



Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District School Committee
Regular Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, February 18, 2020

TIME: 5:30 P.M. Executive Session

6:00 P.M. Regular Session

LOCATION: Superintendent's Conference Room

Powder Mill School, 86 Powder Mill Road, Southwick, MA 01077

MINUTES

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Agenda times are estimates.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION (5:30 p.m.)

At 5:32 p.m. a motion was made to go into Executive session and reconvene in open session.

With the members Jeffrey Houle, Chelsea Berry, Theodore Locke, Jonathan Schantz, Maria Seddon and Chelsea Berry present and all voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by Berry, seconded by Locke 5/0/0

- ☐ 1. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 2. Move to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☒ 3. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public and the chair so declares; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 4. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices or strategies with respect thereto; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 5. Move to go into Executive Session to investigate charges of criminal misconduct or to consider the filing of criminal complaints; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 6. Move to go into Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 7. Move to go into Executive Session to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 8. Move to go into Executive Session to consider or interview applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening; and to reconvene in Open Session.
- ☐ 9. Move to go into Executive Session to meet or confer with a mediator, as defined in section 23C of chapter 233, with respect to any litigation or decision on any public business within its jurisdiction involving another party, group or entity; and to reconvene in Open Session.

- ☐ 10. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information; and to reconvene in Open Session.

UFCW Negotiations; Unit A Negotiations; Clerical Negotiations; Cafeteria Negotiations

Ms. Petschke arrived at 5:39 p.m.

At 6:17 p.m. a motion was made to adjourn Executive session and return to open session.

With the members Jeffrey Houle, Chelsea Berry, Pamela Petschke, Jonathan Schantz, Maria Seddon and Theodore Locke all voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by Petschke, seconded by Berry 6/0/0

II. ROUTINE (6:00 p.m.)

A. Attendance

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Houle at 6:18 p.m.

The Following were present:

School Committee:

- ☒ Jeffrey Houle, Southwick
- ☒ Pamela Petschke, Granville (arrived at 5:39 p.m.)
- ☒ Theodore Locke, Tolland
- ☐ Jessica Boldyga, Southwick
- ☒ Chelsea Berry, Southwick
- ☒ Jonathan Schantz, Southwick
- ☒ Maria Seddon, Southwick

Administration:

- ☒ Jennifer Willard, Superintendent (arrived at 5:36 p.m.)
- ☒ Stephen Presnal, Director of Finance and Operations (arrived at 5:36 p.m.)
- ☐ Amy McLaughlin, Recording Secretary
- ☒ Annie Larkham, Substitute Recording Secretary

Student Representatives:

- ☐ Amelia Coviello, Gabrielle Houle (Regular Session at 6:00 p.m.)

News Media:

- ☐

Observers:

- ☒ Approximately 5

B. Opening Ceremony – None

C. Secretary's Report – None

D. Warrants – None

E. Correspondence – None

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – excluding personnel issues

None

IV. STUDENT ADVISORY REPORT

None

V. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION

None

VI. POLICIES

None

VII. ACTION ITEMS

None

VIII. REPORTS

A. Superintendent

FY21 Budget

Superintendent Willard deferred to Mr. Presnal and will interject as necessary.

