

JACKSON SCHOOL BOARD
Meeting Minutes
December 19, 2016

A meeting of the Jackson School Board was held on Monday, December 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Jackson Grammar School.

Board Members Present: Chairperson Jerry Dougherty, Genn Anzaldi, Keith Bradley, Jessica Della Valla, and Dan Mahood. Principal Gayle Dembowski and Superintendent Kevin Richard were also in attendance.

1. Mr. Dougherty called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Approve Minutes
Motion: by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Ms. Della Valla to approve the minutes from 10/17/16
4-0-1(Anzaldi) abstained.

Motion: by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Ms. Della Valla to approve the minutes from 11/21/16
One correction, 8C. Should mention that there is no termination clause. **4-0-1(Anzaldi) abstained.**
3. Citizen Comments: none.
4. Presentation of School Programs/FYI ITEMS: none.
5. Old Business:
 - A. Whitney Facility Usage
Ms. Della Valla: The Whitney Center committee has revised their fee structure. We've been working with it a few weeks and it appears to be working well. The public isn't necessarily paying as much, but the board is covering some costs because they still want it to be available to the public.
 - B. Preschool:
Ms. Della Valla: the church was not able to get to preschool discussion at their most recent meeting.
6. Instructional Issues: none.
7. Consider Personnel Actions
 - A. Election of Katherine Kearns as Nordic Coordinator
Motion: by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Ms. Anzaldi. **5-0-0.**
8. Business Affairs

A. FYI – 2016-17 Budget Status Report
Mr. Bradley noted that we're not going to have a very big surplus this year.

B. Review Draft of 2017-18 Proposed Budget
Adjustments: **Mr. Richard:** overall budget is up 6.17%. \$148,000.

Salaries: **Mr. Richard:** made adjustments to hiring and salary schedule. The enrichment teacher had not been included, so an adjustment was made there as well. Health insurance came in at 10.7%. Retirement also adjusted up 2%. Proposed salaries and benefits up \$56,000. Tuition is based upon the 2015/2016 students. Additional 2 students at the high school, 2 at middle school. That number is now at \$136,000. **Mr. Bradley:** that number will go up even more next year. Probably another 3 or 4 kids at each school. **Mr. Richard:** Contracted services and maintenance had some reductions there. Regarding buses, Jim does a 3-year average.

Revenue: **Mr. Richard:** Based upon expenditures for this year, we estimated \$32,000 for the unencumbered fund balance, which means you've pretty much spent everything you budgeted for this year. **Mr. Dougherty:** regarding the state education tax: are we getting more back than we used to? **Mr. Richard:** There was the Adequacy grant that you pay into. You folks essentially lost \$70,000 in revenue there. The tax rate ends up at .61 per \$1,000. **Mr. Dougherty:** and this is before any of the warrant articles. **Mr. Richard:** yes.

Mr. Dougherty: in light of Jessica's needing to leave at 6:30 for a prior commitment, we will move to discussion of the proposed preschool.

Ms. Della Valla: nothing has changed with the numbers. We don't know if this will go up. No changes from the school's end of things as far as costs. **Mr. Mahood:** there is certainly some risk there. **Mr. Bradley:** he can't recommend it for this year. He wouldn't mind seeing it on a warrant article, but that makes him nervous. **Mr. Dougherty:** if as a board we aren't sure we want to promote something and put it on the warrant article for the voters to decide, that he doesn't really feel they've done their due diligence as a board. **Ms. Della Valla:** \$11,760 includes staffing, rent, supplies, curriculum, insurance, one-time expenses were furnishings for classroom and playground. **Mr. Dougherty:** we as a board need to put it forth to the budget hearing. If we do that, does that put it on the warrant? **Mr. Richard:** You can zero it out afterward. We need to have a majority decision to support it or not. **Ms. Anzaldi:** how many students? **Ms. Della Valla:** max capacity is 20. But we're looking at possibly 10 kids, basing on census data. Still need to get the info from the church. **Mr. Dougherty:** we can make the decision in January. **Ms. Anzaldi:** we should put it forward whether we support it or not. **Ms. Della Valla:** a preschool in this town would be an asset to the community, but looking at the budget items going up so much, it gives her pause. **Ms. Anzaldi:** but is

