

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
SOUTH BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT** (Participating via Zoom)

Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Bridget Burkhardt, Martin LaLonde, Alex McHenry, Brian Minier

**ADMINISTRATION/STAFF** (Participating via Zoom)

David Young

**GUESTS**

No guests

**REGULAR SESSION**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Bridget Burkhardt made a motion to enter executive session at 6:01 p.m. to discuss labor negotiations with teachers and support staff and added that it would be significantly disadvantageous to the district not to do so in executive session. The Board requested that David Young attend executive session. Brian Minier seconded the motion.

**Discussion Regarding Labor Negotiations with Administrators, Teachers, and Support Staff**

In: 6:01 p.m.

Out: 6:58 p.m.

No Action

**Evaluation of Superintendent**

This item will be added to the next meeting.

The executive session was closed at 6:58 p.m.

**PRESENT (Via Zoom)**

Bridget Burkhardt, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Martin LaLonde, Alex McHenry, and Brian Minier

**ADMINISTRATION/STAFF (Via Zoom)**

David Young, Gary Marckres, Amadee Denton

**GUESTS (via Zoom)**

3 guests

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

**COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

There was one public comment from a resident who expressed concern around the district's spending on ads and inserts leading up to the March 2020 budget and bond vote. The resident noted that he contacted all board members regarding his concern as well as the Secretary of State around the intent of the ads which he presumed were designed to influence the vote. The resident suggested that moving forward, the district

reconsider how they use funds and should hold “on the record” votes on the use of funds.

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

There were none.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

David Young said that the district had a successful in-service with staff November 3 focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Bridget Burkhart and Brian Minier announced that Hiba Ali has been chosen to be the junior representative to the school board.

### **CITY AND SCHOOL COLLABORATION**

David Young said that the next steering committee meeting between the school board and city council will take place November 9 at 7:00 pm via GoToMeeting. The agenda and link will be shared by the city. Items on the agenda will include FY 2022 budget discussions, the FAA/airport grants, status of the reappraisal process, a continued discussion around reestablishing school impact fees, and COVID city and school updates.

### **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Gary Marckres provided the update on Rick Marcotte Central School/180 Market Street. Additional markings and arrows were placed in the parking lots to more clearly delineate the staff and parent lanes. Westbound traffic has been limited and it has been communicated that the Mary Street entrance is not for school use. On November 23 and 24, when school is not in session, School St. will be closed since a well drilling truck will need to take up an entire lane during that timeframe.

Gary Marckres provided the update on the Gertrude Chamberlin School noise mitigation/airport item. An electrical engineer will be visiting November 10 and 11 to complete the information needed to complete 60 percent of the design phase required by the FAA. Each classroom, in addition to the positive ventilation system, will also have heat provided which will take a load off of the old boiler on site and will benefit the stewardship program financially.

Gary Marckres reported out on the electric vehicle grant. The district had applied for round one of the Volkswagen settlement funds and was not selected. However, they applied for round two in partnership with Highland Electric and the purchase of two electric buses will be funded; two in the fall of 2021 and two more in the fall of 2022. The grant will cover maintenance and electric for ten years. The district will have the buses at their disposal for any trips within range.

### **SRO DISCUSSION**

Police Chief Shawn Burke was present to offer his perspective and answer questions regarding the ongoing discussion on school resource officers in the district. Burke expressed that he felt the conversations were long overdue and reassured the board that he did not see any alarming trends in the data that students are being arrested or ticketed in school. The district currently has two, SBPD SROs in the schools working in concert with district officials on issues of safety and security in the school. DARE is

taught in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and middle school. Burke said he has heard overwhelmingly positive feedback on the program and its success lies in building relationships. That being said, he wants to know more about the lived experience of those marginalized in our community – not just in our schools but as it pertains to policing in South Burlington. Martin LaLonde expressed concern around BIPOC community members and their experience of SROS in schools. Brian Minier asked about any feedback from the community Shawn Burke had received on the SROs. Burke said it has been positive and policing with consent is about building relationships. Elizabeth Fitzgerald said that the board is in the information gathering phase and plans to reach out to the student justice union. The need to listen to students was expressed. Martin LaLonde suggested a subcommittee of the board convene to talk to students and find out how they would feel most comfortable addressing this issue rather than foisting a forum on them. Also, how they would like to gather other student feedback, not only on SROs, but more broadly on this issue. Bridget Burkhardt said she would like to hear from administrators as well as teachers and counselors about their experiences. The board would like to hear a lot of different perspectives to frame how they approach SROs in the future. It was determined that a subcommittee would be developed and this item will return at the next meeting for updates and further discussion.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

