

Farmington River Regional School District

School Committee

Meeting #459

Farmington River Elementary School Library

Monday, December 2nd, 2024

MINUTES

7:00 PM

Members Present: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, Stacey Schultze

Also Present: Timothy Lee, Caroline Stamm

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Denise Hardie
 - a. Roll Call: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, Stacey Schultze
 - b. The meeting was recorded for archival purposes.
2. **Public Comment:**
 - a. Nothing at this time.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:**

- Meeting #458 from November 4th, 2024

 - a. MOTION: Phil Magovern made a motion to accept the minutes from Meeting #458 (11/4/24).
 - i. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
 - ii. There was no discussion.
 - iii. VOTE to accept: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, and Stacey Schultze were in favor. The motion passed unanimously to accept the minutes from Meeting #458 (11/4/24).
4. **Superintendent's Report:**
 - a. November 5th County Wide PD Day:
 - i. A few of the specials teachers went offsite to workshops, but a majority of the staff stayed on campus and participated in several workshops.
 - ii. A huge thank you to Denise Hardie for hosting breakfast that morning!
 - iii. The teacher workshops focused on a deep dive into the MCAS data to look at specific items of strengths and weaknesses. Paraprofessionals participated in PARA training modules ranging from assisting students with autism to helping teach writing. Following lunch, workshops continued followed by a collective discussion with all staff on the productive struggle and helping students take responsibility for their own learning and persevere when learning is uncomfortable.
 - iv. Tim thanked Jamie Foster for leading the MCAS data workshop, and Bethany Mather for leading the Productive Struggle workshop. The district will continue to encourage teachers to step up and lead their peers in meaningful PD sessions.
 - b. Veterans' Day Assembly:
 - i. The annual assembly was lead mainly by students who took turns by grade level

to sing and present tokens of appreciation to Veterans in the local community. We had a wonderful turnout with approximately 20 local Veterans, many of whom were family members of FRES students. A huge thank you to the students for their wonderful presentation, the staff for supporting them, and the veterans for coming to the school to celebrate Veterans' Day.

c. Bus Contract IFB:

- i. The Bus Contract is up for renewal this year.
- ii. Bids are due January 16th, 2024 before 4pm. The Bid will be posted in the bid in newspapers.
- iii. The bid document is based on the document used in previous years by Eric Jesner during the last bid process.

d. Transportation Updates:

- i. Our 7D-wheelchair van is officially being built - expected delivery date in May 2025. It is a similar chassis as what we currently have but with wheelchair accessibility, and it will be a lease instead of purchase.
- ii. At the last meeting, it was reported that there was schedule changes that would keep bus routes under an hour, but after doing a ride along on one of the routes, Tim would like to amend his statement that there is one route that is a bit over an hour to get all students home.
 1. There was a discussion on how the bus routes are currently routed and some factors that are causing a discrepancy in time between the morning and afternoon routes. Tim suggested the Policy Subcommittee should review the policy on a bus stop within 1-mile of a student's house.

e. Surplus of Equipment (Van 4), Vote to Approve:

- i. Tim a status update on Van 4, including the current inspections and registration status with municipal plates. The plan would be to surplus the vehicle (a series of steps that vary based on the vehicle's value to advertise and resale, or handoff the vehicle).
- ii. Carl Nett recommended Tim reach out to Steve Seddon who has had experience with the process auctioning off town vehicles.
- iii. MOTION: Stacey Schultze made a motion to declare the 2016 9-Passenger Ford Van, identified as Van 4, with 108,232 miles as surplus equipment.
 1. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
 2. MOTION to AMEND: Carl Nett made a motion to amend the motion to specify "to be auctioned or sold by the district." Phil seconded the motion to amend.
 - a. There was no discussion.
 - b. VOTE to AMEND: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, and Stacey Schultze were in favor. The motion passed unanimously to amend the motion to declare the 2016 9-Passenger Ford Van, identified as Van 4, with 108,232 miles as surplus equipment to be auctioned or sold by the district.
 3. VOTE to ACCEPT AS AMENDED: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, and Stacey Schultze were in favor. The motion passed unanimously to declare the 2016

9-Passenger Ford Van, identified as Van 4, with 108,232 miles as surplus equipment, to be auctioned or sold by the district.

f. Accelerated Reader:

- i. Tim presented a statement prepared by Laurie Flower regarding the newly introduced Accelerated Reader program. She explained how it works and the benefits to the students, along with the incentive program that will go along with it. This program will engage students more in reading and will help them identify more books at their reading level that will interest them.

g. FY26 Budget Update:

- i. Tim reviewed what he and Carol have been working on recently in the budget preparation process, and the next things on the horizon. The plan for the January meeting is to have an expenditures-only budget.

