

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2020

EPPING SCHOOL BOARD - LIVE/Epping TV Channel 22

Epping Town Office

School Board Meeting - 7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Deborah Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Deborah Brooks, Vice Chair David Mylott, Member Heather Clark, Member Ben Leavitt, Superintendent Furbush, Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Student Taya Morgado, and Student Emily Kelly. Member Robin O'Day was absent.

SCHEDULED GUESTS

a. Emergency Management - Cathy Zylinski

She discussed the different types of people who are on the Reopening Task Force.

She stated that the pandemic response is just one part of their emergency response plan. They met with other sections, and they continue to look at all aspects of their plan. They have been implementing emergency protocols and implementing safety drills. They reviewed the building safety protocols and are thinking about next steps and future plans. She listed off some of their future plans. She stressed that they're not just focusing on the pandemic, and they are addressing other areas of the emergency management plan as well.

Heather thanked her and the team for the excellent job that they've done and the continuing work that they do. Superintendent Furbush thanked Cathy for updating all the Memorandums of Understanding, and he thanked Christine Cue along with the administrators.

Cathy is looking for a Board member to join the Professional Development Committee. They meet once a month for a couple of hours. Most meetings are virtual. Heather and Deborah will try to make it work and will share responsibilities.

b. Winter Sports Plan Update/Ice Hockey Discussion - Ben Bourgoin

The Epping Ice Hockey team is a co-operative sport with Sanborn. Sanborn's School Board approved Ice Hockey. Players will be wearing recommended masks under their helmets. Sanborn's Board approved Epping students joining the team. There are limited facilities available. This may lead to less practices and games. They've talked to parents, and they are willing to commute if needed. The locker rooms will not be used. The bench areas have been modified and expanded. Everyone will be social distancing. A certain number of spectators will be allowed in certain rinks. He recommends that the Board approves allowing Epping students to participate in Ice Hockey with Sanborn and abide by State and District rules. All parents sent messages to the Board asking for their approval. There are three students who would be playing hockey from Epping. Heather supports this plan and thinks it's viable.

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to approve the Winter Hockey League for the Epping-Sanborn group. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

Ben said that the situation regarding Covid-19 has changed since he last presented the Winter Sports Plan. D1, D2, and D3 have all mandated that masks be worn during basketball games. D4 South is taking a vote soon and seems to be in favor of a mask mandate. It is different from fall sports since winter sports are indoors. The NHIAA has not issued a statewide sports mask mandate yet, but one could be coming soon. Ben is recommending a mask mandate for athletes at home and away games along with practices for all sports.

David said that safety is the number one priority, and he supports it since health officials are on board. Heather agrees with David. She asked if every school is still playing, and they all are. Ben thinks it's very responsible that the divisions are stepping up even though it isn't required.

Heather asked about winter track and spirit. Ben said that the runners outside who are distanced wouldn't need to wear the masks.

Member Heather Clark made a motion that all Epping middle and high school athletes will need to wear a mask for the winter sports season at home and away games along with practices that are indoors. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

Ben also covered the spectator policy. Epping middle and high school are scheduled to host basketball games. All spectators must follow NFHS policies. The Epping middle school gym will not have enough room for spectators. The games will be livestreamed.

The Epping high school gym will have designated sections. Two of the sections will be for visiting athletes. The two middle sections will be for immediate household family members. For

students with multiple households, they will be able to accommodate this. They will assign seats to those families which lets the district track and keep people spread out. They won't let spectators in until 15 minutes before the games and would need them to leave immediately after. Policy changes may lead to no spectators being allowed. They are trying to do everything safely and still allow parents to come to the games.

Deborah asked if students need to let him know in advance if their families will be attending the games. The families will have set seats for the season, so it won't be necessary.

David asked if away fans can come, and he said that it is just for their fans.

