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**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD - SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NO. 27**

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**September 10, 2008**

**(approved as written 9-24-08)**

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair  
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair  
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member  
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member  
Mrs. Dot Beauregard, Board Member  
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Superintendent  
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator  
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary

**1) Public Session – Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**2) Review & Revision of Agenda**

There were no revisions to the agenda.

**3) School Board Members' Comments**

Mr. Miller congratulated Mr. Boehm on his success in the primary election.

**4) GMS Septic System**

~ Gary Hamm, Hamm Septic

Mr. Miller welcomed Mr. Gary Hamm to the meeting. He indicated that Hamm Septic provided a septic/leach system evaluation at GMS for the Board.

Mr. Hamm discussed the condition of the septic system/leach fields at GMS. He explained that the basic request was to see if the existing leach beds would fail and to check their condition. The groundwater table and soil conditions were tested. All leach beds are 4 ft. above the seasonal high water table. Mr. Hamm stated that all systems were in excellent working order, including the oldest leach bed that was found to be in very good condition. Mr. Hamm reported that, based on what he saw, both leach beds will give extended service. In the event they fail, they can be replaced in kind, however, the process would include redesign procedure, load updating, and expansion. Separations and set backs would need to be in place. Mr. Hamm also explained that, based on the groundwater problem, septic tank replacement would have to be above grade and gravity fed.

Mr. Boehm asked about the per student capacity of the leach fields. Mr. Hamm indicated that increased enrollment would affect loading, but that these systems are usually over-designed.

Mrs. Beauregard asked for clarification on a statement Mr. Hamm made in his report: "without going through extensive design and ground work, and potentially the State approval process, I cannot guarantee alteration would not be necessary." Mr. Hamm clarified that you would have to go through the design steps, calculations, and plotting prior to the State level, and the proper agencies will be involved when you are ready to renovate the leach beds.

Mrs. Beauregard asked what testing would be necessary for replacing the system since the water table tests performed by Hamm Septic were for the present. Mr. Hamm indicated that if the leach system needs to be redesigned, new tests would be necessary.

Mrs. Beauregard queried about the submission of a design if the system is replaced in kind. Mr. Hamm confirmed that if the leach fields are to be replaced in kind, a design would be required to be submitted.

Mrs. Beauregard asked about the cost for a redesign in a different location. Mr. Hamm indicated it would be a substantial cost.

Mrs. Beauregard queried about separations and set backs. Mr. Hamm noted that the leach beds are 4 to 4.5 ft. above the water table and are unaffected by the seasonal high water table. Wetland setbacks are assumed not to have changed.

Mr. Miller asked about the timetable to replace the leach fields. Mr. Hamm estimated it would take approximately 4 weeks to replace.

Dr. Cutler explained to Mr. Hamm that Litchfield is required to implement kindergarten. The capacity for the portable classrooms is approximately 80 students. She asked if it would be possible to tie the portables into the existing septic system. Mr. Hamm indicated that the portables could be tied into the existing system and would have some impact on the loading. Additional loading to the system requires justification of the loading or increasing the size of the fields.

Mrs. Couture commented that the Board has been told the average life span of the leach fields is 15 years and the ones at GMS are 30 and 35 years old. We were also told they are being used at a quarter of their capacity. She asked Mr. Hamm for his estimate on the life span of the system. Mr. Hamm indicated that based on the condition of the fields (choice soils and no abuse in the septic tanks), they could last another 20 years with the proper maintenance, but this is just an opinion.

Mrs. Beauregard queried if the cost of a septic system replacement should be included in a long-term plan. Mr. Hamm commented that the Board should consider it within a 20 year span.

#### **5) Community Input**

Mr. Frank Byron , Selectmen Chair, discussed concerns regarding the distribution of school tax dollars from the town. He indicated that Mr. Martin provided an analysis of the issues and a schedule of fund transfers for the year. Mr. Byron was concerned with the fund balance at the town level in December and January with relation to the revenue from property taxes and the scheduled payment to the district.

Mr. Boehm commented that if the town cannot meet the district payment schedule, the town must borrow money and pay the interest. Mr. Miller indicated that the Board will help minimize the impact to the taxpayers.

Dr. Cutler suggested scheduling a meeting with the town and the school district.

