

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2019
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The Gilford School Board held a regular meeting on Tuesday September 3, 2019 at the Gilford High School Library. Present were Board members Chris McDonough, Gretchen Gandini, Jeanin Onos, and Karen Thurston. Administrators present were Kirk Beitler, Scott Isabelle, Anthony Sperazzo, Peter Sawyer, and Danielle Bolduc.

Public Hearing – Meadows Expendable Trust

Chris McDonough stated that the hearing was posted in the Laconia Daily Sun. No comments were made on the Meadows Expendable Trust transference of funds. Jeanin Onos made the motion to transfer \$12,350.00 from the Meadows Expendable Trust to the General Fund towards the maintenance of the Meadows. Gretchen Gandini seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Opening

School Board Chair Chris McDonough called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Superintendent Beitler confirmed posting of the meeting. Chris McDonough led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jeanin Onos made the motion that the Board approve the minutes of the August 5, 2019 meeting. Karen Thurston seconded the motion. There was no discussion or corrections. The motion passed in the affirmative. Chris McDonough abstained as he was absent from that meeting.

Public Comment

Public comments were made by the following Gilford residents:

- Kyle Sanborn spoke against the implementation of non-gender bathrooms, referring to the recent email from Superintendent Beitler and the SAU. Mr. Sanborn stated that he feels the law is open for interpretation and unconstitutional. Stating that while he has empathy for people dealing with these issues, he feels his children's privacy is being infringed upon. Continuing, he commented on the timing of the email of the new policy. Mr. Sanborn stated that he understands the policy is in line with state law, but it has not gone through the courts, and in his opinion is not federally mandated.
- Chris McDonough stated that he cannot speak for the entire Board, and that it may take some time to get a consensus before answering the public's questions.
- Kyle Sanborn asked if a public meeting was held by the Board.
- Chris McDonough replied it was, that the meeting was posted, and the public meeting was held on Tuesday August 27, 2019 at the SAU office. The school attorney and District Association attorney were contacted and guidance sought. Mr. McDonough said the Board was directed to act on the issue as soon as possible.
- Kyle Sanborn asked if the email was the entirety of the policy.
- Mr. McDonough replied that the District does not have a policy yet; it has not gone through the system. It is a practice/procedure, not an official policy until it goes through the Policy Committee process.

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- Kyle Sanborn asked if his child would be disciplined if the wrong pronoun was used regarding another student, questioning, “I we are going to subject the 99% for the 1%.” Mr. Sanborn continued, asking how his children’s privacy or protection was going to be handled.
- Mr. McDonough stated that Superintendent Beitler will craft a future response to that question once it has been discussed by the Board.
- Kyle Sanborn shared that the policy is against his religious views, continuing that he believes that he has a legal case to bring forth to protect his children. He inquired if there will be a private space for his daughter to change that would be, in his opinion, safe.
- The Board stated that yes, private spaces are available.

Chris McDonough went into more background on the issue, stating that a student in the school who has been regularly and consistently identifying as the opposite gender followed the previous practice of using a single stall bathroom. Following the passage of the law, the parent asked if their child could use a bathroom that he/she identifies as. Mr. McDonough said that the law states that the child needs to be able to use that bathroom. Our attorney was consulted and advised that the children use that bathroom. Mr. McDonough included that the email states that there are single use bathrooms that can be used by anyone who is uncomfortable with a non-gender bathroom set up.

- Angelo Farruggia spoke on the issue, stating that any child discriminated against for anything is unacceptable. He said that he is upset that the meeting was so short notice and asked why one family’s request was more important than any other family’s feelings. He said that the transgender bathroom policy should not be in effect until everything is worked out. Mr. Feruggia commented that the bill is loosely and vaguely written, and contradicts many other things. He stated that, in his opinion, it is discriminatory towards his female children. Mr. Feruggia commented that he feels that a single use bathroom is not discriminatory to the transitioning child, and that the Board is taking away his child’s rights, although there are single user bathrooms available to her. Mr. Feruggia asked Mrs. Bolduc how many single user bathrooms are available at GES.
- Mrs. Bolduc responded that there are five within the building, with another in each of seven classrooms.
- Mr. Farruggia stated that he feels that those in the classroom offer no privacy, and restated his opposition to implementing the new law without discussion and without a full policy. Mr. Feruggia would like the whole issue tabled until the Board has a definitive plan.
- Skip Murphy spoke next, asking if this public comment is toward anything specific.
- Chris McDonough replied that it is a time to ask about any concern.
- Mr. Murphy inquired about another new law: an unfunded state mandate requiring schools to supply menstrual products in bathrooms. Mr. Murphy stated that he believes requiring the schools to pay for supplies is unconstitutional.
- Chris McDonough replied that we are implementing that practice (buying supplies.)

