

**BETHLEHEM BOARD OF EDUCATION
BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
GOOGLE MEET**

**DATE: JANUARY 12, 2021
TIME: 5:30 PM**

BOARD MEETING MINUTES - Draft

PRESENT: Chairman Robert Weir, Superintendent Tari Thomas, Principal Sue Greenlaw, Business Manager Toni Butterfield, Board Member Jennifer Lucas, Chirs McGrath

PRESENT GOOGLE MEET: Board Members: Tim Fleury, Becky Beno, James Noyes entered 5:37PM

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Robert Weir called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM Roll Call: CHAIRMAN ROBERT WEIR, JENNIFER LUCAS, TIMOTHY FLEURY, BECKY BENO

JAMES NOYES present at 5:37 PM

II. PUBLIC INPUT

Chris McGrath: Asked for dates for the filing of candidacy. Business Manager Butterfield gave him that information.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2020 MEETING

[2020-12-08 Draft Public Meeting Minutes](#)

[2020-12-08 Draft Non Public Meeting Minutes](#)

MOTION MADE BY BECKY BENO SECONDED BY TIM FLEURY FOR THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8TH, 2020 MEETING. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTIONED PASSES.

MOTION MADE BY TIM FLEURY SECONDED BY JENNIFER LUCAS FOR THE APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8TH, 2020 NON PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTIONED PASSES.

V. FINANCIAL

A. Budget Review

Business Manager Butterfield and Principal Greenlaw reviewed the budget.

Principal Greenlaw reports that Brian Smith is listed as staff currently, his position is being paid through an IDEA grant, and will hopefully continue. There will be adjustments of positions. This will reduce that line item.

Principal Greenlaw is searching for kindergartners next year, so far there are only 12 students. That may mean one kindergarten class vs two kindergarten classes. Nothing is definite yet.

Principal Greenlaw stated with the retirement of a first grade teacher, there is an automatic budget amount put into the line item based on the retiree's salary. There is potential savings if the new hire is not at the step level as the previous teacher.

Principal Greenlaw reported last year in the budget there was a permanent sub on staff, which is a cost of \$20,454, Principal Greenlaw feels this is a valid position to keep on staff, especially if we go back to normal next year. This year the \$30,000 substitute line hasn't been used. If that position could stay in house the substitute line could be lowered. Principal Greenlaw is going to look at the trend in the past to see what the cost of substitutes were.

Business Manager Butterfield mentioned that Principal Greenlaw has done a great job offsetting costs. Healthcare cost has gone up 9% and retirement has gone up 21% for professional staff and 14% for support staff.

Chairman Weir states there is a 5% increase change in the bottomline. They should know more information in a few weeks if there is a small increase or decrease.

Business Manager Butterfield urges the board to call her if they have any questions between now and the February meeting.

Business Manager Butterfield created a financial report, she states BES is in a good place. Starting General Fund Balance is \$160,000 at the beginning of the year. \$40,000 will be taken out and put it into the Capitol Building Fund per previous year warrant article. This will leave BES with an opening balance of \$120,000. Expended to date is 1.3 million dollars, over \$50,000 will be covered over the Rotary Grant and CARES Grant. There were a lot of Covid related expenses and those will be covered. Figures showed what was encumbered, if BES was to spend nothing, BES would end up with an end of the year balance fund of \$215,000. The first line which was not encumbered yet, might reduce the balance.

Business Manager Butterfield recognized that Principal Greenlaw has done a good job balancing all the grants to reduce the budget. Discussion ensued.

Business Manager Butterfield spoke about the food program; sales are down for Fresh Picks across three schools. BES served about 100 breakfasts before the schools closed, at this point it is cut in half. A discussion about any shortfalls or cost will have to happen once the kids are back in school. Fresh Picks had some of their employees take unemployment, which was not an expense for them. BES had to pay a portion of the service cost to Profile as they prepared 33 meals for BES students during the closure.

B. General Information

Chairman Weir states he thinks at the end of the fiscal year looks good and thanked Principal Greenlaw and Business Manager Butterfield.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Budget Hearing/ Annual Meeting Format

NHMA Guidance on 2021 Annual Meetings:

https://www.nhmunicipal.org/sites/default/files/uploads/legal/annual_mtg_gdnc_2021_0.pdf

The text of the bill:

gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billText.aspx?sy=2021&id=996&txtFormat=html

Superintendent Thomas provided the board with information from NHMA guidance in regards to holding meetings and voting during Covid times. She reports there is also a new bill pending in the legislature 2021 SB 2, this would allow schools to postpone elections and annual meetings. SB 2 has passed through the Senate, and needs to be passed at the House next before signed into law. SAU attorney mentioned talking to the moderator. Most schools in the district want to go forward with in-person voting, but in the winter months there may not be an appropriate venue. Last year BES held their meeting at Profile's parking lot, some have had meetings in gymnasiums with proper covid protective measures in place. Superintendent Thomas opened the topic to discussion on whether to hold in-person voting or postponement.

Chairman Weir stated that at the Executive Board level, during their meeting it was discussed how other schools might be holding their meeting. Moderator Don Lavoie would have to give his approval to the date if he thinks it is safe. The bill could potentially be similar to last year, where the date kept getting postponed and the meeting ended up in June. There are some different options that were discussed last spring, such as having voters in classrooms with monitors.

Chairman Weir doesn't believe we can hold the meeting outside in March because of the weather.

Board Member Fleury reported the Town of Bethlehem voted to postpone their meeting to the end of June. The town felt it was important to meet in person, that way they didn't lose public input, conversations or votes.

Chairman Weir isn't opposed to postponing and believes that last year's annual meeting worked well. If the meeting does get postponed this year, maybe it doesn't have to be pushed out to June. The annual meeting is well attended.