B. Director of Finance and Operations

FY21 Budget

Mr. Presnal stated it was challenging to put together this budget due to the exploration of the outsourcing of transportation. He has worked with LPVEC and DESE seeking guidance on regional transportation reimbursements, as well as DOR and local services on how to handle the proceeds from the sale of the current fleet of busses and vans. Additional guidance was received from the auditor and financial advisor. Guidance received indicated the establishment of a reserve account for the funds received from the leasing/sale of vehicles to pay remaining debt service. Vehicles have been purchased using debt approved by the individual towns over 5 year period with 5 year notes, each having different maturity dates. There are some vehicles with no debt associated. The collaborative has determined which vehicles they would need to operate consistent with the level of service provided. This will play into the financial analysis of the 2021 budget and beyond. Mr. Presnal skipped to Option C, which is the preferred option, and will work back to Options A and B as needed. Option C shows revenues coming into the district should the collaborative buy/lease vehicles and how it relates to the remaining debt service, indicating fair market value which was approximately \$1M. The DOR has ruled that the district does not have the authority to reserve funds from the sale of vehicles. It would go to the general fund, roll into excess and deficiency (E&D) which would create a problem with that account and would reflect an amount in future budgets that would need to be returned to the towns. Ms. Petschke asked for clarification on how the debt service loans worked. Mr. Presnal explained that the loans were paid out over five years. Ms. Berry asked if the total amount reflected the amount the district would be paid for the fleet. Mr. Presnal asked for time to clarify as he goes through the documents. The DOR recommends leasing vehicles and using that revenue stream to reduce the assessments to the three towns to pay the debt service. Mr. Presnal stated there are 8 vehicles in the current fleet that the collaborative are not interested in purchasing. Those will be sold outright or go for salvage value. The nominal funds from these sales will go to the general fund. There are approximately 20 vehicles the collaborative is interested in taking which is reflected in Option C, line 1. The collaborative is interested in the newly acquired vehicles that have no debt associated. This would be handled with a one year loan and then sold to the collaborative at fair market value at the end of that year. Mr. Presnal added that the value of the fleet exceeds the remaining debt on the vehicles. He is proposing that in the interest of the district, leases be linked to value of vehicles not remaining debt. The surplus of this is reflected in the documentation presented. Ms. Petschke asked what happens to the surplus money. Mr. Presnal answered that it would come to the district as a revenue source through E&D.

Ms. Petschke asked about a rate that would have to be paid to LPVEC for transportation and how it is calculated and funded. Mr. Presnal answered that in conversations with the collaborative, Options A, B and C were created. Option A is similar to Option C but paying off the debt over five years. Option B would sell everything, which would create an issue with E&D.

Mr. Presnal explained that the collaborative reviewed the district's current bus routes, drivers needed, historical costs and came back with a "cost-per-bus-per-day". The district would also be billed for related services like monitors, field trips, athletics, special education trips. Ms. Petschke asked if the district would be charged a greater cost than other member towns. Superintendent Willard and Mr. Presnal answered that the rate is the same as other member towns and with our district coming on board, that rate would actually be lowered. Ms. Petschke asked when a decision will be made whether we will move forward or not, and if it will be separate from the budget. Mr. Presnal answered that it would be separate but linked as the budget is built reflecting the option to work with the collaborative.

Mr. Presnal explained information contained in the distributed draft marked "Transportation Operating & Capital Costs Analysis – LPVEC v. STGRSD". Subject to change, the projection is an incremental cost of approximately \$30,000 more to work with the collaborative. Also reflected is the amount of additional reimbursement from the State for regional transportation. This brings the incremental cost to approximately

\$10,000 for FY21. Ms. Petschke asked why the number increases dramatically over five years. Mr. Presnal answered because the district's incremental costs increase over the years, the reimbursement amount will also increase. Savings are reflected in the last two years due to the anticipated need to replace the underground storage tank, which will not have to be done. Ms. Petschke asked about the incremental increase in FY23. Mr. Presnal answered that is due to the debt service falling off. Superintendent Willard explained that the district will no longer have to borrow on capital debt each year to purchase vehicles. Mr. Schantz stated that the district will also see savings in administrative costs which may not be reflected. Mr. Presnal stated that almost all members of LPVEC are utilizing them for transportation. Mr. Houle explained that the vote on outsourcing transportation will occur on the same night as the operating budget and the debt service.

Ms. Berry asked what it would look like for the district if transportation is outsourced by the collaborative. Superintendent Willard answered that the district attorney has reached out to the union to ensure that our staff are protected through the process. Ms. Petschke asked how long "squatter's rights" would be in effect and if drivers' seniority would be impacted. Mr. Locke indicated that the drivers would be in the same union and the district currently has no control over the selection of routes that union members bid on their routes according to the collective bargaining agreement. Mr. Schantz stated that it would be beneficial to drivers as they would have more routes in other districts to bid on. Mr. Houle explained that the district is also current voting members of the LPVEC with a voice in future decisions. Mr. Presnal stated that a decision has not been made on whether or not to remain on the district campus. The district would develop a lease to remain at our location for an initial three years. Ms. Petschke asked if parents would contact LPVEC with questions. Mr. Presnal confirmed and stated that they would still be able to contact the Superintendent's office as well. Ms. Berry asked if LPVEC would continue to adhere to the district's bus related policies. Mr. Presnal answered that the district would still have input on the design of routes and they have similar guidelines.

