



**Fort Edward Union Free School District**  
**Meeting of the Board of Education**  
**June 12, 2023**  
**Board Minutes**

**Members Present:** Thomas Roche, Ella Collins, James Donahue, Amanda Durkee, John Guglielmo, Timothy Clark, Taylor Boucher

**Members Absent:** Ella Aul (student member)

**Others Present:** Richard DeMallie, Daniel Boucher, Jr., Jason Brayman, IdaMae Tholl, Daniel Boucher, Sr., Garrett Hamlin, Eric Robert, Sarah Bradshaw, Christopher Rayder, Steve Neron, Erin Russo, Amanda Lucas, Michael Smith, Keaysie Ferguson, Greg Weeks

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance - Time: 6:30**

**II. Recognition of Successes:**

**A. Tennis Adirondack League Champions:** Calvin Boucher, Preston Gulick, Angelo Saunders

**B. HFE Baseball Section II Class D Champions/Regional Semifinalists:** Daniel Boucher Jr., Zachary Bartholomew, Kameron Brayman

Head Coach: Jeff Durkee

JV Coach: Jeff Tully

Modified Coach: Jason Brayman

Equipment Manager: Hunter Kearns

**C. Adirondack League Baseball All-Star Second Team:** Zachary Bartholomew

**D. Chronicle Publication:** IdaMae Tholl

**E. Heather Miller:** Class of 2021 Alumni made the Dean's List at St. Rose (majoring in Forensic Psychology)

**III. Community Comments:**

**A.** Daniel Boucher, Sr. discussed how youth basketball yielded 65 students in the K-6 range. Youth baseball yielded 65 students but 13 students at 9-10 year olds and 11-12 year olds; there is a lot in t-ball but as the age groups progress, numbers tend to dwindle. Dan thanked the board for the use of the facility and their continued support of youth sports. He further noted that he would likely be moving away from youth sports in the future as his children are aging out. Richard DeMallie thanked Dan for his efforts with youth sports over the years and for his family's continued support of our students.

**IV. Presentations:**

**A.** Senior Class Trip 6/19/23

1. Amanda Lucas (senior class advisor), Rheanna Plude (senior class vice president) and Leroy Catone (senior student) presented. The trip is scheduled for a day when the students are off and do not have finals. They anticipate a 6:00 am departure from Fort Edward School and a re-arrival time from 11:30 pm. Students will be attending Hampton Beach State Park and Ocean Boulevard Boardwalk. This is a location that has amenities that are accessible for all students, including beach access mats and beach wheelchairs (as some have mobility issues). They have received permission slips and anticipate 100% of senior students to attend this trip.



