

**Farmington River Regional School District  
Farmington River Elementary School  
555 North Main Road, Otis, MA 01253  
Monday May 2, 2016 – 7:00 PM**

**Meeting #386, Via ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Nick DellaGiustina, Jessica Drenga, Deb Fogel, Carol Lombardo, Jennifer Hibbins, Arlene Tolopko, Tom Nadolny, Eric Jesner, and Teresa DellaGiustina

**Absent:** None

**Guests:** Kendra Rybacki, Candy Chaffee, Linda Curtiss, Meaghan Martin, Amy Maxton, Dawn Lemon, Laurie Flower,

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the chair, Nicholas DellaGiustina.

1. **Approval of minutes #385.** Nicholas DellaGiustina motioned to pass Minutes #385. Carol Lombardo motioned to approve, Deb Fogel seconded the motion. Minutes #385 was approved unanimously by the School Committee.
2. **Principal/Superintendent Updates:** Tom Nadolny began by stating that Teachers signed up to start cleaning their rooms out. One teacher upstairs while one is downstairs for the next couple of weeks. Summer cleaning will begin early this year. Not much news from the state, nothing new to update from them. No conference calls took place. There is a waiver to postpone postural screenings that happen each year. There were brief discussions about summer school, most likely that will be on hold. The conversations are based on September openings. No one knows what the best way to open school back up at this point. Right now it's just brainstorming. Carol Lombardo asked about busing students to school. How can that happen? Tom replied: that is one question that they are working on. Jennifer Hibbins asked if there is say on the local level. Tom said that there is say on local levels, but if they go against the state and close, we still have to make up days that were missed if the state says to open.
3. **Kendra Rybacki in to update how the food distribution is going and discuss a check donated to the school for food.** Kendra stated that we are feeding roughly 75 children 21 years and younger. The state recognizes the ages. We are delivering food to 17 families and 21 families are picking up. The month of April we have served 3300 meals, which is 1200 more than a normal month. This happens every Monday. This is offered to any child 21 years and under. The boxes include a 5 day breakfast and lunch. The school is getting reimbursed for every meal served. We charge 1.55 for breakfast and

getting reimbursed at \$2.20. Lunch is \$2.75 and our reimbursement is \$3.53. This option is continuing until June 30<sup>th</sup>. The reimbursements are helping us continue the program until the end of the month. The reimbursable rate is much higher than what we charge because the state is going off the numbers they reimburse schools that are free for all attending students. This allows us to proceed with the program and not touch the budget. There is a possibility of the state extending this reimbursement throughout the summer. There is not a definite answer yet. Jess Drenga asked about the seniors that are being provided for. Right now, we are not paying for the senior's food boxes. The boxes are being donated by the Salvation Army. We need to make a decision soon because families need to know if we can continue providing for them. We cannot just drop the program and leave people hanging. There is not a budget for the food service department during the summer. There never has been. Staff members are getting tired, and are willing to continue throughout the summer, but it is difficult due to get childcare. Carol did ask if we could get other volunteers to replace them. Other organizations. Nick stated that they are trying to limit the amount of people exposing the school as well. Teresa DellaGiustina also brought up the point that the kitchen still needs leadership and organization and cleaning properly due to state guidelines. Tom did mention a couple of those positions need to be paid. Kendra wanted to add that the program would not function without the help of Candy Chaffee, Karen Yvon, Teresa DellaGiustina, Meghan Martin, and Terri Digrigoli.

Kendra also brought up a large check donation that was given to the food distribution under the school's name. If the school accepts it the School Committee must approve where the check goes. This is considered income for the school if done this way. The check first has to be deposited into the school's funding, and then moved into the right account. The best route for donations would be gift cards. This way the donation goes right to the source of the program. Kendra wanted to thank the AMVETS, Tom Soules helping deliver food boxes to our seniors and purchasing many items for the boxes, and Ralph and Jane Gleason for helping us by providing names of seniors in need from both Sandisfield and Otis. Ralph and Jane represent the Otis Council on Aging, and they have been delivering food boxes to the seniors as well.

- 4. Discuss the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade and Senior's banners.** Candy Chaffee wanted to ask the School Committee for help with paying for banners that Candy has designed for the graduating students this year. Teresa DellaGiustina stated that the quote from the sign company is just under 800 dollars. But since the quote, there has been changes reducing the amount that was ordered. Teresa, along with Candy and other parents in Otis, would like to acknowledge the Class of 2020 as a district with signs that would be posted on the greens in each town with the student's names on them. Individual lawn signs are included in the cost as well. Teresa stressed that this is a district acknowledgement, not just a Farmington River School acknowledgement. Students have lost the privilege of attending their proms, field days, graduations and many more events that they look forward to after the years of waiting. Dawn Lemon and Linda Curtiss both wanted Candy to reach out to the PTA and they would help. Nick DellaGiustina then said PTA is willing to help so Candy should get in touch and work everything out with the PTA.