David Young said the District continues to navigate through COVID-19 daily. So far, three of five schools have had individuals test positive for COVID-19. Young discussed what constitutes a decision by a school to move to a remote state is largely determined by the Vermont Department of Health in concert with the contact tracing team. They ask all of the questions and the district has a line list of people who could be considered close contacts. Young cautioned that the test data can show up quickly on a website, but contact tracing may not have been completed yet. He shared a video from the Vermont Department of Health on contact tracing. Bridget Burkhardt asked about a timeframe to allow middle and high schools to open to more in-person learning. David Young explained that while the elementary school guidance has 3 ft of physical distancing in place, 6 ft physical distancing is still required at the middle and high school levels, therefore, it would be challenging to allow for more students in the classrooms. Until the criteria changes, the District won't be able to make the move to more in-person instruction at those grade levels. Young noted the filtration devices in all of the classrooms and most of the offices as another layer of protection the district is using to help protect students and staff.

### **FY 2022 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

The board reviewed the budget timeline which now has the community forums included on it. The first will be held November 10 via Zoom from 6-7:30 pm. There will be three total and the goal is to educate and listen to the public. Enrollments, staffing, and program assessments will be shared, but the primary aim is to listen to the community. All meetings will be warned.

David Young showed an update on enrollment as of October 29. The VTVLC students were included. Staff numbers will be forthcoming in a future meeting. Concerns were discussed around decreases in enrollment and where students are being lost. It is difficult to presume how many have moved or transferred to private schools due to COVID. The demographer is beginning their work and David Young would like to get that information by the first week in December to help inform the budget development

process. Elizabeth Fitzgerald would like to be able to indicate to the community whether or not this is a reversible trend since the district had been seeing rising enrollments in the recent past and that became a large component of budget messaging for FY21. David Young said while facilities are front and center, he wants to see what the state is going to do in terms of municipality servicing.

**EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS POLICY REVIEW: 2.1 TREATMENT OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS and GUARDIANS**

This was the first reading of this policy. Changes made by Brian Minier and Martin LaLonde were reviewed. The policy will return to the next meeting for a second reading.

**EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS POLICY MONITORING 2.2 TREATMENT OF STAFF**

Changes to the policy were discussed. Questions were answered and one bullet point was removed due to an editing oversight. The policy was deemed not to be in compliance, but the compliance plan was acceptable.

**POLICY 2.7 ASSET PROTECTION**

This was the first reading of this policy. Business Manager Amadee Denton reviewed the policy in detail. A robust discussion was held and suggestions were made for edits to content and language. This will return for a second reading.

**NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE**

A fact-finding hearing was held October 26 in regard to the negotiations process with the SBEA. Parties are now in a waiting period of 30-45 days while the fact finder writes his report. Martin LaLonde said he is in the process of trying to schedule meeting with administrators and staff.

**COMMUNICATIONS DISCUSSION**

David Young said currently, the District regularly updates their website, sends out district-wide Friday communications, and does not use an RSS feed given its antiquated nature. Young said he would like to use the instruments that are currently in play for communications given sensitivity to bandwidth. Bridget Burkhardt wondered if all of the documents for board meetings could be scanned and uploaded to the website along with the agenda prior to meetings, so that the public who was watching/participating could follow along. Corey Burdick said she would submit calendar items to be included in the next edition of the city's e-newsletter, but the board is not ready to involve themselves/the District further with the e-newsletter at this time. Martin LaLonde suggested submitting excerpts from David Young's Friday letters to be included. Bridget Burkhardt mentioned the board's Facebook page and using it as an avenue for further engagement. A discussion around this item will occur soon.

The board will begin brainstorming Other Paper article topics again and keep that topic as a regular agenda item.

**SET AGENDA FOR THE NOVEMBER 4, 2020 MEETING**

The agenda will include communication opportunities for board/community outreach and the SRO discussion will remain as well.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

How to Run Effective Public Hearings (March Board Work Session), City/School Long-term Investment Strategies, Enrichment Activities, and Strategic Plan.

**CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF OCTOBER 19, OCTOBER 21, and OCTOBER 26**

The minutes were approved via consensus.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE ORDERS #16 and #17**

Brian Minier had one question on order #17 related to a payment for the solar array at the landfill the school shares with the city. There were no further questions or comments on the above orders.

Martin LaLonde made the motion to approve the accounts payable order to the HowardCenter in the amount of \$53,217.46, Brian Minier seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Alex McHenry made the motion to adjourn, Martin LaLonde seconded. A roll call vote was held and the motion passed unanimously at 10:28 pm.

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Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Chair

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Bridget Burkhardt, Clerk