there ever really a right time. We don't know what the budget will look like next year. We've done our homework, the climate is right, and nationally it's a movement. She proposes moving forward depending on what the church said. **Ms. Della Valla:** it seems that we want to proactive rather than reactive. **Mr. Bradley:** the budget is a reason he can't support it. But we don't have all the answers on this. We're asking for all this money, but we don't have all the answers yet. **Mr. Dougherty:** if the town says yes, but the church says no. **Mr. Bradley:** we haven't decided on anything. **Mr. Dougherty:** If we haven't reviewed it that, we need to review it. You've seen the proposal. **Mr. Bradley:** yes, and he was against a lot of it. He will vote no. Their proposal is less than the school proposal. **Mr. Dougherty:** is there a reason to charge less? Our cost is going to be \$117,000 with 3 kids or 20. If we're going to have any hope of transitioning students in, we need to be competitive. **Mr. Bradley:** if we tuition in at \$6,000, that's a really good rate. **Mr. Dougherty:** is this something that we feel we should be offering the kids of Jackson regardless of whether we tuition kids or not? Our budget is already up; he can't in good faith support it. There are two questions: why are we doing it, and what is it going to cost / how it will affect our budget? There are still a lot of questions that we need to discuss. **Mr. Mahood:** it's a great proposal if we want to have the taxpayers decide. **Mr. Dougherty:** but how do we know until we present it what they are going to ask? When it comes to make the decision and he votes no because of the budget, he gets that. Let's look at the proposal, see what it is we don't like about it. People may ask us questions at the budget hearing that we're not going to know if we don't review it. **Audience member (Leslie):** What does it cost to send them other places? **Ms. Della Valla:** \$3,000-\$6,000. **Leslie:** So over double what it would cost here? **Ms. Della Valla:** We're going to do it better than anywhere else. **Mr. Bradley:** we do need a preschool. We're just not ready yet. **Ms. Anzaldi:** it's worth it to put it out to the voters. **Leslie:** she's all for education, but so many people have said should we join with Bartlett. Why wouldn't we do that? **Mr. Bradley:** we've discussed this. Our budget would go up significantly.

Mr. Dougherty: whether you have 30 students or 150 students, there are some fixed costs that aren't going to change. That per pupil cost is going to be about the same no matter where you send them. We do a great job of educating our kids. The preschool is really a philosophical question for the town. There are strong reasons to do it in a town that doesn't look like Jackson. It is something that will eventually happen. There's a lot of data that shows that is the way to go. It's hard to argue for those things in Jackson because we don't have the population base to justify it from a fiscal standpoint. Salary costs are always going to rise. We need to decide if this is something the town wants to do philosophically. We have a proposal for a preschool at the church. The question is: is it something the town thinks it should supply? We have gotten an overwhelming amount of support from the community members they have heard from. We need to get people to our budget hearing so that when people have questions, we can answer them. Need to have a meeting between now and our next meeting. We need to vote on what is being proposed. **Mr. Mahood:** we took taxpayer input during this process to develop the best proposal.

Mr. Dougherty: the hearing is Feb. 2. January 17th is our next board meeting. **Mr. Richard:** That is when you have to finalize everything. **Mr. Bradley:** it feels like things

are being rushed through. If I'm going to put my name on something and someone asks me a question, I want to be able to answer it. If we put this on a warrant article, this is something we are telling them we support. If we decide to go forward, do we try to put something in there to avoid having more tuitioned kids than Jackson kids? **Mr.**

Dougherty: that's not what it is about. **Ms. Dembowski:** it is good for the kids to have that sort of social outlet. **Ms. Anzaldi:** so all questions should be into Jess by January 5th.