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- B. Capital Project Development - Garrett Hamlin (TetraTech), Sarah Bradshaw (Bernie Donegan), Eri Robert (Schoolhouse Construction) and Christopher Rayder (Business Office)
1. Garrett Hamlin presented on the capital project process and the preliminary timeline. The timeline would be board vote for the project in February/March; then it is put out to vote in May 2024; then it is designed and submitted for SED Review in February 2025; bids for construction happen in fall of 2025 and then construction phase would begin. End for construction depends on scope of project and effect on the construction budget.
  2. John Guglielmo asked if bids went to individual contractors or general contractors for sub-contracting. Garrett Hamlin responded that bids are separated by general contractor, mechanical, electrical and plumbing.
  3. Timothy Clark inquired if capital projects needed to be voted with the budget vote. Garrett Hamlin responded that the advantage of doing it at the same time as the budget vote is that the district saves money by not having a separate special vote. Garrett noted, however, that if the construction was controversial (i.e. would substantially raise taxes), he would typically suggest that a school district conduct their vote at a separate time so as to not affect their budget vote.
  4. Sarah Bradshaw presented on the estimated financial impact of the proposed capital project. Budgeted for the \$100,000 capital outlay for 2023-2024, will submit to SED and then spend in 2024-2025 and then will begin receiving the building aid as of 2025-2026. Capital outlay projects do need to be closed out by the end of the fiscal year.
  5. Tim Clark asked about the 2024 and 2025 \$50,000. Tom Roche and Sarah Bradshaw explained that there are debts falling off and now is a good time to do the projects. Although the project is not “no cost”, there is no additional cost and no tax impact.
  6. Amanda Durkee noted that the SED approval part of the timeline could throw the project off. Garrett noted that their timelines are conservative and there is room to adjust the timeline so long as the chosen end date is adhered to. Richard DeMallie noted that the construction phase was originally discussed as one summer but SED, etc. was a concern in preliminary discussions so extending the timeline to construction over two summers is another way we are adjusting the timeline.
- C. ESSER 3 Spending - Christopher Rayder
1. Christopher Rayder presented Fort Edward’s Financial Report. He noted that historically we did not budget for what was spent and this was a major cause for concern. Moody’s has been looking at our financial health for eight years and says that we are in the best fiscal health that we have ever been. Christopher Rayder noted that there is ESSER 3 Spending that needs board approval. He stated that we had not originally anticipated, but we will now be adding a special education classroom for 2023-2024. He further noted that this classroom will bring 4 students that are currently placed out of district back in the school and will also bring 4 students from other districts to our district and they will pay Fort Edward tuition, this totals \$307,480. Additionally, we are a Red Cross Emergency Site and we do not have a generator, the estimated cost for this is \$520,000.
  2. Taylor Boucher asked if the ESSER money was the source that the school and board was trying to get away from the salaries being drawn from. Christopher Rayder responded



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- that she was correct but that come next year, it will be absorbed back to fund balance and that varying things help offset that, such as retirements, etc..
3. Taylor Boucher questioned the ratio for the special education classroom. It was discussed that information would be requested from the Director of Pupil Services, Joyce Long, regarding the ratio and if a Teaching Assistant would also be needed, and if any of the potential students (including those from outside districts) require 1:1 Aides.
  4. Tim Clark inquired about the generator, including the maintenance and longevity of the generator as well as the noise produced by it. He raised the question about getting a portable generator that would run just the boilers in the event of a power outage emergency rather than a generator that would power the entire school. He noted that the upfront cost, end of life cost and annoyance that generators presented were of concern to him. Taylor Boucher concurred that she felt that the \$520,000 seemed like a very high number and that the funding could be put to use in other ways. She further noted that she did not feel that having a generator to keep the entire school running, rather than allowing the kids to have a snow day, etc. was a good idea.
  5. Richard DeMallie noted that ESSER 3 money needs to be spent by September 2024, that it can only be spent on certain items and that if it was unused, it would go back to the state. He noted that we had two power outages that had a major impact on the school as the battery backups were not great and booting back up our system, including the boilers, was difficult. He further noted that since the money goes away, if the board was not interested in a generator, other things should be looked into.
  6. Thomas Roche asked that the approval of the ESSER 3 spending be tabled and that the board be provided with a breakdown price of practical generators (including the price of the diesel generator and a smaller generator to only run the boilers), prices for air conditioning for the third floor of high school, prices for APC back ups and possible other ways to spend the ESSER Funds.

**V. Reports:**

**A. Board Committee Reports (9 Board Committees)**

1. Budget, Finance and Audit Committee
  - a) Met tonight - discussed Moody's Report and ESSER 3 Spending
2. Personnel, Grievance and Negotiations Committee
3. Curriculum and Instruction Committee
4. Policy Review Committee
  - a) Amanda Durkee working on setting a date via email
5. Athletic Committee
  - a) Met 6/6/23 = notes included in board packets
  - b) Taylor Boucher noted that she was upset when she heard that we were looking at our mergers and that she believed an email was sent to Hartford to say that we were re-evaluating the merger. She went on to say that Hartford has been a great partner through our sports merger and that although we only had 3 boys on the baseball team, it feels like a partnership. She voiced that she was concerned that after such a great baseball season, we put out a bad vibe to Hartford and she is in



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favor of keeping a merger as long as possible. She felt that we could have/should have just assessed the merger without having to send something to Hartford indicating that we were doing so.