- Skip Murphy continued, asking about the financial impact on taxpayers for implementing the transgender bathroom policy. He inquired as to who would pay for extra monitoring or if that had yet to be discussed.
- Mr. McDonough stated that the Board will take that under advisement, discuss it, and report back to the public.

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- Mr. Murphy stated his opinion again, asking that the transgender policy be tabled until all the ramifications have been worked out.
- Ryan Fogg spoke to the issue of transgender bathrooms, referencing a discussion about bathrooms that occurred in 2017. Mr. Fogg stated that he has worked in the general public where these issues have arisen. He commented that children will be going into transgender bathrooms, and that he has been in transgender bathrooms before without any issues. He commented that he is in support of transgender bathrooms, stating our children need to be able to accept it and move on with it. He stated that the District needs to provide the facilities to do that, but feels that the District currently does not have the correct facilities for this.
- Mr. Fogg continued, explaining that he brought documents that explain the best practice to meet the needs for a gender-neutral bathroom. He talked about each stall being a separate room that locks with a vacant/occupied indicator on the door, and these individual rooms would be within the general bathrooms. Mr. Fogg stated that the designs have been implemented in other places, usually offices.
- Chris McDonough asked about the construction of the rooms within the bathrooms.
- Ryan Fogg replied that there are walls on all four sides with a peep-hole from the inside so that the occupant could see who might be outside the door. Mr. Fogg expressed concerns as to how long it would take to implement this installation. He urged the Budget Committee and School Board to look at the documents he brought to get gender-neutral bathrooms into our schools. Mr. Fogg stated that he feels that we need a plan, designs, and layouts as soon as possible, and presented the Board with the documents on gender-neutral bathroom design.
- John Sanborn spoke against the changes, stating that he agrees with Kyle Sanborn's comments. He wanted to know when the public can get answers from the Board. After stating his opinions on the issue, he stated that he would like the opportunity to ask specific questions that will get answers.
- Chris McDonough asked John Sanborn to submit his questions to Mr. Beitler at the SAU office so that Superintendent Beitler could address them.
- Skip Murphy spoke again, referencing Mr. Fogg's comments about the facilities. Mr. Murphy stated that the Board needs to address the morality of the situation, referring to the topic of social justice. Mr. Murphy commented that he does not feel that the issue of providing transgender bathrooms was pressing enough to implement it so quickly.
- Mr. Fogg spoke to clarify his comments about the facilities. He stated that our current facilities are not ready, but with the appropriate facilities, the District could create an environment that allows for a safe implementation of the new law.

- Kyle Sanborn spoke again, expressing his concerns about his daughter competing against someone who is biologically a male, and its effect on his daughter's school athletic career.
- Mr. Farruggia spoke again, stating that in his opinion, engineers can tell you how something can be done, but it does not make it right. He expressed his concerns for his children and commented that he feels no one should be discriminated against. He continued, saying that the District should be talking about funding things to better our schools and communities, not these bathrooms.
- Jade Wood spoke next, stating that SB 263 becomes effective September 17, 2019. She asked that the Board reconsider a motion to defer implementation, effectively immediately, especially at GES.
- No motion was made.

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Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beitler reviewed his written report as written.

Student Learning

Mr. Beitler commented on the learning and curriculum work that our teachers have done this summer with over twenty teachers involved. He stated that he and Paula Mercier met with the 7th/8th grade teachers from Gilford and Gilmanton, as well as the Gilford High School math teachers, to discuss transitions, assessments and curriculum. Mr. Beitler noted he has received very positive comments about the Choose Love presentation.

Families and Communities

Mr. Beitler complimented the staff who participated in the Old Home Day Parade, congratulating them on their first place win. The \$50 prize won by the staff will be donated to Gilford Got Lunch. Superintendent Beitler noted that the start of school after Labor Day has been viewed positively, noting many related it being a more relaxed start to the school year.

Resource Management

Mr. Beitler stated that he is continuing to review the staff survey results. He is focusing on the comments that staff would like to see him in the schools and classrooms more, which he will work on. Mr. Beitler said that there will be another survey in the future.

Safety and Facilities

Superintendent Beitler stated the buildings look great, complimenting Ken Mulleavey and the Building and Grounds crew. Mr. Beitler informed the Board that he had a request from Nick Englert to continue goose hunting at the Meadows. He presented background information regarding the hunting request. The New Hampshire Fish and Game, as well as the Gilford Police Department, approved the hunting.

- Jeanin Onos asked if there was a legal boundary requirement with it being a residential area.
- Mr. Beitler replied that there is one, and according to Fish and Game, has been met.
- Chris McDonough stated that he felt it should continue.