#### **6) Recommended Action**

##### **a) Business Affairs:**

##### **1) Draft School Board Minutes:**

##### **a) Public Minutes of August 27, 2008**

Minor revisions were made to the minutes.

***Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.***

##### **b) Public Minutes of September 3, 2008**

A minor revision was made to the minutes.

***Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.***

##### **2) Year-End Financial Discussion**

Mr. Martin reviewed the 2007-2008 year end district profile with the Board. The report indicated that the costs for per pupil expenditures for the 2007-2008 year was: Elementary \$9,532; Middle School \$8,813; High School \$10,261.

Mr. Martin reviewed the 2008 general fund financial summary indicating that the District ended the year with \$467,536, which will be returned to the voters. He explained that Special Education, Salaries & Benefits, and Self Funded programs were under spent; propane and fuel were significantly over spent; and there were emergency expenditures for GMS at the end of June. The total unreserved general fund balance in addition to the unanticipated revenue totals \$467,536.

Mr. Martin reported that PM MacKay officially completed their work at GMS. He added that jersey barriers still need to be ordered. Mr. Martin will provide the Board with a final accounting in October. Mr. Martin reported further that impact fee payment has been delayed. These funds will offset energy accounts. He added that the only open item is the audit.

3) Town Tax Payment Update

Mr. Martin reviewed the school tax payment status with the Board. The District payment schedule is based on the setting of the property tax rate. Impacts on the town are high because of the amount of uncollected taxes. Mr. Martin shared the proposed tax payment schedule with the Board. He explained that the schedule reflects the movement of the larger payments to December 1 and January 1 to mitigate the impact on the town. *See School Tax Attachment dated September 9, 2008.*

4) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

7) **Committee Reports**

1) Budget Committee

Budget Committee did not meet last week.

2) Building Committee

The Building Committee did not meet this month.

3) Selectmen

Mrs. Jewett reported the Selectmen continue to meet.

8) **New Business**

1) Highlander Court Traffic Reinforcement

Dr. Cutler discussed with the Board the enforcement of traffic on Highlander Court and the need for the road to be an officially accepted road in order for traffic charges to be upheld in court. Mr. Frank Byron, Selectmen Chair, and Chief O’Brion expressed concern to Dr. Cutler regarding the police department’s inability to enforce the traffic laws on Highlander Road because the town has not officially accepted the road. This issue will be forwarded to the town with a condition that the school district will remain responsible for the road maintenance.

*Board consensus: to sign the document for the town to accept Highlander Court as a road.*

9) **Old Business**

a) Kindergarten Update

Dr. Cutler discussed with the Board the preparation for kindergarten classes, the use of classroom assistants, transportation issues, and the possibility of hooking up the portable classrooms for septic and water.

Board members asked for information about vouchers for private kindergarten and a list of certified personnel at the schools that offer private kindergarten.

10) **Policies: 1<sup>st</sup> Reading**

a) Procedural Safeguards Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability (ACE)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Procedural Safeguards Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability policy for a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- b) Programs for Students with Disabilities (IHBA)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Programs for Students with Disabilities policy as a 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

**Policies: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & Approval**

- a) Sexual Harassment (GBAA/JBAA)

*Mr. Couture made a motion to approve the Sexual Harassment policy. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- b) Staff Participation in Political Activities (GBI)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Staff Participation in Political Activities policy as amended. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- c) Character & Citizenship Education (IHAK)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Character & Citizenship Education policy. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- d) Cyberbullying (JICDD)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Cyber-bullying policy and attachments. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- e) Reporting Child Abuse (JLF/JLF-R, Attachments A-E, Reporting Form)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Reporting Child Abuse policy, procedures, and attachments. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

- f) Community Use of School Facilities (KG)

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the Community Use of School Facilities policy, procedures, and attachments. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

**11) Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3II (a-c)**

*[Minutes of Non-Public Session are written under separate cover.]*

*Mr. Boehm made a motion to go into non-public session at 8:47 p.m. under RSA91-A:3II (a-c); (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, 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. (c) Matters, which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

**12) Return to Public Session**

*Mrs. Couture made a motion to return to public session at 9:28 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mrs. Couture, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.*

**13) Adjourn**

*Mrs. Jewett made a motion to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.*

**14) Upcoming Meetings**

*> Litchfield School Board: September 24, 2008 – CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM*

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn  
School Board Secretary