- c) Amanda Durkee noted that the board, moving forward, should lay out their goals very specifically but that she, individually, is not interested in dissolving any of the sports mergers in any way. She agreed that mergers should be evaluated, but not for dissolution; she stated that mergers should be evaluated for what we did well, how we can improve and what we need to do to have sustainable mergers with our neighboring communities. She further noted that discussions surrounding mergers should be collaborative and any talk of dissolution is not collaborative. Additionally, she noted that sports mergers for small school districts seem to be standard practice as it becomes more and more necessary as school enrollment numbers continue to drop. Lastly, she stated that sometimes Fort Edward has brought more players and sometimes Hartford has brought more players, but that she felt the merger with Hartford has been 50/50 throughout the number of years that they have merged.
- d) John Guglielmo noted that at the Athletic Committee meeting, although there were concerns that the modified girls could have the potential to field their own team, it would benefit Fort Edward to stay with mergers as the numbers are constantly fluctuating. He further explained that Page Toomey (modified softball coach) had been concerned that, with the number of girls on the HFE team, Fort Edward girls were not getting a lot of time at bat. He explained that during this discussion, he expressed that Hartford girls may get more at bats because they train more and start younger in order to get better at their sport. He stated that he suggested that coaches request to continue playing after a mercied game so that teams could get more playing/practicing time. He noted that Page is starting a summer program to keep girls engaged in softball and to work on their skills. He further noted that if we did reach out to inquire about dissolving one level, he feared that we would lose out on the merger altogether. He additionally noted that the only way that we can build a program at Fort Edward is to start athletes young. He stated that Chris Boucher does a great job with youth basketball and Dan Boucher does a great job with youth baseball.
- e) James Donahue agreed with the concern that if we did reach out to inquire about dissolving one level, that we would lose out on the merger altogether. He also worried that this would reflect badly throughout the league and that no one would want to merge with Fort Edward for sports.
- f) Richard DeMallie noted that Page Toomey had requested to meet as the school typically gets into sports mergers without discussion from others involved. He pointed out that he was agreeable to bringing the coaches into the Athletic Committee meeting so that feelings and discussions could be presented. He also noted that, similar to us, Hartford was meeting to discuss and reassess the merger. He further noted that he felt that telling Hartford that we were assessing the merger was better than them finding out through a third party. Lastly, he noted



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that although dissolution came up in the Athletic Committee meeting, that was never the goal; he stated that the goal was to assess what we could do to be a better partner.

- g) Thomas Roche noted that programs should always be reassessed each year to discuss how the merger worked, what can be done better on both parts, how many students are participating and if numbers have grown enough to field your own teams, etc. He questioned if the board would be having the same discussion if the baseball team had not done so well this season. Lastly, he agreed that the board would need to discuss their goals as there is a different mindset to proactively supporting mergers versus raising our own teams. He stated that he felt that the goal was to stack the number of students playing and field a Fort Edward team but that he understood that lower numbers make mergers necessary.

6.Strategic Planning Committee

7.Health & Safety of Buildings & Grounds

8.Capital Project Committee

- a) Scheduled for June 20 at 6:00pm

**B. Superintendent Report**

1.Traffic Pattern Meeting = Looking to meet again

2.5/23 = Capital Project Kickoff Meeting

3.6/2 = Sun SafetyFashion Show/Elementary Field Day

4.Working on finish up fire drills

5.Interviewed for ELA and Spanish = Putting forth an ELA candidate and re-posting for a Spanish teacher

6.School Psychologist = Candidate declined due to personal reasons, will need to be reposted

7.New Meadow 2023-2024 school year and plan to be in their own facility for 2024-2025; they will be expanding to three additional rooms by September (taking the BOE Room, Business Office and Teacher Resource Room)

- a) Amanda Durkee suggested reaching out to BOCES about renting space from us when New Meadow leaves. Richard DeMallie confirmed that Christopher Rayder has already been in discussions with them.
- b) James Donahue asked if we had the space for the new Special Education classroom as well. Erin Russo confirmed that there is a room planned for this classroom as well.