- Karen Thurston made a motion that we allow Nick Englert to continue hunting the geese during the two seasons. Gretchen Gandini seconded.
- Gretchen Gandini asked if only Nick Englert is allowed to hunt.
- Mr. Beitler replied Mr. Englert would be the only one to have permission to hunt there, but he may take some friends there so that two or three people might be with him.
- The motion passed unanimously.

Principals' Reports

Gilford Elementary School

Danielle Bolduc reviewed her report as written with no additional comments.

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Gilford Middle School

Peter Sawyer reviewed his report as written, noting that the Jump Start Program went very well. He commented on the addition of playing activities, making it a more fun start to the year for the fifth grade students.

Chris McDonough asked about student withdrawals, especially the number of students leaving for a private school. Mr. Sawyer said that would be included in the total number of withdrawals.

Gilford High School

Anthony Sperazzo reviewed his report as written.

Additionally, Mr. Sperazzo sought approval for \$5,398.75 for purchasing Enriching Students software. To fund the program, he stated that the following would be eliminated:

- Purchasing from Gunstock Inn one lifeguarding session.
- Decreasing the expense of removing chemicals from the science department, as there are fewer chemicals to be removed this year. It was approximately \$3,000.00 last year.
- There should be no repair fees for kiln this year, which were approximately \$1,200.00 in 2018-2019.
- This brings the cost savings to an estimated \$5,400.00.

Discussion followed about the software, which would be used by the Lead Time Program at GHS. Input was given by Lead Time Program leaders Jessie Bishop, Tom Raymond, and Louise Jagusch.

- Tom Raymond spoke about how strongly students have expressed their need for the program, focusing on the extra help they receive and the ability it gives them to work collaboratively with other students. Mr. Raymond noted that enrichment will grow organically for students and staff.
- Jessie Bishop commented on the importance of building relationships with students. She stated that it gives students a chance to work on time management skills, meet with faculty, and have the opportunity to build those relationships outside of the regular schedule.
- Louise Jagusch spoke from both an educator's and parent's perspective. She stated that the program would be very advantageous for student athletes and students who work, as they could schedule time

during the day to work with advisors. Ms. Jagusch also noted that it puts the onus on the students and helps them learn how to make the best choices effectively.

Chris McDonough asked about the connection to Lead Time and the Enriching Students software.

- Anthony Sperazzo replied that the software program would allow students more easily set up scheduling Lead Time with staff. He said that teachers can also use the program to schedule students who they feel might need extra help. Mr. Sperazzo noted students can also sign up for times to work with their peers on collaborative projects, and the program caps enrollment. He said this helps students know the times available.

Chris McDonough questioned changing the budget numbers at this time, noting that the request for funds has not gone through the budget process, nor been approved by the Budget Committee.

Gretchen Gandini echoed Mr. McDonough's sentiment, stating that hearing about the cost after the fact is concerning.

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- Mr. Sperazzo said that they based providing the program on requests from students and concerns raised during the NEASC visit. He presented this program to NEASC as a means to address students' concerns for time to get help, etc. Mr. Sperazzo commented that students and parents have expressed the need for the Lead Time program. Of the schools who have the Lead Time program, all but one use the Enriching Students program or something similar. The one school who did not use the software stated it is the one thing they need to make the scheduling work.

Kirk Beitler replied that the new grading system we are looking at will include this software program. He stated that our current system, SIS, does not, which is why this would be a one year patch until the new system is installed.

Jeanin Onos asked if we could use Google Calendar to do this instead of spending the money for one year.

- Anthony Sperazzo expressed his concerns about needing the software to provide cap information when students are scheduling time for help.
- Jessie Bishop said being able to track any student at any time is another reason to use the software program. She stated that it allows teachers to see where students are traveling to (where students are going, such as to which teachers) which would help create the intervention needs for the students.
- Louise Jagusch spoke to the timeline of requesting the funds, noting the program only came out in the spring, which is why it was not part of last year's budget discussion.
- Mr. Sperazzo stated that 82% of parents want to see it implemented, and over 96% of teachers agreed.

Chris McDonough said that he is not opposed to the flex block or the software, but there is a process which must be followed to maintain the integrity of the budget process. He commented that we should find a way to do the flex block but without moving money around. Mr. McDonough restated he is not in support of moving the funds without following the budget process.

Karen Thurston asked if the PTA has been approached for funding. Mr. Sperazzo replied no, to which Mrs. Thurston suggested approaching the PTA to cover the funding.

Gretchen Gandini reiterated that she did not question the integrity of the program, just that we have to follow the rules of the budget process.

