

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Remote Meeting

Tuesday, May 5, 2020
:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. Governor Scott signed H.681 into law, making temporary changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Part of those changes allow school districts to hold school board meetings remotely with no designated meeting location. LCATV provided coverage through a live stream and citizens were provided online and telephone options to participate in the meeting. Those in attendance were Board Chair Mike Rogers; Directors: Craig Kieny, Lindsey Cox, Curt Taylor, and Nic Longo; Student Board Member Mitch Gadapee; Superintendent Amy Minor; Business and Operations Manager George Trieb; Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli; and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz.

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. COVID-19 School Closure Status Update

Informational

Director of Curriculum Gwen Carmolli gave an update on remote academic instruction happening across all grade levels. As the district progresses through the continuity of learning phase, the focus of remote learning instruction is meeting the standards and proficiencies that teachers have identified as critical for students to learn during this period. Teachers at all grade levels have established weekly office hours to support students and families with the lessons for these essential elements and high-leverage concepts. They have been adding enrichment opportunities to allow students the opportunity to go deeper with their learning. Ms. Carmolli added that traditional assessments will not take place but they are developing and finalizing reporting plans. They are also working to provide continuity of learning plans for preschool children in Colchester who attend private preschools.

Superintendent Amy Minor provided an update on the meals program. Since the start of the closure the district has delivered 56,482 meals to children in Colchester. She expressed deep gratitude to all the employees who have played a role in facilitating the program. She also stated the leadership team is beginning to brainstorm and plan for summer. CSD normally runs five different summer school programs. The district has been told by the Agency of Education that they will provide specific guidance regarding summers school in the next two weeks. They are also starting to think and brainstorm plans for the fall. It is anticipated that the Governor and Education Secretary Dan French will provide an announcement and further guidance for the summer and what the end of the year will look like for celebrations and gatherings on Friday, May 8. Colchester's middle and high schools have already formed committees to solicit input and develop alternative plans for their respective graduations. Students and families should expect a survey in the near future to gather feedback to assist the committees in determining the most important aspects of the ceremony for our

graduates and how we can best honor this monumental achievement given the current gathering restrictions. Superintendent Minor also acknowledged that it is faculty and staff appreciation week. She thanked the school community for all of their work amid the current pandemic and also extended a huge thanks to families and students who contributed to some of the videos and emails noting appreciation for our staff.

IV. District Facilities Presentation

Informational

At the request of the board at a previous meeting, Superintendent Amy Minor presented an overview of the current status of the district's facilities and what the needs will be in the future. She went over the ages of the buildings, any renovations that have occurred since their opening, and projects that are forecasted to take place in both the short and long term.

Director Kienny asked if the provided maintenance list could be further filtered so he could easily see which projects would lead to more substantial issues if not addressed. Business and Operations Manager George Trieb stated he will compile that and that it will mostly be items such as boilers, roofs, and septic systems.

Director Longo asked if the district has a sustainability plan in place. Business and Operations Manager Trieb stated that the district does as much proactive work as possible. The district receives net metering credits from solar projects; HVAC and lighting are upgraded to more efficient models whenever possible. Director Longo also asked about the status of the district's sewer systems and why the board decided not to connect into a potential town sewer line. Mr. Trieb stated that the advice given to the board from district's engineers was to continue with their septic tanks. The systems are checked regularly and are in good shape. It was advised that it would be cost prohibited for the district to change over. Board Chair Mike Rogers concurred with Mr. Trieb and stated if there was any indication from the engineers that it would be a good move, the board would have looked into it further. He stressed that the board is open to future proposals and further examination regarding the septic system.

V. Early Education Center Update

Informational

Director Lindsey Cox first provided some background on the early education center project. Since 2016 the board has been seriously looking for solutions to the issues at both of the district's K-2 schools. The main issues include aging buildings, needing a permanent home for preschool and accommodating an expanded number of students and staff due to both a growing population of students and also expanded services that students receive during the day. Ultimately, two options are being considered, renovating or building new.

Director Cox stated the board has been moving slowly and with caution to uncover all the options and potential hurdles. They have convened working groups, architects to draft plans and spaces, explored permits with Act 250, and conducted a traffic flow analysis. Over the winter, the board explored and hired a firm to help engage the community by providing information about the district's needs and to also solicit feedback and input on the options. In light of the pandemic and the resulting uncertainty and hardships that are being experienced by the Colchester community, the board has reevaluated the idea of offering a bond vote to taxpayers. They have decided that it is in the best interest of students and our community to put it on hold with the understanding that this project is still incredibly important and something that will eventually need to be done.

VI. Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda **Action**

There was no personnel consent agenda presented.

VII. Approval of General Meeting Minutes: April 21, 2020 **Action**

Director Taylor moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 21, 2020, seconded by Director Longo. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

VIII. Approval of General Meeting Minutes: April 27, 2020 **Action**

Director Taylor moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 27, 2020, seconded by Director Cox. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

IX. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports **Informational**

Director Cox requested some education for the board regarding any potential changes that need to be made to policies or items in the board purview that could help safety return students to school in the fall.

X. Future Agenda Items **Informational**

- COVID-19 Update
- Lead Testing Results
- CSD Safety Planning
- Future Facilities Needs Presentation
- Policies: Fraud, Truancy & Attendance

XI. Adjournment

Director Cox made a motion to enter executive session at 7:59 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contracts connected to spring sports, seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.


Director Cox moved to exit executive session at 8:17 p.m., seconded by Director Taylor, the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Director Cox moved to adjourn at 8:17 p.m., seconded by Director Taylor, the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Recorder:


Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


Lindsey Cox
Board Clerk