

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Present: School Board Members John Harmon, Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, Stephen Scarfo (remote attendance), and Cindy Bennett (remote attendance); Student Representative to the School Board Tyler Dunphy; Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman; Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore; Executive Director of Student Support Services Jodi Gutterman.

Proof of Posting: It was noted that the meeting was properly posted.

Pledge of Allegiance: All those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input: Public input was opened at 6:01 PM. Mr. Harmon read a letter from Bob LeMoine, REA President, on behalf of the REA Executive Council relative to the lack of minutes taken during strategic planning meetings, strategic plan directives, and survey comments regarding required phone calls to parents. A copy of that email can be found at the end of these minutes.

Mr. Harmon noted that public input would be open for another 25 minutes. If anyone arrives within that timeframe and would like to speak, they will be allowed to do so. There was no further public input forthcoming.

Our Students/Our Schools: Holly Londo, RHS Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) Coordinator, and students Nathan Wallace, Ryan Santino, and Peter (Trey) Donahue discussed the field trips taken as part of the ELO program at Raymond High School, including Construction Career Day, National Manufacturing Day, Portsmouth Health Care Expo, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and Job Corps. They also discussed their upcoming field trips.

RHS Senior Class Trip Approval: RHS Teacher and Senior Class Advisor Renee Fontaine and students Aynalem Levesque, Acadia Gafford, and Kylie Potter reviewed the plans for the 2024 senior class trip to Lake George, NY with the School Board. They reviewed the itinerary, funding, and security.

MOTION: Tony Clements moved, seconded by Joseph Saulnier, to approve the 2024 senior class trip. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

Student Representative to the School Board Report: Mr. Dunphy stated that the Site Council met with the Food Service director, and they also met to have a discussion about competencies and how students feel about that topic. They will be looking to meet with administration for some open discussion. He also discussed the winter carnival, which kicked off this week, and some of the activities as part of that.

Student Services Update: Ms. Gutterman reviewed a presentation on student services throughout the district, including data, funding, systems/programmatic work for social-emotional learning programs, and student progress monitoring. During discussion:

- Ms. Bennett asked if, as students move out of these treatments, do they move out of their diagnosis midyear. Ms. Gutterman stated that it's all unique to the student, that IEPs run for a year, but that they could come back midyear.
- Mr. Saulnier asked if there is a specific reason why Medicaid has gone down. Ms. Gutterman said that things have changed as to what can be put in without a physician signing off; we can't bill for the same services that we used to.
- Mr. Saulnier suggested that all those who input goal tracking data on a daily basis do so electronically so it can be easily accessed. Ms. Gutterman stated that as long as people are communicating, not everything needs to be documented daily, and there are things that only a special education teacher needs to see.
- Mr. Scarfo asked for a sense of how students are progressing in these out-of-district placements and asked if some of them could be brought back. Ms. Gutterman stated that the students placed out-of-district are making progress and good growth. She can't speak to students coming back, but the conversation happens at annual IEP meetings. Mr. Clements stated that it's important to note that a student doing well may be just as good a reason to keep them there rather than bring them back.

Energy Efficient Investments: Mr. Harmon stated that this agenda item was scheduled to solidify the School Board's intent regarding the energy projects proposed by Energy Efficient Investments, now that they have more precise numbers. MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the Energy Efficient Investments lease for year one at \$317,880 with a projected savings of \$58,700 for a total budget impact of \$259,180. Mr. Harmon stated that he wants to be sure everyone understands that they're putting in a line for \$317,880 but then reducing other lines with savings. He said it's just as important to understand that the \$317,880 will be in the budget for the next 20 years but we won't be seeing savings as a result in, for example, year three. We will have seen all of the savings by that point, and thereafter it is a cost avoidance. Mr. Scarfo stated that there will be cost savings carried year to year, so the reduction will stay and they won't re-incur those costs. Mr. Saulnier stated that once we see savings, the savings will continue. Mr. Leatherman stated that the energy savings is financing the projects. After further discussion, among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

2024-25 Revised Operating Budget: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to revise the operating budget to reflect Energy Efficient Investments - the new budget would be \$31,041,741. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

During discussion, Mr. Harmon and Ms. Bennett changed their vote to no, resulting in a final passing vote of 3-2.

Warrant Articles - Dehumidifiers: After some discussion, it was the general consensus of the School Board that this warrant article not be brought forward to the voters, and that the topic of heat in the classrooms at RHS be considered for possible alternatives in the future.

2024 RHS Graduation Date: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to have graduation set for June 7, 2024. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

SST 2024-2028 Agreement: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the regional agreement for Seacoast School of Technology for years 2024-2028 with the following amendment: correct page numbering. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

New/Revised Policies - First Reading: The School Board reviewed the following new/revised policies for the first of two readings: EBD Indoor Air Quality and KFA Conduct on School Property/Assaults. There were no further revisions suggested at this time.

New/Revised Policies - Second Reading: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept policy ACN Nursing Mothers Accommodation. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept policy EBCC Bomb Found or Threats. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

Monthly Financial Update: Ms. Whitmore reviewed the financial update for months ending November 30, 2023. During discussion, Mr. Harmon stated that in expenditures, the salary line is a positive variance of \$715,000, and on the last page, encumbrances are approximately \$466,000, resulting in about \$247,000 positive. Ms. Whitmore stated that there are certain salaries not encumbered fully or prorated. Mr. Harmon asked if we think we're going to be hiring for the currently vacant positions and if not, do we need to continue the freeze.

Mr. Saulnier suggested looking into a program other than Munis. Mr. Harmon suggested possibly having a conversation about that in the spring.