Principal Greenlaw mentioned she doesn't want people to feel uncomfortable about coming into the building in March for the annual meeting. May or April maybe potential months to have the meeting outside.

Discussion Ensued.

Budget hearing will continue to be on February 16th offered via remote and in person at Bethlehem Elementary.

B. Warrant Articles

Superintendent Thomas shared the warrant articles from last year, she was wondering what the plans are for this year's warrant articles.

Principal Greenlaw mentioned it could be beneficial to put some money aside for possible roof repairs, or for a digital heating monitor in the classrooms to allow the heat to operate more efficiently. Principal Greenlaw also mentioned that the trim around the windows are in rough shape and starting to chip, and an unofficial quote for that was \$12,000 as the school has about 70 windows. These are things that need to be done, but not immediately.

Board Member Noyes questioned if this was addressing the windowsills. Principal Greenlaw replied that the unofficial quote was for painting only. It was mentioned there is a compound that could be used to solidify the windowsills for those that are chipping and cracking and falling off. Board Member Noyes noticed the window above the gym was cracking and there was concrete on the ground.

Business Manager Butterfield mentioned that there is still \$127,000.

Brief discussion ensued about the amount of monies that should be in the warrant article.

MOTION MADE BY BECKY BENO SECONDED BY JAMES NOYES TO APPROVE WARRANT ARTICLE TO RAISE THE SUM UP TO \$40,000 FOR THE CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

C. General Information

[Revised 2021-2022 Calendar](#)

[Holiday Letter to Staff](#)

[January 2021 Newsletter](#)

[Annual Meeting and Filing of Candidacy Information](#)

Superintendent Thomas shared that there was a revision to the 2021-2022 calendar. It was necessary to change the winter break to link up with the North Country for CTE at Littleton High School. Winter break will now be February 28th- March 4th. This was approved by the Executive Board.

Superintendent Thomas mentioned her January 2021 Newsletter went out early this month due to the violence at the Capitol, she wanted to provide parents with resources. The newsletter has been viewed 627 times. The newsletter has information about schools across the district, COVID and school enrollments. Also mentioned by Superintendent Thomas is Tammy Reardon and the BES staff created thoughtful holiday food baskets and gift bags for the children and families in the community, very astounding.

Superintendent Thomas, provided a final meeting and candidacy information for the district. There are two positions up for the Bethlehem School Board, make sure you get your paperwork done. Filing for candidacy is between January 27 and February 5th, for more information or questions contact Gabriel Clark at the SAU office or email at g.clark@sau35.org

Chairman Weir wanted to remind everyone that the budget hearing is February at 5:00 PM, not 5:30 PM.

VII. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

[Principal's January Report](#)

A. General Information

Principal Greenlaw summarized her January report.

Everyone is excited to come back into the building on the 19th. There have been some changes in the building, Erica Smith has agreed to take over the 5/6 grade positions that was opened after a teacher resigned in November. Jo-anna Brusseau will take over the Preschool.

Tammy Reardon had her Covid Vaccine

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Reminder to families that this needs to be a group effort for our kids to stay in person for the remainder of the year.

VIII. BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS

Chairman Weir reported that at the E-Board meeting last week they were scheduled to talk about the Superintendent search, this will continue. They are looking to possibly reorganize and restructure how the SAU does business. Through Superintendent Thomas roles previously she has pointed out that there is a cost per pupil ratio that schools often use. Chairman Weir reported that all the schools in the district have a very high cost per pupil, the E-Board is looking at if there are ways that can be streamlined and are there economies of scales that can be produced. With that discussion, the E-Board wants to find qualified Superintendents that will stay for a long time. Historically the SAU has had high turnover with the Superintendents. The SAU having 5 unique schools, the E-Board is looking into the possibility of doing things better. This is looking at the culture of the SAU, looking at ways to do better with economies of scales and maybe cost share. Chairman Weir mentioned that he is in contact with Barrett Christina from NH School Board Association to explore some possibilities. Chairman Weir will keep the board update with information.

Superintendent Thomas added that some of the towns are on a spending cliff, and the costs are out of reach for the taxpayers. That is a motivation to look at possibilities to keep cost to the communities down. Allowing for the uniqueness of each district and keeping their autonomies.

IX. POLICY COMMITTEE

Nothing at this time.

X. NON-PUBLIC SESSION AS PER RSA 91A:3 I, II (If Needed)

MOTION TO GO INTO NON-PUBLIC JENNIFER LUCAS 6:34 PM , SECOND JAMES NOYES. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTIONED CARRIES.

MOTION TO LEAVE NON-PUBLIC MADE BY TIM FLEURY, SECOND JENNIFER LUCAS. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTIONED CARRIES, TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AT 6:42 PM.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Board Member Noyes will attend the Delegate Assembly for NH School Board Association.

Board Member Noyes asked about campaigning for the election. Campaigning is okay.

Board Member Fleury stated that the after school program will be opening.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to come before the Board adjourned the meeting.

**MOTION MADE BY JENNIFER LUCAS SECONDED BY BECKY BENO TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:47PM. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rhienna Miscio
Substitute Board Clerk

The next Board Meeting will be held on February 16th, 2021 at 5:00 PM

A Checklist To Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency

As Chair of the Bethlehem Elementary School Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

- a. Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Google Meet for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting by clicking on the following website address: <http://meet.google.com/hrv-rxdr-osz>. Join by phone (US) +1 302-751-6137 (PIN: 890575892)

- b. Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided physically as posted outside the SAU #35 office door and on the websites of Bethlehem Elementary School and SAU #35 at: www.bethlehem.k12.nh.us and www.sau35.org

- c. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem, please email Sue Greenlaw at s.greenlaw@bethlehem.k12.nh.us

- d. Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.