8.6/16 = Meeting with FESS

9.6/20 = Lunch with Gregg Diefenbach as his last day is at the end of June

10. Will present extracurricular and coaching appointments to the board at the next meeting

11. Would like to work with the board and FETA to change Marching Band to Marching Band/Pep Band = there is interest in getting a pep band together

12. Would like to keep working on the pre-referendum for the capital project

13. Still looking at options for filling the anticipated Clerk position

14. 6/16 at 6pm = CTE Graduation ceremony; we have 12 students



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15. Continue prepping for graduation
16. 6/19 = Juneteenth - No School
17. Special Education Teacher interviews will begin next week
18. TOSA = Proposed position of School Improvement Coordinator with some duties including, assisting with discipline and PBIS, character education in elementary, positivity project in secondary, assist with supervisory duties, assist with creation of attendance task force, run grade level meetings and help coordinate 3-8 testing
  - a) Will discuss at next meeting
19. Wellness Policy = Formalizes things that we already do, including definition of adequate time for eating meals, USDA smart stack standards and anti-meal shaming.
  - a) Amanda Durkee clarified that although, typically, the Policy Committee reviews changes to policies and then presents them to the board for approval, the policy had been submitted for the Policy Committee to review at their next meeting but that it needs to be approved before July 1 so they were agreeable to having the first reading tonight.
20. Richard DeMallie noted that the board should look at the update email that he sent to them as it includes all of the end of year events coming up

**C. Building Principal Report**

1. Prom was a success = 33 attendees
2. 5/26 = Fun Day for MS/HS included Just Dance, Whacky Bikes, frog dissection, tie-dye, cooking, a dunk tank (featuring Erin Russo and Richard DeMallie) and the PTO sponsored 5 inflatables (including bounce houses, jousting rings and water slides)
  - a) James Donahue thanked the PTO for all of their support for this event
3. 6/2 = Field Day for elementary included PE stations, tug of war and a hot dog lunch
4. 6th grade trip to NYC was last week = they loved the play Aladdin and being in Time Square
5. Integrity winners were awarded trip to the library
6. Incentive trip to Lake Lauderdale was derailed due to air quality issues; went to Broadway Lanes with 70 students who missed 2 or fewer days from March on and no referrals
  - a) Thomas Roche inquired if a thank you was sent out to Broadway Lanes
  - b) Timothy Clark noted that he felt that tying attendance to incentive trip may not be fair as he knows that a student stated they were disqualified due to absences that were out of their control
7. 6/8 = Sports Banquet held at Fort Edward School, looking to make more positive changes moving forward
8. 6/12 = Chromebook collection
9. 6/14 = Regents testing begins
10. Summer Academy is in the works
11. Summer Credit Recovery is moving forward = using Educere, a self-paced and NYS certified program which will set students up to take Regents in summer
12. 6/13 = Jr/Sr High Award Assembly
13. 6/19 = Senior Trip to Hampton Beach



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14. 6/21 = PreK and Kindergarten Graduation
15. 6/22 = 5th Grade Moving Up Ceremony
16. 6/23 = Graduation
  - a) Graduation Commencement Speaker = Eileen Doyon, author and former Fort Edward student
17. Attendance Rates
  - a) YTD
    - (1) 90.02% = overall
    - (2) 93% = 2nd and 6th grade
    - (3) 92% = 3rd, 4th and 5th grade
    - (4) 80% = 9th grade
  - b) 4th Quarter = best quarter so far
    - (1) 91.25% = overall
    - (2) 96% = 2nd grade
    - (3) 95% = Kindergarten, 3rd and 11 grade
    - (4) Most room for growth = 9th Grade

