

**Our Mission is to prepare and support all students within a culture of excellence to do their best and to be their best so that each can be a successful contributing citizen, able to adapt to change, and to successfully respond to the future.**

**RSU 16  
Mechanic Falls \* Minot \* Poland  
The 5<sup>th</sup> Regular School Board Meeting for 2022 - 2023 was held  
Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 p.m.  
>>>> PRHS LIBRARY <<<<<**

.....  
Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87038027522?pwd=Z0lzSVY4UEY3QndaRGVxL0pTR2FIZz09>  
Passcode: 194909

**Present:** Mary Martin, Patrick Irish, Amber Lyman, Christine Downs, Elizabeth Martin, Mike Downing, Melanie Harvey, Angela Swenson, Jessica Smith, Steve Holbrook, Emily Rinchich, Ed Rabasco, Andrea Winn

**Absent:** Joe Parent, Sarah Robinson

**Student Rep:** Joe Elliot, Kadence Peters

## **MINUTES**

### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** Mary Martin

Pledge of Allegiance & Mission Statement

### **2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT: (15 minutes)**

Mary Martin reminded those present of the expectations regarding public comment.

Danielle Loring, Town Administrator of Minot and resident of Mechanic Falls, shared concerns regarding the upcoming budget process and the proposed timeline. She is concerned that the proposed schedule will result in additional elections in Minot. She is requesting that the board reconsider their timeline for the budget. She suggested that if the board would like to change the timeline, it should be voted upon by the towns for final approval.

Matt Garside, Poland Town Manager, spoke on behalf of moving the school budget vote to align with the town referendum. Matt is concerned that moving up the timeline as it is proposed will result in fewer voters. Matt would also like to see the members of the town vote upon the change to the budget timeline that the school has proposed. He raised concerns regarding staffing, increased financial burden, and the administrative responsibilities of holding two separate elections.

Vic Hodgkins, Town Manager of Mechanic Falls, asked that the board consider keeping the original budget schedule with a May/June vote and not move forward with the proposed March/April referendum.

Lisa Cesare, Minot resident and Selectperson, spoke in support of moving the RSU 16 Town Referendum vote to align with the town budget vote.

Matt Callahan, Minot Resident and Selectperson, asked that the board move the decision on the referendum up in the agenda in order to allow those in attendance to hear the results without having to attend the entire school board meeting.

Bill Perry, Minot, spoke in support of returning to the May/June referendum to avoid an additional vote and unnecessary costs for the towns to hold an additional election.

Douglas Gilpatric, Minot asked that the board consider the requests of the town communities to return to a May/June budget referendum and vote.

**3.0 RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: (5 minutes)**

**Congratulations** to November's Optimist Student of the month *Elliot Colon*, Grade 6, Minot Consolidated School

**Congratulations** to the *Whittier Middle School students and staff* who brought in over 1,000 items for the food drive this week. Half of the food will go to the Poland Community food bank and the other half will go to the Vineyard Church food program.

**Kindness for Hallie** - *Antonio Rocha*, a well-known story teller visited PCS and did three performances.

**Kindness for Hallie** - A terrific turn out for the *Ornament Decorating Event* in honor of Hallie Oldham. The

**Kindness for Hallie** - *Christmas in Poland Committee* provided a great opportunity to bring families together.

**Hoops for Hallie** - a huge success. There were about 400 people who attended to watch the State Police, Cumberland County Sheriff's Department and Auburn Police Department play against the Portland and Poland Fire & Rescue Department. The game started with Sophie Patenaude singing the National Anthem and the Color Guard Ceremony. The game was an exciting one, Jarod Oldham made the first basket for the Fire & Rescue team! The event raised over \$4,300 for the Oldham family.

