

**HARWOOD UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2016 6:00-9:30 P.M.
HARWOOD UNION HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY**

APPROVED Minutes

Attending Members: Christine Sullivan, Jill Ellis, Peter Langella, Maureen McCracken, Jim Casey, Alycia Biondo, Rosemarie White, Heidi Spear, Garrett MacCurtain, Rob Williams, Sam Jackson, Caitlin Hollister.

Administration: Brigid Nease, Michelle Baker

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Board Chair Christine Sullivan at 6:05 p.m.
2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None
3. Approve Meeting Minutes of 11/30/2016: Rob Williams moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Garrett McCurtain. Motion carried.
4. Discussion Items
 - A. Budget Work, including these issues
 1. Brigid & Michelle met with all of the principals to discuss the “asks,” from last meeting, considering what administrators felt were absolutely essential. The new list for a proposed budget are as follows:
 1. 1.6% increase level service budget.
 2. Plus Granville bus
 3. Michelle presented an updated list of items changed as requested.
 1. Science curriculum – could put a server in each school and each could act as a server, drops cost to \$51,555
 2. Phone System – Applying for grant to upgrade switches. Grant would pay 50%. Add other 50% to expenses
 3. Technology – reviewed requests. Staying with level service. Need wireless access in Warren – put in budget
 4. Changes in some staffing issues
 5. Maintenance Support Staff – hire 2 full-time people to be shared among all 4 of the Valley schools - .5 for each school.
 6. Maintenance monies divided among schools
 7. Maintenance Reserve Budget – to be established. Proposal: consider an additional contribution of \$268,149. Suggest we consider this after seeing the income. Local schools have own MR. Level service budget is \$231,851, so if contribute the amount above, it would add up to \$500,000 as a Maintenance Reserve Fund for new district.
 8. Total would be 3.0%
 9. Sheila to do research about providing World Language for grades PK-12. Consider a phased in program. Thatcher would need 1.6 FTE language teachers needed to be equal to the other schools.
 4. Review of original “Ask” list:
 1. Siding at Fayston – could wait a year
 2. Maintenance - 1.5 FTE staffing

3. Moretown phone system – use grant for all valley schools
 4. Sink – short term maintenance number
 5. Technology equip Waitsfield – non-essentials could wait a year
 6. Maintenance Reserve - \$32,000 Waitsfield out of Maintenance Reserve Budget.
 7. Warren – sharing foreign language teacher; things that MUST be done re technology, no chrome books, soccer goals replaced by town. Funding for building improvements, things going favorably for bond project. See what has to be done after bond complete before asking for more M.R. monies.
 8. Waterbury/Duxbury – no new money for requests.
 9. Crossett Brook – chrome books already in previous budget.
 10. Harwood – math books – new money for this, washed out of another department.
 11. Grounds person already discussed.
 12. Not adding a 1.0 tech support person. Building an efficiency model to be housed at Harwood.
2. Have synthesized the information – keep as explained. Much depends on what happens to reimbursement and revenues numbers in January.
 3. No meeting on December 21, but two meetings on January 4 and 11.
 4. State board rules and class size: Rule: Superintendant and the board have to follow the law. PK-3 when taken together shall average fewer than 20 students per teacher. All students in grades 4-12, average fewer than 25. Is there a min and max class size? Minimum average class size per grade cluster is 14; maximum average per cluster is 20 and 25.
 5. Staffing: see Brigid's list of current classroom sizes. Recommendations for staffing to put together the budget: 1 reduction in Fayston, 1 reduction in Warren. How to facilitate the equalization across the district? Changes may happen and increases in the budget would have to be made. Some board members warn against making decisions too soon and how it affects the schools and school choice. Still have much work to do around these issues. All of the board members will decide these issues, hopefully have some policies developed by that time. All taxpayers across the district are funding all the schools and equity has to do with class size. All schools should continue to stay fluid. Keep exploring information on these issues. (Prioritize vibrant, healthy schools.) Policy on choice certainly can be changed as needed. Question regarding math with the reduction of a teacher. All issues will be addressed and changes made accordingly.
 6. With new district, seven campuses – teachers can be assigned anywhere, no seniority, so to reduce a teacher, administration can decide who goes and where they go, based on licensure, etc. All schools together in one contract, despite seniority. Maureen suggested that this topic be revisited at a future meeting. Felt that the World Language issue was a very important part of the budget for Thatcher Brook and Crossett Brook in the area of equity.
 7. Administrators in the two districts of Warren and Fayston, Beth & Gene, oppose the proposed staff cuts of 2 FTEs. Gene agrees about the issue of class size but he is concerned about a .2 math teacher instead; also discussed the value of having an on-site substitute teacher.

8. Motion was made by Rosemarie White to direct Michelle to develop a draft one budget to determine the tax rate calculation on the basis of the 3.3% increase and the reduction of two staff, seconded by Jim Casey.
9. Heidi Spear made amendment to the motion to direct Michelle to get multiple tax rates based on the level service budget and 2 staffing reductions, as well as the 3.3% increase and the reduction of two staff.
10. Heidi moved to move the question, seconded by Christine Sullivan. Motion was carried.
1. Enrollment by grade document with survey data overlaid. (Variable – sending bus to Hancock and Danville – would that mean more kids?)
2. Workgroup Reports:
 1. **Facilities** report by Rosemarie White: group met, toured Warren, focused on items currently not included in bond, came back to Harwood. Twelve contractors were interested in bidding the project, now down to 10. Specs being put together for contractors. Will start project as soon as classes end in June. No new information on the tract RFP. Next meeting on January 11 and group will go to Waitsfield.
 2. **Communications** report by Rob Williams. Peter is going to write up a short letter to all communities based on survey data on school choice - to be put on school web sites. Is there any way to get the board meeting and materials earlier (possibly the Friday before). Partial material would be OK and then it could be put on Front Porch Forum. Alycia will get the agenda to the Warren Front Porch Forum. Group is agonizing about restrictions concerning open meeting laws. Can they have individual 1-on-1 conversations – can work groups meet? Can people work on documents together. Need to warn meeting and take minutes. Can they work on Google Docs together? NO Plan A – Peter to edit draft and group will then send comments for him to compile. Waitsfield to proactively get presentation of budget to community, remind them of the change and invite them to participate. Will do a letter for FPF and other sources.
5. Other Business: No meeting on December 21 – not unless absolutely necessary.
6. Adjourn – Rob moved to adjourn at 9:20, Maureen seconded. Motion carried

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 14, 2016 6-9:30 P,M.
Harwood High School Library

Agenda item for Jan 24 – how to get information to the public.

Submitted by Freya Chaffee