

THE PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE
UNIT #51

PITTSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MINUTES

MAY 8, 2025

Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Adams- Chairperson
Molly Goggin – Vice Chair
Timothy Robinson
Adam Gauthier
Eric Nilsson

OTHERS PRESENT: Lori Lane- Interim Superintendent of Schools
Kristen White - Principal, PES
Charlene Vary – Director of Student Support Services
Seven Members of the Public

- I. 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. NON-PUBLIC SESSION per RSA 91- A: 3, II (II) Legal with Attorney Barbara Loughman to discuss potential/tentative solutions to address the approximate 1.8-million-dollar deficit.
- II. OPENING OF PUBLIC SESSION by Sandra Adams, Chair, with leading the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. ACTION ON AMENDED AGENDA –
 - Take out Site Council Representative – Mrs. Adams
 - Add Grant Writer draft job description prepared by Becky Berk – Mrs. Goggin
 - Share spreadsheet of grant opportunities prepared by Becky Berk – Mrs. Goggin
 - Mowing at the elementary school – Mr. Gauthier
 - June meeting dates – Mrs. Adams
 - Structure of the May 13th Meet the Superintendent candidates evening
 - Audit update
 - PMHS principal search
 - Recognize Teacher Appreciation Week – Mrs. White - The dedication and commitment of the staff at PES and PMHS. And thank you to the PTO for all their generosity over the week, as well as with a cleanup effort on Saturday, May 3rd.
 - Retirement party invitation to the board for two PES staff – Mrs. WhiteMr. Gauthier made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Goggin to approve the amended agenda.
Vote 5-0.

- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 17, 2025, and non-public minutes from April 3, 2025
Mr. Gauthier made the motion to approve the April 17, 2025, minutes as amended, seconded by Mrs. Goggin. Vote 3-0-2.
Mr. Nilsson made a motion to approve the April 3, 2025, non-public minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Gauthier. Vote 5-0.
Mr. Nilsson made the motion to seal the non-public minutes, seconded by Mr. Robinson. Vote 5-0.
- V. PUBLIC INPUT – Ammy Ramsey – clarification on the Food Service contract and our \$30,000 offset in the operating budget. Mrs. Lane explained the \$30,000 was the contract we are paying for, but we get claims reimbursements from the federal government. The warrant article was written to allow the taxpayers to accept the funds from the federal government. We have the contract from Fresh Picks, the only bid.

- VI. SCHOOL BOARD
Open Enrollment - Mrs. Lane received a letter from the superintendent at Prospect Mountain to pay the open enrollment costs for PMHS students attending Prospect Mountain. Mrs. Lane has responded that she has not been authorized to make that payment, and there is a court case pending to determine if we would be required to pay this open enrollment fee.

Cadet Program for the Fire Department – Mr. Nilsson - This program is for teenagers who want to come down to sign up and learn about fire service and EMS service. They would be covered under the Fire Department's insurance. Students do not need to be residents of Pittsfield. Mrs. Goggin added that with the upcoming job fair on May 13, it would be good to have some information regarding the program.

Approval of the Food Service Management Company Contract from Fresh Picks – Mrs. Lane shared that it is a 5-year contract. The total amount for next year is \$286,993.90. Mr. Nilsson made the motion, seconded by Mr. Gauthier. Vote 5-0.

Review General Assurances, Requirements and Definitions for Participation in Federal Funds - These assurances are for any district that accepts federal funding, and that the district will adhere to all regulations and procedures, to be signed at the conclusion of the meeting by the board chair.

Fair funding - no updates

Health Trust membership agreement - needs approval because it is a change in structure from the joint Barnstead/Pittsfield agreement. Cost will stay the same. It may be wise to get bids and perhaps collaborate with the town or another school district to keep the price down for health insurance for next year. Mr. Gauthier made the motion, seconded by Mr. Nilsson, to accept the Health Trust membership agreement. Vote 5-0. The Board chair will sign the agreement at the conclusion of the board meeting.

Approve 2025-2026 School Board Meeting Dates - Mrs. White pointed out that August 21st is open house night, so we may wish to change that date. This does not need to be approved tonight.

Mr. Gauthier requested permission to mow at PES. Mrs. Lane suggested creating a simple contract that covers him and the district and that it is of zero cost to the district.

Mrs. Goggin shared the grant spreadsheet. When Becky Berk returns from her vacation, the board will ask that she apply for any available grants. Mrs. Goggin shared the draft job description for a part-time Grants Manager position to take that responsibility off the plate of the superintendent. If we were to create that position and have it grant-funded, that would allow the new superintendent to concentrate on systems and finance, human resources, and data collection, among other things, rather than the grants piece. We will work on the job description in terms of the scope and pay.

Update on 2023-2024 audit. Mrs. Lane will confer with Financial Manager Rheana Anderson on the progress of the audit being conducted by our audit firm, Plodzik & Sanderson P.A.