- 5. Discuss the bus bids.** Eric Jesner updated the bid from Dufour concerning busing. Only one bid was submitted. That bid was from Dufour. The bid was for 303 dollars per bus per day. Our daily rate right now with Dufour is \$301.90. There is a minimal increase for next year. The amount increases with each year. Other years do go up at a regular rate. Year 2 goes up 4.6%, year 3 goes up 5%, year 4 is 5.1%, and year 5 is 5.4%. Cost of field a trip is the same, \$130.00 flat rate with a 3 dollar per mile, and 40 dollar cost for wait time. The first 30 miles and an hour of wait time is included in the price. This is the same as it is now. The rate of increase is basically the same as it always has been over the years. We did go down from 5 buses to 3 buses. Jess Drenka motioned to approve the bid contract from Dufour. Billie Pachulski seconded the motion, all votes were in favor of approved.
- 6. Financial updates.** Eric Jesner updated Town Annual Meetings. Otis is June 17<sup>th</sup> and Sandisfield is June 20<sup>th</sup>. That leads us into a 1:12 Budget for next year. The dates were not met for approved budgets for the state. That date is June 1<sup>st</sup>. Most of the schools are in the same situation due to delaying meetings. Once the budget is passed, the school will then switch over to the new budget by submitting to the state by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Eric wanted to elaborate on the donated check to the school. Eric would need the Committee to vote on where the check needs to go. If the check is put into the general account, it counts as revenue to the school which affects the E&D and other accounts. If the check goes into the Student Activity account, the money has to benefit the whole school. The donation was meant for the food distribution program. After discussing the legality of the flow of the donation, Arlene Tolopko will speak to the donor to see if she would switch the check to a BigY gift card. This will alleviate the issue. It is agreed that no one wants a cash donation you cannot trace cash.

Eric started updating the budget. He revised the budget since the bus bid came in much lower than anticipated. The cut increased the surplus by 113,000 dollars. Also, two employees have come forward and requested to be put on the family plan insurance. This over-expenditures that line item by \$14,000. Once Eric amended the changes, the budget increased 2.93% increase rather than a rough 5%. This affects the assessments for the two towns. Sandisfield's assessment decreased from a 9% to 6.36%. The totals included a drop from 140,000 dollars to a 99,000 dollar payment. Otis gets a negative % decrease. The Committee can revote on the revised budget and resubmit the budget to both towns. Tom Nadolny asked Eric about regional transportation before the School Committee votes. The state could possibly reduce the amount for regional transportation drastically. This is due to the virus. Eric explained that we are saving money from the transportation not being used the last part of the school year. We will have a surplus to be discussed. There is too much for E & D. The extra money could be used to offset the decrease in next year's payment from regional transportation. There has been a lot of talk about this cut from the state. We can use that money next year. This should help in a lot of areas.

Nick DellaGiustina, from Sandisfield, motioned to vote to approve the revised budget. Jess Drenka seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

Our new van will be delivered this Wednesday. There is a balance of \$23,464 that must be expended in FY20, and we will be receiving \$23,464.78 from the MA School Rural School Aid. This money also has to be spent in FY20. Eric suggests purchasing another van since we are down 2 buses and purchasing two fire panels that are needed. They are working properly and are not in current code. This was quoted at 12,000 dollars. The gym's ceiling was brought. The ceiling in the gym has to go out to bid because the cost is over \$50,000. The driveway needs to be repaved as well. The money for that is being saved in our stabilization fund. The entire parking lot would need to redone which will be much more costly than buying a van. Carol motioned to approve purchasing a new van, Jess seconded the motion. Vote was unanimously passed.

- 7. Discuss COVID-19 for the School Year 20-21.** Tom said there is not much being said right now. Farmington is well ahead concerning remote learning and schooling. We managed to start school right away, there was not any wasted time from the closing of school. Berkshire County Task Force is trying to create a district wide way for remote learning. You need to join the Task Force for at least \$15,000 or more. Tom will send information to the School Committee once more information is provided. Right now our percentage of completed homework is well over 90%. To change that may not be a good idea. There is nothing concrete about opening in the fall. Carol did ask how our SPED students are doing without have classes. We still have our SPED teachers teaching remotely and through paper copies. They are constantly in touch with their students. OT and PT teachers are continuing services as well through Google Meet and phone calls. Jess asked about MCAS testing. Tom explained that they are told they are still on, but the teachers cannot tell if their students are regressing or not. Tom explained there are ideas out there on what to do come August/September, but nothing concrete. Staggering days and students is an idea, but there are still kinks to work out.

**8. Unanticipated items. NONE**

The Executive Meeting is not needed. Nick wanted to take the time to thank everyone who is helping with the food distribution, Candy for designing and coming up with the idea of the banners, and Jess thanked the PTA for helping to pay for the banners.

- 9. Adjournment.** Carol Lombardo motioned to adjourn, Jess Drenga seconded the motion All votes were unanimous for adjournment. Meeting ended. 8:40pm

Respectively submitted,

Teresa DellaGiustina  
Assistant to the Superintendent/ Secretary to School Committee

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