5. Subcommittees Reports:

1. FINANCE: Nothing at this time

2. FACILITIES:

1. They met this morning, and first discussed the priorities list, more hot water repairs for next year, additional flooring replacements, the back walkway, ballistic film for the front entrance windows.
2. They also discussed the status of the van fleet - with a few that may need to be replaced in the next few years. There was discussion on if the cost of a lease-to-own van can be identified as a capital expense or not.
3. Since the hot water heater is beginning to fail, Carl suggested looking into an indirect heating options.
4. They also discussed the Capital Stabilization Fund, and adding to it over the next few years.

3. POLICY:

1. Met this afternoon to review a policy from the School Nurse regarding medication distribution, and would prepare to present it to the School Committee in the January meeting.
2. Additionally discussed which policies would be best to review next and
3. Plan to meet at 6:00 before the next school committee

4. SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION:

1. Melissa will be reviewing the materials from the previous meetings from his first evaluation, and would like to meet with Denise to prepare for this year's evaluation.
 1. Denise opened a discussion on whether this topic should be postponed till after the RDA is finished. Tim noted that the priority currently is to complete the work on the RDA and to find consensus to move forward, and noted that it would be challenging to focus on goal-setting with this work outstanding.
 2. There was discussion on wanting to set goals before the start of the next fiscal year in order to apply the DESE process, and for this year, the evaluation would focus more on another survey similar to last year's evaluation process.

6. Regional District Agreement

1. Update on Status:

1. The RDA Draft is still being reviewed by DESE, and most of their feedback has been actionable.
2. Discussion/resolution of one-person one-vote question:
 1. DESE spent time looking at the composition of the school committee and concluded that we are out of compliance with the one-person, one-vote. This was decided by looking at the number of residents of each town and DESE concluded that Sandisfield was over represented and Otis was under represented. There were concerns about changing the school committee composition as proposed: one option to change the weight of each member's vote, and one option to decrease the number of school committee members.
 1. There was consensus to decrease the number of School Committee Members to 5 (3 from Otis, and 2 from Sandisfield), as proposed by DESE to be in compliance with one-person one-vote.
 2. The committee discussed how decreasing the number of School Committee Members would be implemented - including discussing the timeline of passing the RDA in conjunction with the town elections of School Committee Members and approval by the Commissioner.
 3. MOTION: Carl Nett made a motion to accept the first paragraph of Section IIA of the RDA as written in the RDA resource document presented.
 1. Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
 2. There was no further discussion.
 3. VOTE: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, and Stacey Schultze were in favor. The motion passed unanimously to accept the first paragraph of Section IIA of the RDA as written in the RDA resource document presented.
 4. The school committee decided to give Tim discretion to continue to make edits based on DESE recommendations as he previously has been doing, specifically looking at the second paragraph of Section IIA.
 5. MOTION: Stacey Schultze made a motion to accept the first paragraph of Section IIB of the RDA as written in the RDA resource document presented.
 1. Carl Nett seconded the motion.
 2. There was no further discussion.
 3. VOTE: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, and Stacey Schultze were in favor. The motion passed unanimously to accept the first paragraph of Section IIB of the RDA as written in the RDA resource document presented.
2. Update Status - Withdrawal Provision:
 1. Included in the packet, Tim provided a few examples of withdrawal agreements provided by DESE. Tim noted that our withdrawal statement appears more comprehensive, however the samples include language on termination specifically and separating Withdrawal and Termination in a different section.
 2. The Committee discussed giving Tim the discretion to make these changes to the current language/sections and see if DESE will approve this. If not - he will ask them to give specific feedback on what they would like changed.

7. Tuition Agreement 7-12 with Lee Public Schools

1. Review Negotiation Process

1. Tim began with providing context that the tuition agreement with Lee Public Schools for Grades 7-12 is up for negotiation this year, and reviewed the proposed tuition agreement from Lee Public Schools.
 2. Carl also provided his context of how certain terms of the current agreement was put into effect by previous administrations.
 2. **Review Lee Proposal**
 1. Tim posed the idea of adapting the Lee Public Schools tuition agreement to make it look more like the tuition agreement with BHRSD which would outline more terms of the agreement. Tim would like to proceed with his suggestion to draft what the agreement would look like for Lee and have the Lee Superintendent review it with his School Committee and have them agree or modify it.
 2. There was discussion regarding the tuition process for both BHRSD and LPS, and the implication on school choice students and transportation.
 8. **Other Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of meeting:**
 1. Carl Nett brought up work on public facing documents to explain the RDA to residents, and would like to bring up considering discussing Melissa's working document. There was consensus to continue to work on public facing documents prior to DESE approval so we aren't under pressure to put something together once it is approved.
 9. **Future Agenda Items:**
 1. Nothing at this time.
 10. **Adjournment:**
 1. Carl Nett made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.
 2. Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
 3. Vote - Roll Call: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett, Stacey Schultze
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Respectfully submitted,
Caroline Stamm