May 13th Meet the Superintendent Candidates, Forrest Ransdell and Sandie MacDonald – Mrs. Goggin explained the four different rotations and time frames for the stakeholders – 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. with administration and staff and community members in the media center and lecture hall; then 7:00-8:30 alternating with the school board and the interim superintendent.

June board meetings – stay with first and third Thursdays, June 5th and 19th at 5:30 p.m.

PMHS Principal interviews – committee of eight, including 2 community members, staff, PMHS Assistant Principal Melissa Brown, and a board member. The first meeting is on Monday, May 12th, at 3:00 p.m. to start the process. Mr. Robinson will represent the board. Mrs. Goggin will be an alternate if Mr. Robinson is unable to meet at future meetings.

Review of the 2024-2025 Budget Balance Sheet and Revenue sheet

The board needs to decide on a recovery plan for the approximate 1.8-million-dollar deficit. Note that healthcare was not properly budgeted for and that is over \$800,000. Salaries were not budgeted correctly, and the IRS fined the district for filings that weren't done appropriately years ago (this bill is from tax year 2021) to the tune of just over \$125,000. So, there are a number of contributing factors that led to this shortfall. Ray Benoit had met with the financial manager, Rheana Anderson, and the district deputy treasurer, Leslie Vogt this morning, and added that 1.1 million dollars was the rollover into this year. Mrs. Lane explained that the summer salaries and the retirement costs were a part of that sum. In 2023-24 is when we ended up with a year-end deficit of \$660,00 after facing reduced ending balances – going from \$200-300,000 year-end fund balance in 2021-22 to approximately \$10,000 year-end fund balance in 2022-23. Every month we are getting a little closer to understanding the operating budget shortfall.

VII. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Budget Committee – Mrs. Adams - no updates

Drake Field and Facilities – Mr. Gauthier - no updates

Negotiations – Mrs. Goggin and Mr. Robinson - no updates

Legislation – Mrs. Adams - no updates – many bills in crossover

Foss Family Scholarship – Mr. Nilsson – deadline for submitting completed applications was Wednesday, May 7. Applications will be reviewed by the committee

Public Relations – Mrs. Goggin - Meet the Candidate flyer out; Exhibition night is May 22nd

Selectboard Liaison – Mr. Nisson to take over this role

VIII. PLAN AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING, May 29, 2025

- Audit update
- Vote on Superintendent candidate
- Wellness policy updates – Mrs. Vary
- Financial and non-discrimination policies – Mrs. Lane

IX. BOARD COMMENTS

\$6,500 earned from PES walkathon per Mrs. White

Board should plan to host something next year for Teacher Appreciation Week in May 2026

X. PUBLIC INPUT

Ammy Ramsey

- was of the opinion that the minutes needed to be cleaned up and more understandable, in particular the April 17, 2025 public meeting minutes relative to the budget.
- At the previous board meeting, were the reserve fund SPED balances accurate? Yes
- agreed that we need a grant manager to take that burden off the superintendent
- Is the school board comfortable with the vetting process re: hiring the new superintendent? yes
- Who is the community member on the PMHS principal search team? Sara Pacarino
- Are policies posted that the board is reviewing so the public can provide input? Yes

Ray Benoit

- Asked if money has been encumbered for open enrollment – no
- Are the general assurance federal guidelines posted on the website?
- Is HealthTrust a contract at will?
- Who should develop the board meeting schedule, the board or the superintendent? The board is comfortable with the superintendent setting this up.
- When putting together next year's budget, review last year's budget and understand the numbers.

- Have you considered an alternate member to the school board? Mr. Benoit would volunteer.

Arthur St. Laurent

Thanked the board for the opportunity to work together . He is the school board liaison from the Select Board. He has an open door policy and shared his cell phone number: (603) 765-2941

Asked for clarification about the HealthTrust shortfall of \$316,000 and is the 2025-26 budget accurate relative to the health insurance – yes, it is based on actuals

XI. NON-PUBLIC SESSION per RSA91-A:3, II

On a motion made by Mr. Gauthier and seconded by Mrs. Adams, the board entered into non-public at 8:20 p.m. Roll Call Vote 5-0.

On a motion made by Mr. Nilsson, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, the board exited non-public at 9:40 p.m. Roll call vote 5-0.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goggin, seconded by Mr. Nilsson to approve sending out contracts to Rachel Horton and Hailey King. Vote 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Nilsson, seconded by Mr. Gauthier to accept the resignation of PES Counselor Michael Curtin, with regrets. Vote 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Nilsson, seconded by Mr. Gauthier to accept the resignation of PES music teacher, Kathryn Ingerson, with regrets. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Gauthier made the motion to terminate head custodian Randy Kelley, seconded by Mr. Nilsson. Vote 5-0.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mrs. Goggin, seconded by Mr. Nilsson to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 p.m. Vote 5-0.

Submitted by Sandra Adams, Chair