



HUDSON SCHOOL BOARD
Hills Memorial Library
18 Library Street, Hudson, New Hampshire

Minutes
May 23, 2022

In Attendance

Board Members

Gary Gasdia, Chairman
Gretchen Whiting, Vice-chair
Ethan Beals
Mike Campbell
Maureen Dionne
Emily Dozois, Student Representative

SAU Staff

Larry Russell, Superintendent of Schools
Rachel Borge, Director Special Services
Jen Burk, Business Administrator
Kim Organek, Assistant Superintendent of
Curriculum & Instruction

Brett Gagnon, Board of Selectmen Liaison

A. Call to Order [0:00:14]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Gasdia called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Ms. Dionne led the Pledge of Allegiance. Emily Dozois was introduced as the newly elected student representative.

B. Public Input [0:00:52]

There was no public input.

C. Presentation to the Board [0:00:59]

1. Panama Field Trip

Alvirne Principal Beals spoke about the recent student trip to Panama over vacation. He was grateful for the staff members who organized these trips. Students Mansi Manthur, Jack Mallet and Mercedes Smith gave an overview of the trip, highlights of which included: STEM and cultural learning (engineering of the Panama Canal, folk dancing, Spanish language); seeing ecosystems first-hand; indigenous food/diet (pineapple plantations); hands-on activities; gaining college credit for the trip and the helpfulness of everyone when one student was tested positive for Covid and had to quarantine. Mr. Peckham, Mr. Reece, and Ms. Lockhart were thanked for the experience.

D. Old Business [0:12:45]

1. Budget Committee Bylaws

The Budget Committee has changed its bylaws so that the School Board and Board of

Selectmen ex-officio members are not allowed to vote. Legal counsel has determined that this does not correlate with RSAs. At the last Board of Selectmen meeting, a vote was taken to pursue a hearing at Superior Court. The School Board can join the hearing and split the cost of litigation with the town - drafting and filing fees (up to \$1,000), preparation, attendance cost (up to \$2,000) and filing fees.

The Town attorney will take the lead. The Budget Committee requested the Board of Selectmen transfer \$24,000 to pay for legal fees. The Board of Selectmen approved a lower transfer and will revisit if the funds are needed.

Ethan Beals made a motion to join the Board of Selectmen at a hearing in Superior Court. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

2. Year-End Spending Requests (Discussion/Decision)

Ms. Burk noted a change since the last memo: the HO Smith replacement lift was moved to the top of the memo under School Board approval.

New under the Facilities Request section is a request regarding District Wide Air Conditioning for replacement of a unit at Hills Garrison in the Music room. Funding for this unit was cut from the FY23 budget to get to the default number. The unit was budgeted at \$13,200 in the original FY23 budget. This request is not specifically for safety, but more to control the environment for the equipment kept here.

Recommended by Administration

Principals/Administration Requests:

NWES Library refresh (similar to HMS project from FY21) – estimate \$50,000

AHS Art Faculty Request – Digital Book Illustration technology (iPads) – estimate \$14,500

Facilities Request: Air Conditioning Unit for the Hills Garrison Music Room - \$10,594

AHS Sound System – estimate \$15,530

Technology Requests

- New (in-house) server to support expansion of (future) cameras at HGS and NWES – estimate \$20,000
- LSS additional laptop cart (1 is in the budget for FY23, this would add another so they would have 4 in total) – estimate \$9,000
- HOS additional laptop cart (1 is in the budget for FY23, this would add another so they would have 4 in total) – estimate \$9,000

Refreshing the HMS Life Skills space will be managed through a grant under IDEA that was just approved.

Total Recommended = \$128,624 (excluding the grant-related item noted above)

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the following requests: AHS Art Faculty – iPads, AHS sound system, LSS additional laptop cart and HOS additional laptop cart. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Mike Campbell made a motion to approve the following requests: new server support expansion of cameras at HGS and NWES (\$20,000). Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:1.

There was discussion about the A/C at Hills Garrison elementary music room. The room is adjacent to the cafeteria. The existing system was part of the A/C unit replacement cycle but it was removed due to the default budget. It is at end-of-life with no more warranty for repairs. It was part of the bid process for quotes (good until June 7th). This vote was tabled.

Mike Campbell made a motion to approve the NWES library refresh for \$50,000. Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

3. Policies - Second Reading

Ms. Organek presented policies DAF, DBJ and EHB for second reading with no new changes.

Gretchen Whiting made a motion to approve the second reading of the following policies:

DAF - Administration of Federal Funds

DBJ - Transfer of Appropriations

EHB - Data and Records Retention

Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

E. New Business [0:36:33]

1. ACF National Convention Request by the CTE/Culinary Arts

Mr. Russell noted that there was a request from the Board for a presentation, however, Chef Bressler was not in attendance tonight.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the ACF National Convention request contingent on having Chef Bressler present to the Board after the trip. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

2. Facilities Bids (Discussion)

Ms. Burk noted that bids were out for the following projects.

Roof replacement: approved by voters as a separate warrant article (budgeted \$550,000 - received 3 bids). The recommendation was to use Corolla Contracting at \$425,700.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the bid by Corolla Contracting for \$425,700 for roof replacement. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed, 5:0.

