

SHERMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
SHERMAN, CONNECTICUT 06784
REGULAR MEETING - DECEMBER 2, 2020
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM
7:00 PM

A regular meeting of the Sherman Board of Education was called to order by Mrs. Diotte at 7:01 PM on December 2, 2020 via Zoom.

1. PRESENT:

For the Board:	Mr. Berlandi, Mrs. Diotte, Mr. Laughlin, Mrs. Lenihan, Mr. Neunzig, Mrs. Seeger and Mr. Vogt
Administration:	Dr. Melendez, Mr. Dudics, Mr. Kalkreuth and Mrs. Snowden
Staff:	Ms. DePuy and Mrs. Lynch
SPTO:	Mrs. O'Neill
Residents:	4 Residents and 4 Students

The Board and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CELEBRATIONS:

2.1 American Education Week

Dr. Melendez acknowledged American Education Week and expressed his sincere appreciation for the teachers, paras, administration, nurse, office and maintenance staff. He shared that the admin team walked the building with a snack cart and personally thanked everyone two weeks ago.

Mrs. Diotte noted her appreciation for the staff and administration.

Student Council Elections

Dr. Melendez acknowledged all the students who ran for student council and noted the high quality election process. He congratulated the 2020-21 Student Council members:

Ryan Hatcher - President
Bryce Vore - Vice President
Michael Clancy - Treasurer
Isabella DiNatale - Secretary

Mrs. Diotte congratulated the students and inquired about their inspiration to run.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

4. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Mr. Laughlin suggested adding student representation to the Board as an Ex Officio member.

Mr. Laughlin moved and Mr. Berlandi seconded, Discussion and Possible Action of including student representation as an ex officio member of the Sherman Board of Education and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

5 CONSENT AGENDA:

5.1 Review of Minutes:

Review of Minutes:

Minutes - Monthly Meeting, November 4, 2020

Minutes - Policy Meeting, November 17, 2020

5.2 Personnel Actions

New Hire

Jasmine Sosa - Para, Effective 11/20/20

Olivia Malone - Para, Effective 11/30/20

Resignation

Louise Hofsdal - Para, Effective 11/5/20

5.3 Monthly Enrollment Report

5.4 Monthly Budget Report 2020-2021 Budget by Function & Summary of Funds

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Berlandi seconded the approval of Consent Agenda Items 5.1 to 5.4 and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

6. APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS:

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mrs. Seeger seconded the approval of current bills, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

6.1 2020-2021 Current Bills

7. ORAL REPORTS:

7.1 SPTO Update

Mr. Vogt shared the SPTO will be selling Gingerbread House kits as a fundraiser and are planning a photo contest on their Facebook page.

Mr. Berlandi suggested a Polar Plunge event similar to the one being hosted in Pawling.

**7.2 Sub-Committee
Policy Committee**

Mrs. Seeger noted two policies have been reviewed and the committee has finished the CABA audit. The committee plans to review the 9000 Series in total.

Maintenance Committee

Mr. Laughlin noted the committee had two recent meetings on November 17th and 30th. He reported the committee continues to have discussions regarding capital needs including:

- Feedback for potential roof options
- Generator - OEM
- Water Issues - plans to move forward once COVID is under control
- Pressure and Ventilation of K-Wing
- Continue playground discussion pertaining to sighting and the septic

Communication Communication

Mrs. Diotte reported the Board reviewed the Board of Selectmen presentation at their meeting.

7.3 Chair Report

Mrs. Diotte noted the decision to move to a Zoom format for the Board of Education meeting is for safety concerns to keep the school free from cross contamination as much as possible. Mrs. Diotte thanked the community for their efforts to keep the school safe thus far.

**7.4 Superintendent Update - Dr. Jeff Melendez
Budget Update**

Ms. DePuy noted the budget is tracking on target with no large surplus expected. She pointed out the purchase of four new interactive TVs which has had a slight impact on the technology budget, but savings in the extra-curricular line will offset it. The extracurricular line has a surplus due to temporary suspension of extra-curricular activities.

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Melendez pointed out the movement to "In Progress" for Action Steps 11.1 and 11.3.

Mr. Berlandi questioned how the student challenges will be implemented (Action Step 11.3). Mr. Kalkreuth shared the Steering Committee is discussing creative ways to address student challenges. This Action Step would look very different in a non-COVID environment.

Health Trends

Dr. Melendez provided two slides which indicated a current decline in the COVID infection rates in Sherman. He noted one staff member has tested positive, but was not present in school during the incubation period and was not a threat to the health of the Sherman community. Dr. Melendez sent a letter to the school community.

Dr. Melendez acknowledged how fortunate the school is to remain open and is hopeful to continue as long as possible while adhering to safety measures.

Mrs. Diotte echoed Dr. Melendez's sentiments.

Mr. Neunzig noted the safety dividers and complemented Mr. Lombardozi for all of his efforts.