Mr. Houle moved the discussion on to the operating budget. Mr. Presnal explained information contained in the distributed draft marked "FY2021 Budget Summary". There is no real increase to state aid. The minimum contribution for each town increased. Mr. Schantz asked for clarification on the increase to local tuition. Mr. Presnal answered that the costs for PreK are not paid from the tuition account, the account grows due to revenue each year. Ms. Petschke asked for clarification on the charter school tuition reimbursement. Mr. Presnal answered that the district has limited exposure to charter school and the student opportunity act impacts that figure. He explained that the current figure for general administration includes the amount reserved for staff salary increases. Once the agreements have been approved, the funding will be transferred from general administration to the individual school cost centers. He stated they are trying to reflect student transportation from the current year and have the presentation align with next year. Superintendent Willard stated that a different presentation would not be transparent. Mr. Presnal indicated the large increase in technology accounts for year two of the technology program, that grades 5, 6 and 9 will be receiving new devices.

Superintendent Willard reviewed the distributed "Proposed Capital Projects". The technology costs are not only in leasing devices but in beyond the wall needs. Ms. Petschke asked about the hot water heater for Powder Mill. Mr. Houle stated it was to downsize the tank as there is no longer a need for showers. Mr. Houle asked about a need from OT/PT for specialized furniture and other items might be missing. Mr. Presnal indicated this list is not final, they are waiting for additional feedback from principals and directors. He anticipates the capital borrowing plan to be reduced. Superintendent Willard stated she will be revising budget and it is currently a work in progress.

IX. SUB COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS

None

X. PUBLIC COMMENT – excluding personnel issues

Jean Reopel, Southwick, MA – Ms. Reopel asked that the information be displayed so that observers can follow along. She asked about the previous feasibility study that had been done on transportation showing a savings by keeping it in-house. She asked what the cost is to run our own transportation. She asked what the total was for capital projects. She asked if there was a benefit in increasing PreK tuition, or adding a classroom, or offering full day preschool. There are more houses being built and people moving in. She asked if the district could offer a non-

special education preschool classroom. She asked about an option to keep transportation and maintain garage, parking lot and underground tank. She asked about the vocational tuition.

XI. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

A. Old Business

None

B. New Business

Ms. Petschke stated she had met with the select board in Granville who expressed concern with a change in transportation and a loss of financial control in moving funds from capital to operational. They will no longer have the ability to vote on transportation capital during lean years. The select board would like to have the Superintendent visit Granville again this year to get an educational perspective of the district. They want more information than just numbers. She asked if she could get enrollment numbers for the future and whether the Granville enrollment has remained consistent.

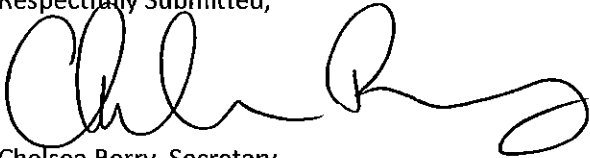
At 7:59 p.m., a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

With the members Jeff Houle, Pamela Petschke, Theodore Locke, Chelsea Berry, Jonathan Schantz, and Maria Seddon ~~and Jessica Boldys~~ ^{all} voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

^{amc 2/25/2020}
Motion by Petschke, seconded by Berry 6/0/0

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chelsea Berry, Secretary

I. LIST OF DOCUMENTS VIEWED OR DISCUSSED DURING THIS MEETING:

- Agenda for February 18, 2020
- Options A, B and C for vehicle sale and lease analysis
- Transportation Operating & Capital Cost Analysis – LPVEC v. STGRSD
- FY21 Budget Summary
- Proposed Capital Projects FY21
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