

**New Hartford Public Schools  
Board of Education Meeting  
Antolini School/Multi-Purpose Room  
June 1, 2021 @ 7:00 p.m.**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-ZlomWmjG81dc\\_QM3rfq](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-ZlomWmjG81dc_QM3rfq)

**Present-** Tim Goff, Karl Hermonat, Penny Miller, Tom Buzzi, Tim Klepps, Heather Tomala, Kelly O'Dell Longhi, Mary Stempien, Tony Persechino

**Other-** Brian Murphy, Kelly Carroll, Amanda Shaw, Barbara McLean, Heather Mathes

**A. Chair to Open Meeting-** Chairman Tim Goff opened in person meeting at 7:00pm. The meeting was also live streamed on YouTube.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance-** The board joined in the Pledge of Allegiance

**C. Chair Select Order of Business-** No change

**D. Superintendent's Report**

**1. Eagle Scout Project**

Former New Hartford and current Regional 7 student Caitlin Trotto presented to the board, her proposal to build a GaGa pit as part of her eagle scout project. Caitlin explained to the board, the budget for the project is estimated at \$1,770 however this could change based on the current costs of lumber. Her goal is to have the pit installed before the new school year.

**Motion-** by Miller to approve the proposal for a GaGa pit to be installed at Ann Antolini school as part of an Eagle Scout project with a goal to be completed before the 2021-2022 school year. Tomala seconded.

**Unanimous.**

**2. COVID-19 Funds/ESSER II/ARP**

Mr. Murphy informed the board that the New Hartford Public Schools received \$59,161 in ESSER II funds from the Connecticut State Department of Education for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Murphy explained to the board that his plan is to use these funds to bring back the two tutors that were previously eliminated from this year's budget. In addition, he also said he planned on using \$5000 of these funds towards the excess costs related to this year's expanded summer school program which was discussed later in the meeting by Barbara McLean.

Mr. Murphy then went in to explain the process set out by the State Department of Education, in receiving the \$119,000 in Covid-19 funds. Firstly, the district must survey parents and staff regarding the past school year and mitigation strategies. This brief survey was released on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021 via email. The guidelines state that these surveys will have to be conducted every six months. Mr. Murphy told the board, that once these funds are released, the district can have full use until the end of 2024. The full spending plan for these funds is still to be determined, however Mr. Murphy did let the board know he plans on using some of the money for staffing and particularly another tutor in addition to the

two added back in this school year. Further guidelines include submitting the district reopening plan to the state by June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021. This plan will be based off of current guidelines and feedback provided in the recent survey. A copy will also need to be posted on the district website. Any revisions to the plan must be made in August.

O'Dell Longi asked Mr. Murphy if there was any information in the state guidelines regarding the process if districts did not agree with current requirements specifically pertaining to the requirement of school children wearing masks in schools. Mr. Murphy responded that he was not aware of any information on this but explained there could be consequences which could result of loss of grant money and a risk of being exposed legally. Goff asked Mr. Murphy if the district could seek a legal opinion on the ramifications if they choose not to follow current mandates which requires the use of masks in schools. Mr. Murphy said he would look into that.

### **3. Budget Transfers-2020-2021**

Mr. Murphy recommended to the board, budget transfers to four accounts that previously showed significant deficit. These are special education outplacement tuition, legal, special education transportation, and curriculum software. Upon completion of the transfer, Mr. Murphy informed the board of an anticipated small surplus of around \$2,000. This was due to a savings in health care costs and in the Dattco bus contract. In addition, the district received \$100,000 in covid 19 relief funds from the state that was used toward the previously anticipated deficit of \$190,000.

**Motion-** Miller to approve the budget transfers for the purpose of further discussion. Seconded by O'Dell Longhi.

Miller went on to ask Mr. Murphy to explain in more depth the reasoning for the savings to which he responded. This was due to a change in personnel and healthcare enrollment. The \$100,000 in the unexpended fund allocated by the town was not used this school year and will be available next year if necessary.

Motion- By Miller to approve the 2020-2021 budget transfers as presented by Mr. Murphy. O Dell Longhi seconded.

