be forthcoming by him as part of the Entry Plan.

Mr. Baker mentioned the importance of systematic Exit Interviews for teachers and staff. Teachers should be able to speak freely.

Annie Collyer (Newton)- Asked that the Suggestion Box idea be revisited which was previously brought up in a past Board Meeting for teacher's rooms and other areas to improve communication. They would be locked boxes that can be made in the shop department.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

6.1 Ms. Mahoney asked (In lieu of the natural disasters that are occurring) about the District's **Disaster Plan**. Mr. Broderick discussed the plan in place for the town/school and Mr. Ambrose will bring more information on Sanborn's plan to the October meeting.

6.2 All other will be discussed at next meeting

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

7.1 Payroll Check Register #4, \$193,107,056

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Budget Timeline- Ms. Croteau explained that that the Budget Timeline was reviewed with Mr. Ambrose, Ms. Collyer and Mr. Broderick and will be reported in full at the next meeting 9/6 to review and adopt. (The timeline will be sent out in advance).

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**

9.1 Agenda TBD

9.2 Announcements

9.2.1 The next Sanborn Regional School Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, from 6-9:00 in the Library at Sanborn Regional High School. **Going forward, all School Board meetings will be held in the library at Sanborn Regional High School.**

9.2.2 The next Budget Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2017 at 7PM in the School Board Conference Rm. #137.

9.3 **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Mahoney at 8:43 and seconded by Ms. Lytle
Vote: All in Favor.

Minutes Respectively Submitted by:

Phyllis Kennedy
School Board Secretary

Minutes of the School Board meetings are unofficial until approved at a subsequent meeting of the School Board.