

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Media Center

Tuesday, January 8, 2019
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 8, 2019, at the Colchester High School Media Center. Those in attendance were Board Chair Mike Rogers; Directors: Craig Kieny, Curt Taylor, and Lindsey Cox; Superintendent Amy Minor; Director of Special Education Carrie Lutz; Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli; and Principal Michele Cote.

There was 1 audience member.

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Mike Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. Report from Building Principals

Information

CMS Principal Michele Cote said they will be holding an interim assessment tomorrow. This interim will help to teach testing expectations to students to prepare them for lengthier assessments in the spring. She also shared that she has received great feedback on the presentation given to students and families by John Halligan last month.

IV. Presentation by LCATV: Proposed FCC Rule Change

Information

LCATV Executive Director Kevin Christopher and LCATV Board President Dick Pecor spoke to the board about a potential rule change that the FCC is considering. The change, if approved, would essentially put LCATV and all access stations around the country out of business. With the current government shut down the FCC is not operational, but once they re-open they will be considering letters from impacted entities. The board agreed to send an ex-parte letter on behalf of LCATV to show their strong opposition to the proposed rule change.

V. Approval for Purchase of an IP Security Camera System at CMS

Action

Recently, the district received a safety grant through the State of Vermont in the amount of \$25,000 for the purchase and installation of new security cameras similar to the cameras at CHS. All three vendor bids provided estimates over \$25,000. The additional funds needed beyond the grant will come from the district budget.

Director Taylor moved to approve the purchase and installation of a new IP security camera system at CMS, part of which will be paid for by a \$25K grant from the State of Vermont, and to

authorize the Business and Operations Manager to execute the necessary documents to make this happen, seconded by Director Kienny. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

VI. Approval of Colchester School District Announced Tuition Rates Action

Each year, districts are required by law to announce their anticipated tuition for students attending Colchester schools from other districts that do not have a high school or middle school. The majority of tuition students attending CSD are from the Grand Isle Supervisory Union.

Director Cox moved to approve the announced tuition rate for FY 2020 at \$13,750 for elementary grades (k-6) and \$15,800 for secondary grades (7-12), seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

VII. FY'20 Budget Presentation and Discussion Information

Using the priority lists discussed in previous FY'20 budget discussions, Superintendent Amy Minor showed the board several scenarios with varying levels of additions to illustrate how those additions would impact the budget and what the subsequent estimated tax increase would be. The goal of this discussion was for the board to make a determination on what percentage increase they would be comfortable with putting forth to the residents of Colchester.

Between the three scenarios discussed, the budget increase ranged from 4.54% to 5.28% and the estimated tax increase ranged from 1.278% to 2.019%, depending on the number of additions. Superintendent Minor also went over potential reductions if needed; including an unfilled bus driver position and estimated breakage from anticipated retirements.

Director Kienny asked what it would take to level fund the budget. Superintendent Minor stated it would require eliminating 2 million dollars which is the equivalent of 20 teachers and would result in a negative tax rate. Director Cox stated that based on the presentation at the last meeting around large class sizes at the middle school, she feels that it has been an area of neglect in the past and it is now a necessity to add the recommended 2 FTE. Director Kienny agreed, adding that it will also allow the district to accept more Island students in the future. The board discussed what it takes to remain competitive with neighboring districts to attract tuition students. Superintendent Minor stated that although the high school's course of studies is not as expansive as other districts, there are exceptional learning opportunities at CHS and an unrivaled pride among faculty and students. Student Board Member Sophia Brigante further acknowledged the positive culture of CHS adding that the teachers make it a priority to get to know the students and there are many options for independent learning. She has friends in neighboring districts who do not have the same sense of school community.

Superintendent Minor pointed out that the district has been very fiscally responsible in recent years and as a result they have discovered that the district is under resourced in several areas. The effects of several reductions over the years is starting to show in assessment scores. Administrators in the district believe instructional coaches would impact the greatest number of students in a short time. Board Chair Rogers stated this may be the budget cycle where the board needs to add positions back. Director Kienny added that class sizes are growing and the board needs to respond appropriately. He said that ultimately the board needs to balance and compare fiscal spending with assessment results. The board asked for Superintendent Minor to prepare additional scenarios which would include an instructional coach in the budget.

The board discussed adding \$50,000 for the food service program. For the past two years the board has had to allocate money mid-year to repair broken appliances and provide general support to the program. Putting a specified amount of money for the program in the budget ahead of time will allow more flexibility and planning while lessen the likelihood of an unexpected need for funds.

Director Cox asked to clarify what language voters see on the ballot. Superintendent Minor reminded the board that the ballot language is set by state statute. Voters see the total budget amount, the per equalized pupil spending amount and the percentage difference in per equalized pupil spending from the previous year. Voters do not see the percentage of the budget increase or the percentage of the tax increase. Director Cox asked to see what the per equalized pupil percentage would be for each of the new scenarios brought to the next meeting.

Director Cox and Director Taylor discussed the advantages and disadvantages of comparing districts using the education spending per equalized pupil amounts. Director Taylor stated it can be looked at with two mindsets; commendation for efficiency or concern that the district is not offering comprehensive services.

All board members present agreed that the FY'20 budget should include a minimum of 2 FTE's at the middle school and \$50,000 for the food service program. The board showed interest in several other recommendations on the priority list and asked Superintendent Minor to come to the next meeting with additional scenarios for their review and consideration. No final decisions were made.

VIII. Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda

Action

The following Personnel Consent Agenda was presented for January 8, 2019.

PERSONNEL CONSENT AGENDA

Board Date: January 8, 2019

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Purnawati	Poudyel	End of Employment	Custodian	40.0 hr	CMS	Notice of End of Employment			Yes
Support Staff	Kathryn Libby	Valiquette	End of Employment	Food Service Worker	27.5 hr	CMS	Notice of End of Employment			Yes
Support Staff	Martin	Welsh	New Hire	Food Service Worker	27.5 hr	CMS	Notice of Hire	Kathryn Valiquette	Yes	Yes
Support Staff			New Hire	Custodian	40.0 hr	MBS	Notice of Hire	George Ibala Djilali	Yes	Yes

Director Kieny approved the Personnel Consent Agenda as provided, seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0

IX. Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2018 – Executive Session **Action**

Director Kieny moved to approve the executive session minutes of December 18, 2018, seconded by Director Cox. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

X. Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2018 – General Session **Action**

Director Cox moved to approve the general session minutes of December 18, 2018, seconded by Director Kieny. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

XI. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports **Information**

- The board will film the budget roundtable discussion at LCATV on February 4th.
- CSD Integrated Field Review by the AOE on January 24th.

XII. Possible Future Agenda Items **Information**

Future Meetings:

- Budget Discussions
- Nursing Report
- Discipline Policies

XIII. Executive Session to Discuss Negotiations **Action**

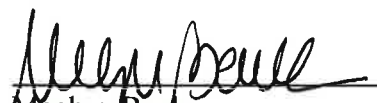
Director Taylor made a motion to enter executive session to discuss contract negotiations at 8:28 p.m., seconded by Director Kieny. The motion passed 4-0.

Director Kieny made a motion to exit executive session at 9:02 p.m., seconded by Director Cox. The motion passed 4-0.


XIV. Adjournment

Director Cox made a motion to adjourn at 9:03 p.m., seconded by Director Kieny. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Recorder:


Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


Craig Kieny
Board Clerk