Mr. Saulnier stated that he noticed a vending machine breaking often. It was agreed that the Superintendent would make the decision as to whether the vending machines are cost-efficient enough to keep or not.

Mr. Harmon asked about \$71,000 in the budget compared to last month for social workers for two years, and that he doesn't recall approving that as a board. Ms. Whitmore stated she will put that in the Friday Memo, as she doesn't have that information with her.

Committee Reports: Mr. Clements stated that the Budget Committee's public hearing for the School District operating budget and warrant articles is scheduled for January 2nd, and the Town on January 9th.

Superintendent's Report: Mr. Leatherman stated that it has been slow lately and he wishes everyone a happy holiday.

Correspondence: None.

Manifest Signing: A quorum of the Board signed the manifest. Accounts Payable total \$937,635.51. Payroll total \$1,004,961.05.

Minutes Approval: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the minutes of November 28, 2023. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, and Stephen Scarfo. John Harmon and Cindy Bennett abstained.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the minutes of November 29, 2023. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the public minutes of December 6, 2023. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by John Harmon, to accept and keep sealed the non-public minutes of December 6, 2023. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the minutes of December 7, 2023. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, and Cindy Bennett. Stephen Scarfo abstained.

The School Board reviewed the proposed correction to the vote on the operating budget in the already approved minutes of November 16, 2023. The tally of that vote should have been 3-2, with Mr. Harmon and Ms. Bennett voting in opposition. MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to amend the November 16, 2023 minutes as presented. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

Non-Public Session: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) "Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting" and (m) "Consideration of whether to disclose minutes of a nonpublic session due to a change in circumstances under paragraph III." Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo, and Tony Clements. The Board entered into non-public session at 8:43 PM and resumed public session at 8:57 PM. Other than the vote to exit this non-public session (which was moved by Joseph Saulnier, seconded by Tony Clements, and upon the Board members being individually polled, was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo and Tony Clements), no motions were voted during this non-public session.

Unsealing Minutes: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to unseal the non-public minutes of: October 5, 1979; June 5, 1980; July 15, 1980, July 16, 1980; July 22, 1980; July 23, 1980. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to unseal the following non-public minutes from July 24, 1980: nominations/elections/contract signatures; high school maintenance supervisor; high school principal position; short-term school board goals; meeting with teachers; and possible school board candidates. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett.

Adjournment: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to adjourn the meeting. Among the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, John Harmon, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett. Meeting adjourned at 9:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,  
School Board Clerk

Raymond School Board Non-Public Session  
December 20, 2023

Not voted to be kept confidential.

Present: School Board Members School Board Members John Harmon, Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, Stephen Scarfo (remote attendance), and Cindy Bennett (remote attendance); Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman.

The School Board reviewed sealed minutes for consideration to unseal them.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,  
Raymond School Board Clerk

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*Email read during tonight's public input:*

*December 18, 2023*

*To the Raymond School Board,*

*Recently, the Raymond School Board approved the revised wording of policy BEDG, concerning minutes. The policy affirms the following:*

*Under NH RSA 91-A, the school board, and each of the school board's committees (irrespective of whether standing or ad hoc, and irrespective of whether deemed a sub-committee or an advisory committee) is required to keep minutes for every "meeting" as defined under 91-A:2, I. As used below, "Board" shall mean and include the district school board, and each such board committee.*

*The policy stresses the importance of Minutes being taken for accurate record keeping of discussions and votes taken. However, why the District Strategic Plan was composed without official Minutes being taken is an issue of concern.*

*There are several directives listed in the Strategic Plan, including “Homeroom and RAM teachers will call parents two times a year for an introduction and a check-in.” We have communication from several persons on the Strategic Plan Committee who either do not believe this directive was agreed upon by the committee at-large or the members responsible for the “Parent and Community Engagement” section, or they question if this was actually agreed to.*

*Without Minutes and official votes being recorded, it is a disregard for the transparency which Raymond residents are entitled to. It is also much easier for a board member, administrator, parent, or educator to dominate conversation and direction of the committee. Such was the case in this Strategic Plan.*

*A recent REA survey is very revealing and worth your consideration. One-quarter of those surveyed believe these phone calls were disadvantageous to parent-teacher relationships. Seventeen percent said a parent expressed annoyance to receive a call with no real purpose. Nine percent were told by the parent they could not talk because they were at work, 3% said a parent told them not to call again, and another 3% said they were hung up on. Twenty-nine percent reported that a provided phone number was not active. Forty-nine percent said they had to use their valuable planning time to make these calls which took anywhere from 2-3 hours (29%), 4-5 hours (6%) or over 5 hours (17%). This is worth an educator’s time?*

*There were many relevant comments teachers made:*

*“Parents were confused and concerned when answering the phone.”*

*“No one seemed to appreciate the phone call.”*

*“Parents seemed confused by the phone call and assumed their child was sick or something was wrong.”*

*“Although I think contacting RAM parents isn’t the most effective as we have varying levels of connection with the students, I don’t think it is the worst idea. What is the worst idea is mandating phone calls. This isn’t the 90s or early 2000s. If parent connection is the goal, and we have ParentSquare to use, we should connect with parents via their preferred method.”*

*“I don’t have a problem with this, but I think email is way better. That’s what leaves a timestamp, plus, the parent can read it at their convenience.”*

*“What was the whole point of this exercise?” a teacher asked.*

*Perhaps parents should be given a say in how they wish to be contacted and what they wish to be contacted about. Because no proper Minutes were kept on how this directive, or the Strategic Plan as a whole, was constructed, we believe the entire plan is invalid and needs to be rescinded and replaced according to proper policy.*

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*Thank you for your consideration.*

*Bob LeMoine, President*

*On Behalf of the Executive Council*

*Raymond Education Association*