Mr. Dougherty: we need a lot of people to show up at our next meeting. What he wants to know as a board member is do Jackson voters want preschool or not? If someone can explain to him how they run a building with staff. **Leslie:** it's a great thing, but if it costs twice of sending them elsewhere. **Ms. Anzaldi:** some of the kids can't afford to go to places like Lilliputian. **Mr. Dougherty:** we'll get our questions in and go from there.

Key Cards: Mr. Dougherty: we've got a little over \$100,000 between the funds right now. This building has \$75,000. Some of the costs of the Whitney Center may be more than what is in there. They do not want to add any more money to those funds at this time. **John:** other than what we're aware of so far, there are no other big projects. After the Homeland Security audit at the school, it was mentioned that we should have key card access for the school. So they are thinking to equip the front door at the Whitney Center with key card system. And for the four doors here used on a regular basis. We got two proposals: Intervale Lock and Key came in at \$12,300 and Siemens came in at \$32,480. There is a good chance that the SAU key card could work in our system if we go through Siemens. **Ms. Anzaldi:** is this a good company that we can go back to if we need new cards, repairs, etc.? **John:** yes, they've been around many years. He sees advantages to seeing one key card accessing everything. The cards can be programmed as far as access, schedules, etc. Software can reside in our system and be accessed remotely. **Ms. Anzaldi:** what if power goes out? **John:** battery backup. Batteries on those systems typically can run for 4 days. **Mr. Dougherty:** in favor of us doing this? **John:** great idea, lots of advantages, but it's \$12,000. From a security, access and building standpoint, he does like the system and the benefits, but he has a hard time spending the money. **Mr. Dougherty:** there is certainly a security, logistics benefit. Ease of use to the community as well. He would support it. **Ms. Anzaldi:** and it's a recommendation by homeland security. **Scott Grant (Audience):** Bartlett went through the process of having Siemens do this, but they can tell who accesses the building. It's awesome. **Ms. Anzaldi:** just the peace of mind is worth it.

All were in agreement to add the key system to the budget.

Enrichment: Mr. Bradley: they were in favor of not going forward with it. They asked Gayle for some other ideas of funding to provide enrichment after school. **Ms.**

Dembowski: proposing to offer a Monday and Wednesday after-school activity from 3-5 pm for 8 weeks. Came up with an estimated cost for 2 days per week: \$5,500. **Mr.**

Bradley: they did ask for a fee basically for parent commitment. **Ms. Anzaldi:** what about busing? **Ms. Dembowski:** parent transportation. **Mr. Bradley:** he had been against the after school care. But there are a lot of people for it. **Genn:** lots of people are doing the dual-income thing. Parents just aren't available after school. If people are asking for it, and this is what we can do, why not? **Ms. Dembowski:** she can put out an

announcement for attendance at the next meeting. **Mr. Dougherty**: has a problem using the enrichment position for this because it really isn't enrichment. He hears a lot of people asking why we would offer afterschool daycare. He is trying to keep an open mind to what people's needs are. They have a \$2.5 million budget right now. **Ms. Anzaldi**: suggests that they table it. **Mr. Bradley**: scrap the enrichment term altogether. **Ms. Dembowski**: part of the work for the enrichment position was to offer after-school programming. Authorized **Mr. Richard** to add it to the budget.

C. Review Draft of Proposed Warrant Articles

1. Articles for Consideration

Article 2: 15000 for buses. **Mr. Bradley**: recommended to drop it to \$10,000.

Article 3: Whitney Center fund.

Article 4: Contract with Bartlett

Article 5: Legal requirements.

9. Administrators' Reports

A. Superintendent: there is an Executive Board meeting on January 12.

10. Citizen Comments

Scott Grant: Either individually or as a board, he suggests writing your state reps.

Is transportation included for the proposed preschool? **Mr. Dougherty**: no. **Mr.**

Dembowski: that would actually depend on the individual needs of the student.

11. Board Member Issues -- Board Discussion/Committee Reports

A. Set Date for Next Meeting (Tuesday, January 17, 2017)

12. Adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer King
Recording Secretary