Heather thinks it is a good plan. She asked if JV teams or earlier teams can watch later games and vis versa. Ben said that they can. She asked if entrance and exit doors will be the same. He said that they will and that people passing each other will happen outside. She asked about the musicians who usually play at the games; he's not sure it can happen this year

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve the Winter Sports 2020-2021 Spectator policy. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

Heather asked about concession stands, and they are not having any as of now.

c. School Updates - EES, EMS and EHS Principals

Principal Cantagallo said that the elementary school received a \$2,000 donation to support student activities, and a \$500 donation for students' needs. The staff have started a Book Club, and they will also be having a Virtual Painting Party. For the Food Drive, they collected 2,166 items. There was a discussion about the student council. Students submitted applications for crew leadership and leadership positions within the council. There are four different crews. They try to encourage crew leaders to do the majority of the work and take responsibility. He discussed the different crews and what they all do. The 4th and 5th grade students can join the crews next week. Heather would love to see any YouTube videos that they do. There are four crew leaders and four assistant crew leaders. There are an additional five to eight students per crew.

David asked how the students are doing. Principal Cantagallo said that they're very happy. She said that they have been completely fine with masks and social distancing. Students have hand washing routines, and everyone is doing a great job. She thanked the teachers and custodians.

Parent Amy Hodgkin said that some kindergarten students have had a hard time sitting all day and mentioned the very dense classrooms. For this year, they don't anticipate changing the classroom sizes.

At the middle school level, they are focusing on a positive community and positive relationships with students. She discussed Penny Wars and thanked the PTO. They were able to raise over \$1,000 in two weeks. She discussed the turkey raffle. They won't be traveling to DC this year and may not be doing Camp Cody. The money raised from the raffle will be put into individual student accounts. Each class raised over \$1,400. She thanked a handful of people. For the End to Hunger Food Drive, the 6th grade won. The Recycling Club has started back up; they are trying to raise awareness. It is student run. The Epping Elves will watch over students throughout this month. Everyone is very excited about this endeavor. She expressed her gratitude for janitors and the staff.

David asked about students who do clubs and other activities besides sports. Youth 2 Youth group is still happening. There is also the Recycling Club and Reading Club. They are trying to create opportunities for kids.

At the high school level, Principal Ernest thanked the Exeter Area Group for the donation. He discussed the "I Am College" day event. He said that 26 students attended. The winter pre-season drills and training have started. He brought up the different fundraisers that they have going on such as the Christmas tree and wreath sale. He went over the Covid-19 tracking data since September. There were eight students that had to quarantine in October. In November, three students tested positive, and 24 had to quarantine. As of December, one faculty member is quarantining, and two students are quarantining as well. He thanked the staff, students, and health personnel.

Ben asked about attendance this year and their procedures. Principal Ernest said that it has been working well, and attendance has been good. He said that two-way traffic in the hallways has gone well. Students are getting to class on time.

David asked what afterschool activities are being offered besides sports. Principal Ernest said that there are activities that happen during the school day. He said that not much has been happening after school. He said that there is still the opportunity to participate in all clubs that were there before Covid-19. He hasn't seen as much interest this year.

Deborah thanked Principal Ernest for stepping up and being a substitute when needed. Principal Ernest thanked past students who have come back and helped out. Superintendent Furbush thanked all administrators and said that he appreciates them.

POLICY

a. IHAM - Health Education & Exemption from Instruction/2nd-3rd Read

Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to approve Policy IHAM - Health Education & Exemption from Instruction. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. IHAM-R - Opt-Out Form/2nd-3rd Read

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Policy IHAM-R - Opt-Out Form. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

PERSONNEL

Three returning college students have been helping as substitutes.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

a. Student Reports

Emily discussed what the different classes are working on. Taya talked about the Project Grad Tree and Wreath sale. She also mentioned the Project Grad 50/50 raffle. NHS is working on a community outreach project. Students are preparing for Scholastic Arts. Taya also added that there is a writing club afterschool. She also mentioned that the drama club will be doing a virtual play this year.

Ben asked Taya about the Christmas tree sale. They'll have about 75 trees and 40 wreaths. They usually don't have any leftovers. If they do, they typically donate them to the American Legion. Ben asked Emily Scholastic Arts. There is no theme; it is up to the artist. There are typically three categories for specific scholarships.