8. PRESENTATION

8.1 Student Blended Learning Survey Results

Mrs. Snowden provided an update from the Blended Learning Survey that was administered to students in Grades 3 - Grade 8. The presentation included questions, results and next steps. Mrs. Snowden feels overall the results were positive.

Discussion regarding parameters, blended learning environments/spaces and standardized tests took place. Adjustments to the Spring curriculum and instruction can be made based on the results from the STAR assessments

Mr. Laughlin would like to see a presentation based on feedback from teachers regarding the use of new tools that are positively impacting growth.

8.2 Playground Committee Final Playground Design Recommendations

Mr. Jason Corbett from Little Tykes provided a very detailed 3D final design of the proposed playground. Mr. Corbett shared that the playground committee inspired most of the designs from their recommendations and research. He highlighted the revisions since the last presentation which included a new treehouse feature. Mr. Corbett pointed out the sensory, social, physical, emotional features that support student development in both the 2 to 5 year old and 5 to 12 year old sections.

Discussion took place concerning the historical multiple meetings involving the playground replacement. The full Board appreciates the work and recommendation of the playground committee.

9. NEW BUSINESS**9.1 Discussion and Possible Approval of MOU with Sherman Education Association**

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Berlandi seconded the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding COVID-19 working conditions for the July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 work years only, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

9.2 Discussion and Possible Approval of MOU with Sherman Education Association Voluntary Early Retirement or Resignation Incentive Plan (VERRIP)

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Laughlin second the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Voluntary Early Retirement or Resignation Incentive Plan between the Board of Education and Sherman Education Association, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

9.3 First Reading Policy 9221 Vacancies of the Board of Education

First Reading - no action

9.4 First Reading Policy 9325 Meeting Conduct

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mrs. Seeger tabled First Reading of Policy 9325 Meeting Conduct until the January agenda, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

9.5 Discussion and Possible Action to Hire a Consultant for Annual Enrollment Projections

Dr. Melendez presented the Board with two options for Enrollment Projections studies and associated costs. The Board discussed the need for the study and the options presented. They also discussed the best timing for a study.

Mr. Neunzig suggested the discussion be tabled for the January agenda.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**10.1 Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Conceptual Design Services Project**

The Board had a robust discussion regarding potential next steps to engage the Town leadership and community. Mr. Vogt raised concerns regarding progress made towards the development of a referendum on school projects. Further discussion ensued with the Board of Education with various points of views raised.

Mr. Laughlin moved and Mr. Neunzig seconded the formation of a special committee that the Board delegates the authority for the committee to engage State, Town and other necessary stakeholders to advance the formation of a final Capital plan in direct

coordination with the administration for the required architectural planning and analysis services and devise and effectuate with Board approval an appropriate communication strategy related to the capital planning process, and the motion passed 4-3 (In favor Mr. Berlandi, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. Neunzig and Mr. Vogt. Opposed: Mrs. Diotte, Mrs. Lenihan and Mrs. Seeger).

Mrs. Diotte requested volunteers for the newly formed committee: Mr. Vogt, Chair and committee members Mr. Laughlin and Mr. Neunzig.

Mrs. Diotte requested feedback from fellow Board members on the draft communication letter for the Board of Selectmen.

10.2 Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Playground Design

Mrs. Diotte noted her appreciation for all of the feedback and recommendations of the playground committee.

Discussion took place regarding Health Department site visit and excavation test for ample depth, bidding process, price increases and playground sighting.

Mr. Laughlin expressed concern regarding moving forward with the playground design as it relates to the Capital plan and noted more time is needed.

Mrs. Diotte shared that the playground needs to be replaced now and noted if the Capital plan is approved, it could take years for its completion.

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Berlandi seconded the approval of the Playground Design as proposed by Jason Corbet of Little Tykes, and the motions passed 4-3 (In favor Mr. Berlandi, Mrs. Diotte, Mrs. Lenihan and Mrs. Seeger. Opposed: Mr. Laughlin, Mr. Neunzig and Mr. Vogt).

The Maintenance Committee will discuss next steps regarding septic issues and development of the RFP/Q for installation.

10.3 Second Reading of Policy 5145 Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mrs. Seeger seconded the approval of Policy 5145 Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities, and the motion passed unanimously 7-0

10.4 Second Reading of Policy 4152.6 Personnel-Certified/Non-Certified, Personal Leaves, FMLA

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Neunzig seconded the approval of Policy 4152.6 Personnel-Certified/Non-Certified, Personal Leaves, FMLA, and the motion passed unanimously 7-0

11. COMMUNICATION

No communication

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment

13. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

No Board of Education comment(s)

14. FUTURE MEETINGS AND TOPICS

14.1 Board of Education Meeting, January 6, 2020 at 7:00 PM

14.2 Budget Workshop, December 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM

15. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Neunzig seconded the Board adjourn at 10.29 PM and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James Neunzig
Vice Chair, Sherman Board of Education

Prepared by Recording Secretary: Nancy Winkler