**Unanimous**

### **4. Summer School Update**

Barbara Mclean presented to the board, information regarding this year's summer school. She informed the board that this year, the program will double from 20-40 students due to a higher level of identified students as a result of the pandemic. Staffing of the program will include five certified teachers, four related services, and four paraprofessionals. The program will be in person for 3 hours per day from July 6<sup>th</sup>\*August 5<sup>th</sup> at New Hartford Elementary School.

### **E. Public Comment/Communication to the Board of Education**

Goff informed the board of two items of communication he received via email. These were shared with the board and copies are included in the meeting minutes.

In person public comment were as follows-

Kristen Kosiba, 40 Windsor Lane, New Hartford, requested that the board consider removing masks from school children.

David Press, 474 Steel Road, New Hartford, asked the issue of liability if the district chooses not to follow the state mandate which requires school children wearing masks.

Susan Lundin, 428 Town Hill Road, New Hartford, expressed concerns with Superintendent Murphy's updated expenditure plan which she believes would cause an increase to tax payers. She also questioned the cost of the current full day pre-k stating that the cost is too low compared to surrounding private daycare centers which is also impacting the tax payer. Finally, Ms. Lundin criticized the board's approach to present issues stating that focus needs to be put on the future of the schools as well as current issues.

Rebecca Welsh, 45 Maillet Lane, New Hartford, CT, apologized to the board for a previous issue which took place prior to the meeting. Ms. Welsh thanked the board and Mr. Murphy and assured them that they have the full support of the parents going forward.

Deirdre Tindall, 1258 Litchfield Turnpike, New Hartford, requested the board chooses not to follow the state mandate of mask requirements in school and offered to fundraise the disqualified grant money from the state if that is a consequence.

David Bean 251 Cedar lane, New Hartford, also asked the board to remove the masks from school children despite the state mandate currently in place.

Mauve Bean, 251 Cedar Lane, New Hartford requested that the board vote to remove masks from schools.

**F. Consent Agenda**

**1. Approval of Minutes-May 18, 2021**

**Motion-** by Miller amend the meeting minutes from May 18<sup>th</sup>. Seconded by Stempien. These changes are listed below and have been resubmitted to the superintendent's office.

Changes are underlined:

**E. Public Comment**

6th grade students of Ann Antolini School Julia Goff and Ryane O'Dell Longhi thanked Mr. Murphy, the board and staff for their time at the New Hartford public schools as they will begin their transition to Northwestern Region 7 Middle school in the 2021-2022 school year. The girls also spoke highly of 6<sup>th</sup> grade superintendent award winner, Jillian Quinto congratulating her on her achievement.

**G. Reports**

**1. Plant Facility & Transportation Committee**

**Motion:** by Buzzi, to allow Superintendent Murphy, to enter a four-year contract with Dattco bus company at \$2,424,135. Seconded by Klepps.

Aye: Tomala, Stempien, Klepps, Buzzi, Hermonat, O'Dell Longi. Opposed: Goff, Miller  
Abstained: Goff, Miller.

**Motion Passes.**

## **H. Adjournment**

Motion: by Miller at 7.50pm to invite Superintendent Murphy into Executive session to complete the Superintendents Evaluation for the 2020-2021 school year.  
Seconded by Tomala.

The board exited executive session at 8.30pm.

Motion: by Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8.31pm. Seconded by Tomala.

Unanimous

**Motion-** by Miller to approve the meeting minutes from May 18<sup>th</sup> as amended. Stempien seconded. All in favor: Tomala, Klepps, Buzzi, Goff, Hermonat, O Dell 'Longhi Abstained: Persechino.

**Motion-**By Miller, to approve the consent agenda with discussed changes. Seconded by Stempien.

**Unanimous**

## **2. Expenditure Report**

### **G. Reports**

#### **A. Facility and Transportation Committee Update**

Tom Buzzi provided an update on the three bid proposals listed on the capital plan for the replacement and installation of the steam boiler at New Hartford Elementary School, Miscellaneous painting at New Hartford Elementary and Bakerville Consolidated and sidewalk repair.

**Motion-** by Buzzi to allow Superintendent Murphy into an agreement with Urban Engineering to replace and install the stem boiler at New Hartford Elementary School in the amount of \$42,000. Seconded by Klepps.

**Unanimous**

**Motion:** By Buzzi to allow Superintendent Murphy into an agreement with Scholar Painting in the amount of \$16,320. Seconded by Klepps.