Deborah asked Emily about flex block. Emily explained how it is handled differently for each grade level. It is also different this year compared to past years.

b. Superintendent's Report

He thanked everyone for doing such a great job.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES

a. Business Administration Updates

Deborah asked about big expenditures from the past couple of years that the Board has approved. Last year, the Board approved the sealing and painting of the parking lots which cost \$6,500. The year before that the SAU roof project cost \$28,980. Deborah mentioned the previous wish list that the Board used to do. She noted that the Board is very good about giving money that they do not use back to the town. Bonnie went through the default budget line by line and added notes. She wants to send this to the Budget Committee tomorrow by noon. David thinks that the notes will help. Bonnie made some adjustments to the default budget such as changing the number of buses from seven to six. The new default budget is \$20,704,670. The Budget Committee wants to see what the district spent this year compared to last year. Bonnie said that she'll get that done.

b. Para Agreement Ratification

Superintendent Furbush said that their Paraprofessional President left this year. He noted that the pay increases that they agreed to have gone up slightly. They want to be able to fill their open positions. He went over the different pay rates in surrounding towns. He said that their proposed pay rate is still competitive compared to the neighboring towns. Superintendent Furbush would like the Board to ratify this agreement. Deborah brought up concerns regarding the Budget Committee meeting and is wondering if they'll support the pay increase for the paraprofessionals. Heather thinks that they will since it is a necessary position and important for the students who need them. The total dollar amount is about \$70,000 over the course of three years. The percentage may seem high, but the total dollar amount isn't that much money.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to ratify the Para Agreement for the 2021-2024 school years. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Discussion from Dec 2nd Budget Committee Meeting

The warrant article meeting with the Budget Committee was pushed back to 12/23. Heather said that they may move it to 12/22 and discuss all warrant articles for the school. It was noted that this date change affects the guest that will be attending the meeting. Deborah said that she will not be able to attend on 12/23 due to a prior obligation. There was a discussion about this situation. Deborah said that they have cut the district's budget already this year. The district has been working hard to minimize costs. Heather noted that the town and school budgets are different. She also stressed that the Budget Committee's schedule has been tentative.

David voiced his opinion on the matter. He would like an apology from the Budget Committee. The Board feels that the situation was unfair. The Board sent their budget electronically on 11/9 and sent a hard copy on 11/23. The Budget Committee was given plenty of time to review the document. David noted that no questions were asked prior to the meeting. Heather explained that they have the right to go through the document line by line.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Minutes for November 19, 2020

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the Public Minutes from the November 19, 2020 meeting as revised. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Non-Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2020

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the Non-Meeting Minutes from the November 19, 2020 meeting as written. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST

a. Payroll Manifest

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept Payroll Manifest #11 dated 11/27/20 in the amount of \$454,789.38. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Accounts Payable

Member Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable #11 dated 11/19/20 in the amount of \$260,988.83. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sean Meagher said that there is a wonderful relationship between the music and athletic departments. They will not be having any band performances during athletic games in order for family members and other athletes to have enough room. In terms of concerts, the December concert was pushed back to late January. He said that it will most likely be live streamed, but they have to navigate copyright issues. It is not possible in the middle school gym due to its small size. He was an author on the State's music education recommendation, and there are no formal guidelines on concerts. There has been a consensus that virtual concerts will be best. They will still explore in-person options depending on how the year progresses.

Ben asked if there are any programs for audio production or music editing. Sean said that if a student is interested, they could take it as an independent study.

COMMENTS/OTHER

Deborah brought up the formal semiannual review that is coming up for Superintendent Furbush. She wanted to hear the Board's opinion on completing the formal review. David said that he does not think it is necessary, but he thinks it will be helpful for Superintendent Furbush since he is a new employee. He recommended that they hold a non-public session for the review. It would be an undocumented meeting. Deborah could then meet with him one on one. Heather likes David's idea. Ben was prepared to do the formal review, but he thinks they should give him some form of feedback. Superintendent Furbush said that he does not need a formal review, but he would love to hear feedback and receive an informal review. Deborah said that the first meeting in January will have a non-public session after the meeting to do the review.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

a. Meeting to be scheduled for December 17, 2020

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II

Non-Public Meeting is not scheduled for December 3, 2020 following the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**Member Heather Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 pm.
Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary