

## Raymond School Board Minutes

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

Raymond High School Media Center

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*DRAFT*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

### Members Attending:

- Terry Leatherman, Superintendent
- John Harmon, Chair
- Joseph Saulnier, Secretary
- Marjorie Whitmore, Business Administrator
- Cindy Bennett, Member
- Rylynn Clark, Student Rep
- Tony Clements, Vice Chair
- Stephen Scarfo, Member

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.

MOTION: Tony Clements moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) "the hiring of any person as a public employee." Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by John Harmon, Joseph Saulnier, Cindy Bennett, Tony Clements, and Stephen Scarfo. The Board entered into non-public session at 6:01pm and resumed public session at 6:07pm.

Public Input: Public input was opened at 6:08pm. John Harmon noted that public input would be open for 30 minutes. If anyone arrives within that timeframe and would like to like to speak, they will be allowed to do so. There was no public input forthcoming.

### Student Representative to the School Board Report:

Ms. Clark congratulated the financial literacy team for winning their event at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> competition and becoming the champions. Ms. Clark also shared that several Seniors were recognized at the NHI Scholar Athlete Ceremony in Concord and received scholarships. Student Council/Student Government students went on a Height field trip to UNH. Sophomores took PSAT's last week and Juniors took SAT's this week. Prom planning is underway. Prom is May 10<sup>th</sup> at the Portsmouth Country Club in Greenland.

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Safety and Facilities Report: Mr. Ledoux noted that we are currently short staffed in the custodian department and that there are two job openings –

- Full Time Custodian – 2pm – 10:30pm Monday through Friday
- Part Time Custodian – can work any time between 2pm – 10:30pm

Mr. Ledoux shared that the HVAC controls project at the high school is currently wrapping up, but going well. Another round of safe grants has been received – 1 for the LRES intercom system to be replaced this summer; and a second safe grant for new classroom deadbolts at the middle school. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and final round of lead testing for the NH Get The Lead Out program has been completed. Mr. Ledoux completed the See Something Say Something awareness training for grades 4 through 12. The elementary school will be trained by their school counselors. The Emergency Response Actions have been updated from 8 to 5 steps - to make it more streamlined and easier to remember. The new list of 5 will be rolled out during April vacation. Mr. Ledoux and Samantha Hogan are to attend a training for region so they can assist other areas and vice versa. The annual district emergency drill details have been finalized and will take place Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> 2024 at the middle school.

Mr. Clements asked what exactly is student/parent reunification? Mr. Ledoux stated that it's a process we use during an emergency in a building – it's how students are reunited with parents or guardians after a lockdown or major situation. Mr. Ledoux also stated that he trains for that in other facilities offsite so if there were ever a situation at one school, students could be moved to another school and/or district if necessary – as part of the emergency operations plan. Mr. Ledoux went on to explain that it's the process used to get children back with their parents and that they have to ensure that students go with someone they're supposed to go with, and that we know who the students are going with – similar to dismissal process.

Mr. Harmon asked if there is anything that we have done to look into composting – having someone come and get it and take it away? Mr. Ledoux said we have looked at it hard 2 or 3 different times and have struggled in many areas to pull it off. There is a struggle with separating it and keeping it clean and keeping rodents out of it. Mr. Ledoux stated that we have never really been able to get it off the ground or figure out a way to do it successfully because it takes a lot of manpower and work to separate. Mr. Ledoux shared that we looked into a company out of Portsmouth that came and picked everything up and took it offsite – however they don't service this far because they are based out of Maine.

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Energy Efficient Investments Project:

Mike Davey and Adam Jenness, from Energy Efficient Investments shared proposals from some banks, as well as information about another project. Mr. Davey shared that EI is municipal leasing consultants out of Grand Isle Vermont who are similar to mortgage broker. They go out and get multiple lease proposals for multiple terms, going to various banks throughout the US – including Bank of America, as well as some local banks – and they bring back the best rates and a proposal with those rates. From there, what typically happens is the board will select a term and a rate that won't be exceeded, then appoint someone (typically the Superintendent) to negotiate the final terms with the bank. At the time a proposal was issued, an estimated 3.7 million dollar borrowing amount with interest rates of - 4.59% for 16 years, 4.79% for 18 years, or 4.89% for 20 years.

Energy Efficient Investments asked for board action to authorize either the Business Manager or the Superintendent to enter into negotiation with the bank to negotiate the terms and rates based upon either the 4.59 for 16 years, 4.79 for 18 years or 4.89 for 20 years.

Mr. Davey pointed out that the second year has a higher payment that is the grant from the IRS for the solar systems. The way that works is - once the project is completed, the school will receive a federal grant in year two, which can then go towards year two or three payments – depending on how it is structured. Otherwise they are level payments throughout the term – so there is only one year that has a non-level fund, however that balance comes from the grant. The remaining payments would be like a mortgage and the same rate in the budget every year.

Mr. Davey also stated that leases can be refinanced if interest rates do come down significantly.

Mr. Davey shared that he increased the solar budget – adding a \$150,00 contingency protective allowance, due to the Eversource Agreement and planning board approval still needs to be done – for anything that might come up for interconnection fees or for drainage requirements. If we get through all the approvals, that is something that can come out.

Some adjustments were made to the lighting scope because their lighting engineer meet with Mr. Ledoux at the high school and one of the goals is to correct the underground wire corrosion of the parking lot lights. Building mounted lights will be added instead, that will eliminate the need for the pole mounted lights and all the trenching under slab.

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Mr. Scarfo asked if the larger solar field gets us 100% power? Mr. Davey stated that it would be 90% if we reduced the lighting and with knowing that at night we would still be on the grid because we don't have battery backup – so it will do the aggregate but we will not be “off the grid”. 90% being due to not paying for something we are not using.

Mr. Saulnier asked if we do smaller field can you add on? Mr. Davey stated yes, it would be possible to add on.

Mr. Scarfo asked for clarification about more permits being required for the larger field and what does that timeline typically look like? Mr. Davey stated that would be about 6 months.

Mr. Saulnier asked for clarification on the prepayment option with the 102% or remaining balance and if it is negotiable? Mr. Davey stated to factor in a 2% premium for whatever the remaining balance is and that this would be based on the bank, as some don't have any penalty and some do. He stated an example of this 2% premium would be – you're down to the last million/700,000 owed and this option would allow you to cut off the last 4 years of payments. Newfoundland paid off entire lease 2 months into it because they used non restricted grant to pay for it. Any extra chunk payments would need to be negotiated through leasing consultants with the bank beforehand.

Mr. Saulnier asked if we went with the smaller solar field and were able to add onto it, would we have to go through the same process? Mr. Davey stated no we would not – that two smaller structures on the same property would justify it.

Mr. Harmon asked for follow up that the field at 80% would cost \$400,000 less to install and would not have to spend 6 months going through the state of NH? Mr. Davey confirmed that was correct and that we would only have to go through the Raymond Planning Board.

The Board voted between the 80% or 90% solar panel project options:

- Mr. Saulnier voted for the 80% smaller field
- Mr. Harmon voted for the 80% smaller field
- Mr. Scarfo voted for the 80% smaller field
- Ms. Bennett wished more of the public was present and voted unsure
- Mr. Clements voted not for solar panels

By majority, the Board voted to go with the 80% solar panel deal.

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MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo that the board would like to go with the 20-year lease payment plan with the smaller solar field and no middle school boilers with the projected 4.89% interest rate, with the Superintendent to negotiate terms of agreement with the leasing consultants.

Further discussion:

- Tony asked how big is smaller solar farm? Mr. Davey confirmed it is 660 kilowatts and is just under 100,000 sq. of space or about 2.29 acres.
- Cindy asked what is the size of each panel? Mr. Davey will try to get that information.
- Tony asked where the solar farm would be going? It will either be up on the hill or as we drive in depending upon where they get the best sun.
- Marjorie stated that typically after voters approve or deny the article, she will ask for bids and if it's okay if she proceeds with asking? She was advised to hold off because it is unknown at the moment if we would be using CIP or operating money.
- John – thinks we needs to go out and bid on what we said we need and Joe agreed that makes sense.
- John asked if everyone is okay with moving forward? Everyone was in agreement.

Motion is to go forward with the project for LED lighting at high school and middle school, a biomass boiler with LP backup at the high school, walk-in cooler controls at the high school, transformers at the high school and a solar ray at the high school that would be used for paying off electrical rates within the district, building envelope at the middle school, walk-in cooler controls at the middle school, and transformers at the middle school and to authorize the SAU to negotiate with municipal leasing consultants on our 4.89% 20 year rate and any additional large chunk payment options. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Project Next Steps: The design needs to be completed – 1-month timeframe, then get on the agenda for the planning board (it's common for a board member to accompany for that), then once that is approved we can go into contact and construction and ordering material – this project will be heavy into next year, but the things we can get done this year to start saving would be: lighting and transformers being done this summer. Mr. Davey is not sure if the high school boiler can get done this summer, if not it will be done next summer (depends how quickly permit gets approved).

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2024/2025 General Assurances:

School board signatures are required by the state of New Hampshire to ensure that Federal Funding requirements are being met.

MOTION: Tony Clements motions, seconded by Stephen Scarfo to allow the board to sign the general assurances for 24/25. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Strategic Plan Update: District wide consistency communication process expectations and accountability. Continuing to work on identifying areas of inconsistency among buildings and will provide recommendations to the school superintendent. Our update is that this is ongoing and some recent areas of focus that all admin have been involved in, including behavior data, collection reporting, restorative practice and approaches, SEL program development and their one programming and fidelity. Establish a district wide grading team to recommend a district wide grading policy – with presentation at the next board meeting. The behavior health advisory team will develop recommended policies and procedures. The ongoing BHAT team recently reviewed behavior and discipline policies and procedures in relation to restorative practices just to see in house number suspensions that go along with reducing that number. Collect and review the data and develop a process to monitor the effect of implementation. Once again, the BHAT team has developed and utilized a progress monitoring plan that is followed throughout the year. At the district levels – school level teams continue to utilize behavior and academic data to evaluate their implementation. We are well ahead of June completion – just need to make sure we're doing things with fidelity and continuing to do things we need to do. Continued meeting and follow-up.

Iber Homes Gove Middle School Boiler Repair: The boiler steamer needed repair at the middle school and was a cost of \$19,605. Funding for the steamer is in our capital improvement plan, it is not allocated for the current year at this time. The board may decide how to fund it – either from the operating budget or out of CIP. If it is paid out of CIP a hearing is needed.

MOTION: Stephen Scarfo motions, seconded by Joseph Saulnier to take the money for the boiler repair from the operating budget. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Nominations: Maria Sharine Batangan BCBA at the SAU.

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**MOTION:** Joseph Saulnier motioned, seconded by Cindy Bennett to accept the nomination for Maria Sharine Batangan. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Committee Reports: The budget committee did an election of officers on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The organization decided to meet monthly to try and get ahead of budgets. Joseph reported that the RCFY gala turnout was good with \$16,008 raised. He noted that guests really liked the gaming parts of it such as the auctions.

Superintendents Report: Weather coming in tomorrow and it might be our first remote day to allow us to still get students out on the same last day as planned.

John asked if we are required to do the tech advisory from the DOE on meals? It is a requirement and funding is currently unknown.

Correspondence or Other: Wrestle mania generated over \$8,000. Steve got to read to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade for march madness last week.

Manifest: Payables tonight \$408,017.12. Payroll \$501,809.05. Grand total of \$909,826.17. All signed.

Public minutes for March 20<sup>th</sup> 2024 amendment: Page 2 under technology report, under the last bullet – general consensus that board allowed GoGuardian for use exclusively at the middle school. Amended to state that it's primarily at the middle school, but for use by teachers.

**MOTION:** Joseph Saulnier motions, seconded by Cindy Bennett to accept the amended March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting minutes. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

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MOTION: Cindy Bennett motioned, seconded by Stephen Scarfo to go into non-public Under RSA 91-A:3 II (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 meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted"; (b) "The hiring of any person as a public employee"; and (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." Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by John Harmon, Joseph Saulnier, Cindy Bennett, Tony Clements, and Stephen Scarfo.

The Meeting entered non-public at 7:28pm

Exiting non-public (8:27 PM)

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to exit non-public session and seal the minutes, as not doing so would render ineffective the action/proposed action taken in non-public session and would adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a Board member. Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by John Harmon, Joseph Saulnier, Cindy Bennett, Tony Clements, and Stephen Scarfo.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to adjourn the meeting. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Celina Lloyd,

School Board Clerk