No motion was made to approve the funding. Request for funding was denied.

Additionally, Mr. Sperazzo updated the Board on the date of the homecoming football game, which is Friday October 5, 2019 at the Meadows.

Business Administrator Report

Scott Isabelle reviewed the Budget Transfers for relocation of staff, which are allowed under RSA 32.10. The amount transferred in and out was \$462,683.00.

Chris McDonough asked if this was done to help give an accurate bill to Gilmanton as we do not want them to have to raise funds that are not needed.

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Scott Isabelle replied that this was in line with the request from the Budget Committee to keep everything clear and in the open.

Karen Thurston made the motion to accept the budget transfers as presented; Jeanin Onos seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Isabelle addressed the Capital Improvement Plan as of September, 2019. Discussion ensued regarding the \$1,517,870.00 increase. Mr. Isabelle stated that the increase was due to the need to replace the A/C units. He informed the Board that the Freon we use now does not meet code; we must purchase approved Freon.

Chris McDonough asked why we are hiring a general contractor and not an HVAC company.

Scott Isabelle replied that if we have the engineers here who could do this, than we could possibly eliminate the general contractor. He said we need a budget figure for September's budget process for planning purposes. Mr. Isabelle said if we think we can use our own staff, we could take \$72,280 off the top.

Mr. McDonough reiterated that we do not need a GC to hire and oversee an HVAC project; we should hire the HVAC company ourselves.

Gretchen Gandini asked if the mechanical contractor would assume those costs in their estimate.

Mr. McDonough asked if we could get a large HVAC company to come in and give us an estimate.

Scott Isabelle replied yes, but we need the whole system re-engineered because it no longer meets code, and this is an estimate to start the project.

Chris McDonough stated it is too much money for one year.

Scott Isabelle replied that we could do the high school one year and the middle school the following.

Karen Thurston asked if we have the ability, as this needs to go before the Capital Improvement Committee.

Scott Isabelle stated this is the first step in the planning; it is just the start of the discussion.

Chris McDonough responded that he is against putting this large a number into the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Isabelle said the request would be \$550,000.00 for Phase One in 2020-2021.

Jeanin Onos made the motion made to approve as amended; Karen Thurston seconded; motion passed.

Mr. Isabelle concluded with the summary of the summer projects. He stated that the track is done, sprinkler repairs were completed mid-August, the bollards are installed, the work on the intercom system at GMS is completed, and the secure entry area at GMS is installed. Additionally, he stated that the water pressure tank work was completed this past weekend by Gilford Well. Mr. Isabelle noted that all of the faucet replacements are completed. One faucet tested high for lead and will be retested. Once retesting of the faucet is done, he will submit the paperwork to the State for the refund. This should be by the end of September.

Policy – Second Reading

IMBA - Online-Virtual Education – current GSD policy for review. Jeanin Onos made motion to accept, Karen Thurston seconded; motion passed 4-0.

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JIH – Student Searches and Their Property – current GSD policy for review. Karen Thurston made motion to accept, Jeanin Onos seconded; motion passed 4-0.

JIH-R – Search of Students – NHSBA sample policy; we do not have a current GSD policy. Jeanin Onos made motion to accept; Karen Thurston seconded; motion passed 4-0.

JiHB – Searches of Student Automobiles on School Property – current GSD policy for review. Karen Thurston made motion to accept, Jeanin Onos seconded; motion passed 4-0.

JiHB-R – Searches of Student Automobiles on Property – NHSBA sample policy; we do not have a current GSD policy. Jeanin Onos made motion to accept; Karen Thurston seconded; motion passed 4-0.

GBEDB – Employee Use of Social Networking Websites – current GSD policy for review. Karen Thurston made motion to accept as amended; Jeanin Onos seconded; motion passed 4-0.

Public Comment

Skip Murphy spoke commending the Board on its handling of the budgetary process and keeping the process open and transparent. Mr. Murphy offered additional comments on the Lead Time program. On a separate topic, he asked if other products, such as SAFE, have been investigated.

Chris McDonough replied that we have One Call Now which is a similar product.

Jade Wood restated her request for the Board to consider a motion defer the senate bill and to rethink our interpretation of the bill, especially as it pertains to GES.

Jeanin Onos and Karen Thurston both stated that it would be better if all Board members were present. No motion made.

Non Public Session

Non-Public – RSA 91-A:3II (a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.*

At 8:25 p.m., Karen Thurston made the motion to go into non-public session; Jeanin Onos seconded. Voting was unanimous, motion passed.

Adjournment

Motion was made at 9:50 p.m. by Karen Thurston to adjourn the meeting; Jeanin Onos seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanin Onos
School Board Secretary