Library Street exhaust fans: replace 11 rooftop units (budgeted at \$30,000). 2 bids were received. The recommendation was to use Blouin Services for \$20,275.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the bid from Blouin Services for \$20,275 for the Library Street exhaust fan replacements. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Districtwide A/C: IT spaces, Nottingham and Hills Garrison. Vendors did site visits. The recommendation was to award four of the projects (two data rooms at Alvirne, Nottingham West main office and Special Education) to ENE Systems for \$65,541 and the SAU data room and Hills Garrison IT lab to Blouin Services for \$15,601 per policy DJE.

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve ENE Systems of NH Districtwide A/C for \$65,541 and Blouin Services for the SAU data room and Hills Garrison IT lab for \$15,601 per specs. Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

There was concern about the higher cost of bids than what was expected due to the times regarding contractors and price increases.

3. Hiring Update

Ms. Burk noted the difficulty in hiring staff not just in Hudson or in education. There were 72 jobs posted on the district website as of last Friday. This number doesn't reflect the actual number of positions that are open, as there are some postings that are combined such as "district-wide paraeducators" which covers all of the openings across the district, which are crucial to support students and IEPs. There was a memo from Human Resources highlighting key vacancies. The district is participating in the Alvirne/Department of Employment Security job fair on May 25. She noted incentives that other districts were using such as sign-on bonuses, substitute rate increases, referral bonuses, and more. There is competition since surrounding towns have many vacancies.

There was discussion about researching for more information regarding signing and retention bonuses and pay scales in order to stay competitive. This could be done through upcoming negotiations or otherwise through MOUs. Mr. Russell suggested this be vetted carefully (e.g. for equality/existing staff). Grant use could be a possible tool for this type of initiative. Ms. Burk will come back with ideas in a future meeting.

4. AHS Graduation (Discussion/Decision)

Mr. Beals brought up the role of the Board and administration at the high school graduation ceremony.

Mr. Beals favors a lesser Board role for graduation and he disagreed with having a School Board speech. He felt that graduation was the one day dedicated to the students and their graduation. He suggested that a staff member distribute diplomas as they had direct impact on the graduates. He favored having the Chair open the graduation and the Board sit on the stage. Ms. Whiting said that the diploma has three signatures, including the School Board Chair, and

that students should know who the Board members are that were part of their learning environment and also to see community involvement. Mr. Beals felt that graduation was not part of the Board's role - graduates largely did not know Board members and did not vote for them. Ms. Dionne thought that the Board should be part of the celebration. Mr. Russell thought this could be a future conversation but not with graduation so close. Mr. Gasdia agreed and said that the Board Chair should say welcome, on behalf of the School Board and not to overshadow anything else. Mr. Campbell favored having the Chair give a welcome and not a speech and he felt that graduation should be at Alvirne and not at the SNHU arena even though students favored that. Mr. Gagnon agreed with Mr. Beals' ideas but also felt that it was good exposure for the students regarding the real world (though there should be limitations).

Ethan Beals made a motion that the School Board Chair give a welcome at graduation should and not a speech. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:1.

5. Extracurricular Nominations

Ethan Beals made a motion to approve Dan Pooler and Sue Piper to split the stipend for 8th Grade Advisor. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

F. Recommended Action [1:26:03]

2. Manifests

3. Minutes (School Board: May 9, 2022)

Mike Campbell noted there were some layout issues with the "draft" mark.

Mike Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2022 as presented. Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

G. Committee Reports [1:27:21]

1. Committee Reports

Mr. Gasdia noted on behalf of the Hudson Old Home Days Committee, Aug. 11-14, people should share concerns now and that it would be nice to have more school involvement (no fee). Anyone interested should email HUDSONOLDHOMEDAYS@gmail.com. Mr. Campbell would be interested in having a table there for the Board.

2. Correspondence

There was no correspondence

H. Board of Selectmen - Liaison Comments [1:30:07]

Mr. Gagnon noted that there was discussion about moving forward with the bond for the new Police Station. He congratulated the Sustainability Committee and Palmer CTE Center who held Ecofest. Tomorrow's Board of Selectmen meeting will feature a public hearing on new explosive ordinances and a review of the Right-to-Know Committee's draft for requests. There would also be discussion about American Rescue Plan money and possible projects. Visionary discussions on the future of Hudson were ongoing.

I. School Board Member [1:33:07]

Emily Dozois mentioned that the Career and Job Resource Fair on May 25 will be beneficial to students. She appreciated being at this meeting.

J. Board Member Comments [1:40:22]

Ms. Dionne said Spring Enrichment was winding down at Nottingham West. ROTC and the American Legion posted flags at Library Park. STEM activities were taking place at Hills Garrison in May.

Mr. Beals and Ms. Whiting welcomed Emily Dozois. Ms. Whiting noted Seniors were celebrating their last two weeks of school and encouraged them to be safe and smart.

Mr. Gasdia welcomed Ms. Dozois and that it was nice to have a voice of the students. He said that he enjoyed the sliders from the Barnyard Cafe and he commended the CTE program.

K. Non-Public Session - None**L. Adjournment [1:36:23]**

At 8:06 pm, Ethan Beals made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0. Roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by
Susan DeFelice