



HUDSON SCHOOL DISTRICT ♦ Hudson, New Hampshire
Hills Memorial Library, 18 Library Street

6:30 pm

Regular Meeting
Non-Public Session

Hudson School Board Meeting Approved Minutes

November 8, 2021

In attendance:

Board Members

Gary Gasdia, Chairman
Diana LaMothe, Vice-chair
Ethan Beals
Mike Campbell
Gretchen Whiting

SAU Staff

Larry Russell, Superintendent of Schools
Jennifer Burk, Business Administrator
Terry Wolf, Director of Strategic Engagement & Communication

A. Call to Order

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Gasdia called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

B. Superintendent Search

Mr. Gasdia stated that the purpose of this meeting is to choose which company to go with for the superintendent search. He offered a recap of the last meeting where the board heard presentations from three potential companies and narrowed it down to two. The board had some questions and received answers. Tonight the board will choose between the Bryan Group associated with the NHSBA and NESDEC.

Ms. Whiting: Glad to see that they both offer a two-year guarantee. Bryan group has not had to invoke that and the NESDEC did have to invoke that twice. Mr. Gasdia clarified that NESDEC had to extend the search once which was COVID-related and once was the two-year guarantee which they think was COVID-related.

Ms. LaMothe: The onboarding/coaching piece is a little different between the Bryan Group and NESDEC. Very impressed with what NESDEC offers. A lot included without additional charges; Bryan Group will charge additional fee for onboarding. Although working with the NHSBA is great, it sounds

like NESDEC may have more connections beyond New England. Personal recommendation from our Business Administrator. Leaning toward NESDEC, feel it would be good to get a different perspective for Hudson, New Hampshire.

Ms. Whiting: In the NESDEC proposal they mention two individuals for the executive search team. Does that mean both will be available to us?

Mr. Gasdia: We would only have one; he has been very responsive so far.

Mr. Beals: Leaning toward the NHSBA. Feels that the Bryan Group has a lot to offer. In NESDEC proposal there are a lot of "assist withs" which looks like we be the quarterbacks and they would help us.

Mr. Gasdia: Has not done a superintendent search so does not want to be the quarterback, get the impression that the Bryan Group would be more hands-on.

Ms. Burk: NESDEC coached on how to evaluate applicants, 12 were on team. NESDEC guided the process.

Mr. Campbell agrees with Mr. Beals and the Bryan Group appears to offer a more unique way of interviewing as opposed the NESDEC'S more traditional way. Would prefer the unique way.

Ms. LaMothe pointed out that if we go with NESDEC, we'd be eligible for other services of theirs of no cost for one year. Mr. Beals listed the services. Mr. Russell stated that we haven't sought out any of those services as we've had no need. Ms. Burk stated we already have a lot of those services from other sources.

Ms. LaMothe moved to have NESDEC provide the superintendent search services; second by Ms. Whiting. Those present again shared their preferences on the two companies. **Motion fails 1-4 with Ms. LaMothe voting aye.**

Mr. Beals moved to approve the NHSBA and Bryan Group, second by Mr. Campbell. Motion passes 5-0.

Mr. Gasdia: All three were good and had a lot to offer. Didn't feel that tonight the board could make a bad decision between the two. They were all upfront, detailed, and quick to respond to questions.

Mr. Beals: Drafted a few survey questions (for interest in being on the committee). Asked for the board's input on the questions. Would like to get it emailed and posted as soon as we can. Members and Terry Wolf shared their suggestions for content and wording of questions.

The purpose/scope and time commitment of the committee was outlined and discussed. Mr. Gasdia would like to wrap this up and not need to discuss it again. Would like to send the survey out by Wednesday.

Mr. Gasdia: Vision of Search Committee – asked for reactions/thoughts. Each board member shared what they thought the makeup of the committee should be. Mr. Gasdia asked if other district members should be on the committee (i.e., para, custodian, etc.). Mr. Beals idea was that they would be included under teachers. Mr. Russell suggested looking at it by collective bargaining units. Discussion continued. Ms. Whiting and Ms. LaMothe agreed that representatives from each union is a good idea.

C. Non-public

Motion by Mr. Beals to enter non-public under RSA 91-A3:II (c), second by Ms. Whiting. Rollcall vote: Ms. LaMothe, aye; Mr. Beals; aye; Mr. Campbell, aye; Mr. Gasdia, aye. Motion passes 5-0. The board entered non-public session at 9:00 pm.

A motion to enter a non-public session passed 5-0 at 9:00 pm. Discussion began at 9:10 pm regarding the make-up of the Search Committee who will work with the selected search firm, The Bryan Group/NHSBA (TBG/NHSBA), to identify final Superintendent candidates to be recommended to the School Board. The Board unanimously agreed that a maximum of ten stakeholders should be on the Search Committee. The 'draft survey' that will be used to recruit potential members of the Search Committee will be presented to TBG/NHSBA for input before it is sent out to the public. The goal is to identify stakeholders who are interested in serving as committee members within one week.

At 9:27 pm, Mr. Russell, Ms. Burk and Ms. Wolf left the non-public meeting.

The Board unanimously agreed that 2 School Board members should serve on the Search Committee. The Board discussed potential conflicts of interest (both real and perceived) for anyone sitting on the Search Committee representing the School Board. No real conflicts of interest were identified. The Board moved forward with the following motions:

Ms. Whiting made a motion to appoint Mr. Beals to the Search Committee, second by Ms. LaMothe. Motion passed 4-0-1. Mr. Beals abstained.

Ms. Whiting made a motion to appoint Mr. Campbell to the Search Committee, second by Ms. LaMothe. Motion passed 4-0-1. Mr. Campbell abstained.

Once potential Search Committee responses are received, the School Board will select the other members of the Search Committee. Timing is of the essence.

Chairman Gasdia asked if the Board would like to complete a mid-year evaluation of Superintendent Russell, as was planned before his resignation. The Board would like to complete the evaluation before March. A School Board self-evaluation will also be completed.

D. Adjourn

A motion to exit non-public and adjourn at 10:08 pm was made by Mr. Beals, second by Ms. Whiting. The motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Porter (public)

Diana LaMothe (non-public)