

Farmington River Regional School District

School Committee Meeting

Meeting #431

Farmington River Elementary School Library

Monday, April 10th, 2023

6:00 PM

Special Meeting:

Superintendent

Interviews

Masks Optional

Call in number to listen only, community participation requires being in person.

MINUTES

Phone number: 605-313-5711

Access code - 7622376

Members Present: Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko

Also Present: Eric Jesner, Robert Putnam, Caroline Stamm

This meeting was recorded for the Berkshire Eagle.

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Carol Lombardo.
 - A. Roll Call: Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko
- II. **Vote to Accept the Questions for the Superintendent Candidates:**
 - A. VOTE: to accept the questions for the Superintendent Candidates
 1. Arlene Tolopko motioned to accept the questions for the Superintendent Candidates.
 2. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
 3. Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko were in favor. There were no objections and the motion passed to use the approved questions for the Superintendent Candidates.
 - B. Approved Questions used for both interviews were as follows:
 1. CAROL LOMBARDO: Tell us about a time when you had to address a crisis that posed serious consequences for your district. What was the crisis and how did you, or you and your colleagues, deal with this situation?
 2. ROGER KOHLER: How do you view the role of the school principal, especially in light of the new evaluation process? What do you see as necessary for principals and their schools to succeed?
 3. ARLENE TOLOPKO: How important is communication between administration and teachers, administration and parents, and administration and students? What is your preferred normal mode of communication with all of the above? Verbal or written?
 4. CARL NETT: What has been your experience working with a school committee and how do you see the role of the superintendent as the chief executive officer reporting to a committee that is, in fact, a municipal legislature for schools, in leading the district?
 5. DEB FOGEL: What leadership skills would you use in selecting a principal?
 6. ALEX BOWMAN: How would you expect to be evaluated as the superintendent? On what measurements would you expect to be "graded" after one year, or at two years or at three years? When would be a fair point to evaluate your performance as superintendent?

7. PHIL MAGOVERN: As the new superintendent in our district, what would be your most critical long-range objective?
8. CAROL LOMBARDO: We all know about courageous leaders, but have you ever had to be a courageous follower in controversial times? Tell us about it.
9. ROGER KOHLER: Our district is a multi-million dollar operation and some people want us to run the district like a business. How do you respond to those people?
10. ARLENE TOLOPKO: In order of priority, which is most important in the hierarchy of the school? Administration, teachers, or students? Elaborate.
11. CARL NETT: Describe an incident where you disagreed with your committee. How was it settled?
12. ALEX BOWMAN: How do you judge the performance of the staff members who report to you? What characteristics do you see as distinguishing a better employee from one whose performance is simply average? What can you do to try to make superior staff out of average performers?
13. PHIL MAGOVERN: With regard to failures, tell us about some occasions when you did not succeed – or in something where you actually failed – and what it was and what you learned from it.
14. ALEX BOWMAN: What are your views about using student achievement data to evaluate educators?
15. CAROL LOMBARDO: What was the best idea you ever presented to your committee – the one you feel exemplifies the best in planning, policy, administrative action, etc.? Did the committee accept it? What persuaded them to move as they did, or what might you do to continue to work with them to accept your recommendation?

III. **Interviews of Superintendent Candidates:**

- 6:00 PM Timothy Lee
- 7:00 PM Michelle Rivers Murphy
- A. Superintendent Interview: Timothy Lee
 1. The Interview began at 6:02 PM and concluded at 7:00 PM
- B. Superintendent Interview: Michelle Rivers Murphy
 1. The Interview began at 7:06 PM and concluded at 7:50 PM

IV. **Deliberation and Appointment of Superintendent:**

- *The Committee will deliberate and appoint a Superintendent.*
- A. Deliberation began comparing the two candidates to the needs of the District and what each candidate could provide.
- B. The Committee opted to hear from a few teachers who were present in the room: Meg Martin, Laurie Flower, Mike Saporito, Amy Maxton (via Zoom). They also opted to hear from Denise Hardie who has ample experience in the school system.
 1. Consensus is that the District needs a seasoned administrator who has ample experience to continue to build a solid foundation
- C. Discussion continued surrounding the option of offering a 1-year contract followed by a 3-year versus a . a 3-year contract. There was a general agreement to offer a 3-year contract upfront as a vote of confidence in the candidate.
- D. VOTE: to offer the position of Superintendent
 1. Roger Kohler made the motion to offer the position of Superintendent to the Farmington River Regional School District to Timothy Lee.
 2. Arlene Tolopko seconded the motion.
 3. Vote - Roll Call: Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko were in favor.
- E. Carol stepped out to contact Timothy Lee with the offer at 8:12 PM.

- F. Carol returned at 8:17 PM with Timothy's response that he would be happy to take the position and would like to discuss a few provisions in his contract.
 - G. VOTE: nominating Carol to negotiate with Timothy Lee
 - 1. Carl Nett motioned to nominate Carol to negotiate with Timothy Lee regarding the terms of his contract as Superintendent to Farmington River Regional School District.
 - 2. Roger Kohler seconded the motion.
 - 3. Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko were in favor. There were no objections and the motion passed to nominate Carol to negotiate with Timothy Lee regarding the terms of his contract as Superintendent of Farmington River Regional School District.
 - H. Discussion revolved around the specific provision that Timothy has requested: adding a provision/per diem to his contract should he need more than the expected 2 days per week at specific points in the year.
 - I. **Motion to Adjourn:**
 - A. Arlene Tolopko made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 PM
 - B. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
 - C. Vote - Roll Call: Alex Bowman, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko
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Respectfully submitted,
Caroline Stamm