

**ROCHESTER-STOCKBRIDGE UNIFIED DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018
7:15 PM
STOCKBRIDGE CENTRAL SCHOOL
APPROVED MINUTES**

1. Call to order
 - 1.1. Attendees – admin: Bruce Labs, David Larcombe Board: Ethan Bowen, Amy Wildt, Megan Payne, Jenny Austin. Members of the public present.

2. Additions / changes to the agenda
 - 2.1. Mid-meeting a motion was made to move the budget meeting to May 22, to be warned by April 22. Need to direct the SU for direction on changes to the budget. Motion made, seconded, and approved. The Annual Budget Meeting for both Rochester and Stockbridge moved from May 15 to May 22.

3. MINUTES
 - 3.1. Approve Thursday, March 15, 2018 Minutes
 - 3.2. Approve Thursday, March 22, 2018 Minutes
 - 3.3. Approve Wednesday, March 28, 2018 Minutes
 - 3.4. Approve Tuesday, April 3, 2018 Minutes
 - 3.5. Table approval of minutes

4. One Planet - Carrie McDonnell
 - 4.1. Carrie noted that the One Planet program would like to buy a shed in conjunction with Stockbridge pre-K program, to be paid for with One Planet funds. Typically, such a request would go to the principal for approval. Since there is no SCS principal, not sure how to move forward. Would like the shed placed by next fall. A definite location for the shed would need to be established as it is not going to be moved around.
 - 4.2. Bonnie had asked Carrie to talk about what One Planet space requires. The funding for One Planet is through 21C grant program funding. Carrie indicated classroom space in Rochester is needed in order to operate the program. Guidelines require 35 square feet of usable space per child. Carl asked if that space need to be dedicated, and if it is, this guideline is not met in Stockbridge. If it is not, Carl commented that we can find a way around keeping only certain zones of the high school open in order to accommodate the One Planet program (i.e. use of art, music, and/or family science room). Carrie noted that the gym is not ideal due to high ceilings and acoustics in the room. Stockbridge does not have a fully dedicated space. Carrie indicated that there should be space for the One Planet staff to come to at 2:30 pm to get ready for the program. It was suggested that once a space is assigned we coordinate with the school to make sure that space is available at 2:30. There was public comment that a space is not dedicated for One Planet Staff at 2:30 pm in Stockbridge.

5. FY 18/19 Budget discussion
 - 5.1. Concern with moving forward when all of the conversations that we have had in the past have discussed adding money into the budget, as recent as last week. Now this week the budget is over the threshold. It was noted that the board needs to feel comfortable with presenting the given budget. With a \$300K spreadsheet error, it is not fair to the board or the communities with the little amount of time we have had to finalize the budget to bring this number to the public. The board needs to understand what we are presenting to the public, and this is not possible when the board is seeing the numbers for the first time at a public meeting. Up until today we have been in the place where we have been adding stuff in.
 - 5.2. There was discussion regarding whether to postpone the budget meeting. Bruce indicated that you can change a number on the floor of the budget vote meeting. There is concern that if a number is approved for the budget at this meeting that people are going to panic in the meantime. Bruce noted we could buy some more time and go for one vote. Do have time to study and get information.
 - 5.3. If voting on May 15 the total budget amount needs to be warned this Sunday. The Post Office warning is 30 days, newspaper warning requirement is only 5 days. June 30 is deadline for budget approval. However, there was public comment that there has been at least one past budget approval that went as late as August.
 - 5.4. Carl noted the warning language is incomplete. We need to warn the total amount of spending, if we are going to bond something, ideas of taking loan to pay for money in anticipation of taxes, where the warning was adopted, clauses to be collected at where and when for each Town, and have to have the language vetted by an attorney. There are three collection dates in Rochester and two in Stockbridge, and is this acceptable? The warning is a high level document but needs to cover the key things (1) spending, (2) what money are you going to take out of our pockets, and (3) what are we buying that needs borrowing money for.
 - 5.5. The board needs information and numbers from the SU that fits the technical requirements that we asked for. Earlier discussed heating 1/3 of the high school for one classroom (One Planet) – there are savings right there that can be captured. Ethan noted Plouffe is going to be visiting the high school over vacation to do a more thorough review. Bonnie’s plan includes heating zone 2 for just one classroom, while the previous Rochester principal indicated that the entire school could fit into the elementary classroom.
 - 5.6. Carl noted he can go to the SU on Monday if needed prior to Tuesday’s meeting to help work on the budget numbers. Would like to know what the various facility options means in regards to costs: what does 1 zone of heating in the Rochester High School give us for numbers, how much does a modular at Stockbridge cost versus acoustic paneling, etc. There was comment that if adding space to Stockbridge is needed should it be permanent; if “art on a cart” is okay in Rochester but not in Stockbridge that should not be acceptable.
6. Annual meeting warning approval
 - 6.1. Postponed due to postponement of annual budget meeting date.
7. RSUD first report discussion – Amy
 - 7.1. Table discussion for another meeting.
8. Facilities update - Stockbridge

- 8.1. Table discussion for another meeting.
9. Interventionalist / World Language Position – Stockbridge – Bruce
 - 9.1. Table discussion for another meeting
10. Public Comment
 - 10.1. Time is of the essence. It is in everyone's best interest to have a public open house / informational meeting. Public needs a chance to ask questions.
 - 10.2. One member of the public suggested splitting grades at schools to save money.
 - 10.3. Public comment noting the merger was put together in 6 weeks. The previous merger process attempted by Rochester with Bethel and South Royalton took course of the course of months. The Rochester school review is a plumbers review, not an engineering review. He suggested we take the time to do it right and not rush it. It was noted that one year Stockbridge voted three times before it passed in August of that year. She suggested we take our time and get a good budget for both towns.
 - 10.4. The question was asked what happens if the budget does not pass by July 1. David noted that 87% of last years' money can be borrowed on July 1 by default.
 - 10.5. Megan noted that during the first year the schools will find ways for the next year to gain efficiencies and that the Towns need to work together. Another cautioned us regarding saying that we are doing this incrementally and that the budget needs to held accountable. Can vote on June 29 if we can get it right then.
 - 10.6. There was a question from the comment whether the board can take on assistance from interested public. Yes, the board would welcome assistance and will seek assistance as opportunities arise.
11. Other
 - 11.1. Next meeting: **Tuesday, April 17, 6:30 pm at Rochester.**
12. Adjourn
 - 12.1. Motion to adjourn by Amy. Ethan seconded. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.