**4.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:**

**Motion by Steve Holbrook to move to Old Business**

**Seconded by Mike Downing**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**5.0 PRESENTATION: (20 minutes)**

No administrator presentation

**6.0 CONSENT AGENDA INTRODUCTION: (5 minutes)**

Approve 4<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of 11/14/22

**Notification of Support Staff New Hires:**

**Notification of Retirement:**

**Notification of Resignations:**

Madeline Archer, FLS Ed Tech - PRHS

*Ashley Szostak, IT Technician - PRHS*

*Hannah O'Marrow, Ed TEch - PRHS*

**Sub Committee November Minutes**

Operations

Personnel & Finance

Educational Policy

**Superintendent Search Committee November 16<sup>th</sup> Minutes**

*Friends of RSU 16 December 9<sup>th</sup> Minutes*

Next meeting at ESS on 1/20/23 @ 9:00 a.m.

**Motion by Steve Holbrook to accept the Consent Agenda**

**Seconded by Mike Downing**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**7.0 ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL SUMMARIES: (10 minutes)**

Approve Financial Summaries as recommended by the Personnel & Finance Subcommittee at their 11/28/22 meeting.

**Motion by Mike Downing to accept the Financial Summaries**

**Seconded by Steve Holbrook**

**Vote: Unanimous**

## 8.0 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: (10 minutes)

Ken shared an updated student enrollment within the RSU. Ken shared that the district would like to move forward with hiring Educational Technician I to the contract in order to fill open positions within the RSU. The association and the district will be looking to re-establish Educational Technician I for the 22-23 school year. Ken shared that he and Amy Hediger were able to read stories to all three elementary schools and visited a number of classrooms in grades K-4. Ken will be having lunch with a couple of Mrs. Harlow's grade 4 students at ESS next week as they have earned it as part of their classroom reward system.

The administrative team has been working on the budgets and will present them to Ken and Amy this week. Transportation update provided by Fred Barlow, Transportation Director. Fred shared barriers to employing bus drivers this year, including split days, long hours, and lack of work in the summer. Fred shared information related to last week and the higher than normal cancellation of the bus routes. Fred shared that illness and an aging demographic for drivers (average age for RSU 16 drivers is 70) has led to an increase in driver's needing to be out. Fred shared some data regarding the number of drivers and routes within the RSU, including out of district transportation that extends beyond our three communities. There is currently only one alternative driver to fulfill routes when drivers are out, which is Fred Barlow. Fred updated the board regarding the process they use to fulfill routes when drivers are out and how they make decisions regarding which routes will be filled and which ones will be canceled due to a lack of drivers.

Emily Rinchich inquired about an incentive plan for drivers to promote regular attendance.

Mary Martin asked what other districts are doing to recruit additional drivers.

Joseph Elliott inquired about the number of students who have missed school due to a canceled route.

Christine Downs asked if van drivers have a school bus license and she inquired about the qualifications to be a bus monitor.

Elizabeth Martin asked if people could volunteer to be a bus monitor. Ken shared that the CHRC background check is different for employees then it is for volunteers.

Patrick Irish commended the efforts of Fred and his department to provide transportation this year. He suggested communities build support systems together to assist with carpooling.

## 9.0 ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: (10 minutes)

Amy Hediger, Assistant Superintendent, provided an update to the board regarding the impact being short-staffed has had upon our staff and students. She shared that staff are being asked to take on new roles and to fill in to provide coverage for classrooms or additional duties to ensure adequate coverage for our students. Amy Hediger would like to engage the staff, the board, and the community in an ongoing conversation about what our strategic plan will be to recruit more staff and to address the issues our schools are facing.

## 10.0 NEW BUSINESS: (5 minutes)

- *Approve PRHS/WMS Special Ed Team Leader & Academic Evaluator - Misty Gilheany*

**Motion by Mike Downing to approve PRHS/WMS Special Ed Team Leader**

**Seconded by Andrea Winn**

**Vote: Unanimous**

- Approve request for funding to pay for plans to be drawn up for the Minot Consolidated School, and to allow our continued work with EMC to make plans and gather quotes to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and control systems at all three elementary schools, as recommended by the Operations Committee at their 11/28/22 meeting.