**Unanimous**

**Motion:** By Buzzi to allow Superintendent Murphy to enter into an agreement with M.E Carroll and Sons for the amount of \$25,849 for sidewalk replacement at Bakerville school. Seconded by Klepps. All in favor: Tomala, Stempien, Persechino, Klepps, Buzzi, Hermonat, O'Dell Longhi, Miller. **Abstained:** Goff.

**B. School Community Relations and Policy**  
**1. Review Policy 5131.911 (Bullying Prevention and Intervention)**

Kelly O'Dell Longhi reviewed the policy as a second read with proposed changes.

Motion: by Miller, to approve the second read of (**Policy 5131.911 Bullying Prevention and Intervention**) Seconded by Buzzi. All in favor: Stempien, Persechino, Klepps, Buzzi, Goff, Hermonat, O'Dell Longhi, Miller Apposed: Tomala Abstained: None.

**H. New Business**  
**1. Superintendent Contract**

**Motion:** By Goff at 8:36pm to invite superintendent Murphy in to an executive session to discuss the superintendents contract. Seconded by Hermonat.

**Unanimous.**

The meeting ended at 8:37pm.

**Executive Session.**

Motion Mr. Klepps to extend Supt. Murphy's contract by one year. Second by Mr. Hermonat. This motion will include the \$5,000 stipend if Supt. Murphy elects not to take our insurance. Additionally, it will include a \$1,500 debit card as long as it is in the Board of Education's name.

Discussion followed with if the board is unable to secure a debit card in its name, then Supt. Murphy will continue to hand in his receipts for reimbursement. The debit card statement will be reviewed by the Superintendent's Secretary and the BOE Secretary when received.

**Unanimous**

Motion by Mr. Buzzi to increase the Supt. Salary by 2% for the 2021-2022 school year. Seconded by Ms. Stempien.

**Unanimous**

**2. Board of Education Self-Evaluation (Executive Session)**

Chairman Goff told Supt. Murphy that this speaks to the how the board feels about the job he is doing and the confidence they have in him. This speaks volumes. Supt. Murphy replied he appreciates that and said thank you.

Motion by Ms. Miller to enter Executive Session @ 9:14 pm to discuss the Board of Education Self-Evaluation. Seconded by Ms. Stempien.

**Unanimous**

**3. Discussion regarding records and reports of negotiations with Local 1303- 336 New Hartford Custodial Employees, Local 1303-367 New Hartford Instructional Assistants and Tutors, and Local 1303-386 New Hartford Administrative Assistants and Central Office Staff, and possible action concerning the tentative agreements reached for successor collective bargaining agreements (discussion proposed for executive session).**

Motion by Mr. Goff to enter executive discussion at 9:59 pm to discuss the records and reports of negotiations with Local 1303-336 New Hartford custodial Employees, Local 1303-367 New Hartford Instructional Assistants and Tutors, and Local 1303-386 New Hartford Administrative Assistants and Central Office Staff. Seconded by Mr. Buzzi

**Unanimous**

Motion by Mr. Goff that the New Hartford Board of Education approve the tentative agreement for successor collective bargaining agreements with Local 1303-336 New Hartford Custodial Employees, and authorizes the Board Chair to sign such collective bargaining agreements on behalf of the New Hartford Board of Education. Seconded by Mr. Persechino

**Unanimous**

Motion by Mr. Goff that the New Hartford Board of Education approve the tentative agreement for successor collective bargaining agreements with Local 1303-367 New Hartford Instructional Assistants and Tutors, and authorizes the Board Chair to sign such collective bargaining agreements on behalf of the New Hartford Board of Education. Seconded by Ms. Miller.

**Unanimous**

Motion by Mr. Goff that the New Hartford Board of Education approve the tentative agreement for successor collective bargaining agreements with Local 1303-386 New Hartford Administrative Assistants and Central Office Staff, and authorizes the Board Chair to sign such collective bargaining agreements on behalf of the New Hartford Board of Education. Second by Ms. Stempien.

**Unanimous**

**I. Adjournment**

Motion by Mr. Persechino to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 pm. Seconded by Ms. Stempien.

**Unanimous**

Respectfully submitted, Laura Fritch/Penny Miller BOE Secretary