**D. Pupil Services Report - Absent**

**E. Business Official's Report -** was reported in presentation portion

**F. Building Maintenance Report**

1. Working on air conditioners
2. Trying to get grounds to look better for graduation with new topsoil and seed
3. Breeching for boilers will be put in tomorrow
4. Will be looking at conditioning the water for the boilers as the coils get clogged
5. Working on key disbursement tracking
6. Roof project on bus garage that had the tree fall on it is being looked at tomorrow
7. Working on preventative maintenance for equipment

**G. Student Board Member Report - Absent**

**VI. Discussion Items:**

- A. Thank you to Christina Durkee for three years of service on the Board of Education.
- B. Thank you to James Donahue for five years of service on the Board of Education.
- C. Vacant Board Seat and Timeline
  1. Keaysie Ferguson will create a posting and get posted on website and social media
  2. Candidates send in a letter of interest to the Board Clerk
  3. The board will conduct interviews and appoint a candidate hopefully at the July 10th meeting
- D. Gaming Club
  1. eSports concept has been changed to a pilot gaming club to include board games, video games and tabletop role playing games
  2. Would be a weekly rotation
    - a) Week 1: board games
      - (1) chess, sorry, uno, taco cat goat cheese pizza, apples to apples, ghost blitz



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- (2) Will start with advisors personal collection but hope to fundraise to get more games
  - b) Week 2: video games
    - (1) Super Smash Brother and Mario Kart
    - (2) Will start with advisors personal games, systems and controllers and students can bring in their own as well but hope to fundraise to get and in-house system and games
    - (3) Working with IT Director to get a network for the gaming system
  - c) Week 3: tabletop role playing games
    - (1) Game Master would be the advisors
    - (2) Will start with Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition
    - (3) Benefits = critical thinking, working collaboratively with others, literacy skills, arithmetic
  - d) Week 4: flexible week to have it off or discuss fundraising, etc.
3. Gathered interest via surveys and fun day participation numbers
- a) Fun day board games = 50 students over 3 sessions
  - b) eSports (video games) survey = 60 students interested
  - c) Fun day Dungeons and Dragons info session = 29 students
  - d) Dungeons and Dragons has a ton of free resources for educators including the books used to conduct a game
- E. Fall Cheerleading/Competitive Cheer
- 1. Looking at stipend as the season extends 4-6 weeks beyond winter season
- F. School Resource Office (SRO)
- 1. Will add to agenda for approval/discussion for the next meeting
  - 2. Taylor Boucher asked if this position was mentioned in the Pathways Newsletter that went out to the public. It was confirmed that it was in the Pathways so the public has been made aware.  
Amanda Durkee and James Donahue noted that they have not heard anything negative or any concerns regarding this.
  - 3. Timothy Clark expressed concern and asked that the following information be obtained regarding this position:
    - a) Job description/duties?
    - b) Who has commanding control of this person?
    - c) Do they have arrest powers inside the building?
    - d) Do they carry weapons?
    - e) Do they carry handcuffs?
  - 4. Richard DeMallie responded to Tim that the person would carry a weapon, he believes that they do carry handcuffs, and that he, as the Superintendent, would be an on-site supervisor but that the direct supervisor would be the Sheriff. He further noted that he would gather the information for the remaining questions and have it to the board before the next meeting.





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**VII. Consent Agenda:**

Although Board action is required, it is generally unnecessary to hold discussion on these items. With the consent of all members, they are therefore grouped and approval is given in one motion. In the event a Board member wants to discuss any item, it is moved to an appropriate place on the agenda.

- A. Approval of Minutes for Board Meeting held May 8, 2023.
- B. Approval of Minutes for Special Board Meeting held May 30, 2023.
- C. Approval of Treasurer Reports for May as included in the Board packets.
- D. Approval of Budget Transfers for May as included in the Board packets.
- E. Approval of the Warrants and Claims for May as included in the Board packets.

Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by Taylor Boucher to approve items A-E. Motion carried 7-0.