### **Discussion:**

Jessica Smith shared that the operations committee meeting attended a presentation from EMC with information regarding the heating issues within the three elementary schools. Ken Healey is requesting that the board allocate \$25,000 from our CIP balance for EMC to provide an improvement plan for heating and energy for all three elementary schools. The proposal that is given would come back to the operations subcommittee for review. Ken is looking to have a bond referendum added to the town vote to improve heating and ventilation within the three elementary schools.

**Motion by Mike Downing to approve Request to pay \$25,000 from the CIP fund for EMC to complete the plan development as recommended by the Operations Committee**

**Seconded by: Steve Holbrook**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**11.0 OLD BUSINESS: (15 minutes)**

- Reconsider Budget Timeline as recommended by the Personnel & Finance Subcommittee at their 11-28-22 meeting.

Christine Downs shared that the subcommittee meeting met with town officials to discuss the proposed budget timeline. The subcommittee decided to move forward with the proposed budget timeline to better meet the needs of our schools. Christine noted that hiring and retention is a priority of our district and the proposed timeline allows for better hiring by allowing early hiring of staff. Christine shared information regarding the large number of open positions currently in the surrounding area and the struggles with staffing RSU 16 is currently facing. Christine did acknowledge the concerns that the members of the towns have raised in regards to the burdens placed on the towns with the proposed budget timeline. The towns have not provided the subcommittee with information regarding the financial burden of an additional election. Christine offered to recruit volunteers to assist with setting up polling stations, parking, and other duties as needed to help ease the burden of the additional election.

**Discussion:**

Melanie Harvey asked about the conflict of interest with board members participating in the ballot collection. Christine shared that board members could help with parking, set-up/take down of elections, but could not participate in ballot collection.

- Consider DRAFT explanation to town officials about the Budget Timeline

**Motion by Angela Swenson to Keep Budget Timeline for June**

**Seconded by Steve Holbrook**

**Vote: 9-4 (Christine Downs, Melanie Harvey, Jessica Smith, Patrick Irish), Motion Carries**

**12.0 POLICIES: (10 minutes)**

Approve 1<sup>st</sup> & final reading of below listed policies, as recommended with suggested changes by the Educational Policy Committee at their 11/28/22 meeting:

- ADF - Commitment to Learning Results
- CBD - Superintendent's Contract
- CHD - Administration in the Absence of Policy

**Motion by Ed Rabasco to approve updated policies**

**Seconded by Mike Downing**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**13.0 REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD:**

**Student Representative: (5 minutes)**

Kadence Peters provided an update to the board regarding a fundraiser for the junior class and some updates regarding the opening of the winter sports season.

Joe Elliot shared that the Senior class had a strong fundraising effort this weekend. The high school also has an upcoming holiday spirit week.

**Report of the School Board Chair: (5 minutes)**

- Superintendent Search Committee

Mary provided the board with an update on the superintendent search and an overview of the results of the survey that was completed by stakeholders in regards to what the community has identified as key areas to target in the upcoming superintendent search. The committee will be completing interviews soon with the candidates.

**Subcommittee Workshop Minutes 11/21/22**

- Certification of Superintendent
- Budget Committee Members(s): Mary inquired about members of the board that would be interested in serving on the budget committee. **Minot:** Elizabeth Martin and Mike Downing. **Poland:** Melanie Harvey and Ed Rabasco. **Mechanic Falls:** Mary Martin and Andrea Winn. The first meeting will take place on February 8th.
- Attendance

**14.0 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:**

ATeam Reports: Elm Street School paving for access to the playground was completed. Poland Community School has shared the continued need for a second school counselor. Shawn Galipeau-Eldridge attended a Jump\$tart National Educators Conference and will be sharing this new learning with his students to increase financial literacy.

**15.0 COMMUNICATIONS:**

**16.0 HANDOUT:** LRP Publication - December 2022

**17.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**18.0 REMINDERS:** *SIGN POLICIES*

**19.0 ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion: by Mike Downing to adjourn at 7:59 pm**

**Seconded by Steve Holbrook**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth J. Healey