**VIII. Action:**

- A. Motion made by Taylor Boucher, seconded by Ella Collins to approve the CSE/CPSE Recommendations, as included in the Board packets. Motion carried 7-0.
- B. Motion made by James Donahue, seconded by John Guglielmo to accept the generous \$500 donation from First Baptist Church of Glens Falls Thrift Shoppe. Motion carried 7-0.
- C. Motion made by James Donahue, seconded by John Guglielmo to accept the generous donation of fifty hygiene kits bags from Lake George Region Women for WIN, Inc. Motion carried 7-0.
- D. Motion to approve the contract renewal for health services provided to children that reside in Fort Edward and attend Oak Hill School.
- E. Motion to approve the contract renewal for health services provided to children that reside in Fort Edward and attend Northern Rivers: Northeast Parent and Child Society.
- F. Motion to approve the MOA between Fort Edward UFSD and Girvin & Ferlazzo P.C. for the 2023-2024 school year.
- G. Motion to approve the MOA between Fort Edward Union Free School District and Washington County Public Health Nursing Service.
- H. Motion to approve the disposal of the fixed assets as listed in the Board packets.

Thomas Roche requested that a motion be made to approve items D-H. Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by Ella Collins to approve items D-H. Motion carried 7-0.

- I. Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by Ella Collins to approve the first reading of the following revised policies:  
#5661 - Wellness  
Motion carried 7-0.
- J. Motion to approve the following resolution:



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**WHEREAS**, the District is in receipt of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (“ESSER”) and is obligated to use such funds to address pandemic learning loss and invest in infrastructure and programs to open and operate safely; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has extensively reviewed its areas of need and has made recommendations as to appropriate allocation of the ESSER funds.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approves the application for, and receipt and expenditure of ESSER funds for the purchase of a generator at a cost not to exceed \$520,000 and \$307,480 for salaries of personnel to support programs that shall support learning loss through implementation of evidence-based interventions.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this authorization shall be effective immediately.

Thomas Roche requested that a motion be made to table this item. Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by James Donahue to table this item. Motion carried 7-0.

**IX. Personnel:**

Thomas Roche read the following: All appointments are subject to change and compensation proration, pending emergency school closing and required reductions in force. All coaching appointments are made pending completion and verification of all required coaching credentials, with the stipend per FETA contract commensurate with experience and no other salary or benefits. All coaching, extracurricular appointments are subject to reduction and compensation proration, pending final student enrollment numbers, and pending the outcome of any potential mergers and emergency school closings.

- A. Motion to appoint Samantha Markham as Summer Credit Recovery Teacher, effective May 31, 2023, at a rate per the FETA Contract to be paid at the bargaining unit members hourly rate.
- B. Motion to appoint Abigail Landon as Summer Academy Substitute Nurse, effective June 13, 2023, at a rate per the FESS Contract.
- C. Motion to appoint Christina Limson-Harvey as ELA Teacher, effective August 1, 2023 at a rate of Step 6 MA, per the FETA Contract.
- D. Motion to appoint FEH BOCES as Purchasing Agent.

Thomas Roche requested that a motion be made to approve items A-D. Motion made by Taylor Boucher, seconded by Timothy Clark to approve items A-D. Motion carried 7-0.

- E. Motion made by Taylor Boucher, seconded by Timothy Clark to accept the letter of resignation from Kathryn Elms, effective June 9, 2023. Motion carried 7-0.

**X. Coaching - None**



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**XI. Second Public Comment Period (if needed)**

**XII. Executive Session**

Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by Taylor Boucher to enter into Executive Session at 10:00pm. Thomas Roche stated that Board of Education Members and other individuals invited into executive session are reminded that all matters discussed during executive session must be kept in strict confidence. Motion carried 7-0.

**XIII. Return to Public Session**

Motion made by John Guglielmo, seconded by Taylor Boucher to return to Public Session at 10:51pm. Motion carried 7-0.

**XIV. Adjournment**

Motion made by Timothy Clark, seconded by Taylor Boucher to adjourn the meeting at 10:52pm. Motion carried 7-0.