

BOARD NEGOTIATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020
REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA GOOGLE MEET

BNC members present: Sue Hamlyn-Prescott, Chasity Fagnant, Bernard Barnes, Bill Sander, Katie Orost

Support staff present: Darcey Fletcher, Nicole Chauvin, Santha Dahlin, Thad Tallman, Yvonne Heath, Andrew Belitsos, Corinne Mutell

Teachers present: Patrick LaClair, Eric Hutchins, Erin Carr, Carol-Lynn Willean, Paul Legris, Gail Whitten, Katlin Bartell, Allen Cook, James Chartrand

Others present: Charleen McFarlane, Deb Clark

S. Hamlyn-Prescott called the meeting to order at 6:02.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the focus of this meeting is ground rules. Ground rules proposed by the BNC were sent to both groups.

D. Fletcher said P. LaClair will present some recommended changes on behalf of both groups. P. LaClair suggested adding language regarding our intent to meet virtually and addressing the impact virtual meetings will have on signing tentative agreements. It will be difficult to sign at the time of agreement.

It was agreed to add to #1 “Until mutually agreed by both parties otherwise, all meetings between the parties will occur virtually.”

P. LaClair said there are a variety of online platforms that allow electronic signatures. He thinks it comes down to what will work for C. McFarlane and others. C. McFarlane said the minutes will reflect what is tentatively agreed to. She is happy to collect initials after the fact or we can clarify the TA’s through the minutes. D. Clark suggested a PDF document with the agreement language could be emailed to the appropriate individuals to initial. P. LaClair and D. Fletcher agreed that would be suitable.

It was agreed to replace #4 with “Tentative agreements for each article shall be clearly articulated and verbally agreed upon in the minutes and signed and dated by the chief negotiators on both sides and shall be subject to final ratification.”

P. LaClair said if meetings are being recorded, the teacher negotiation team would like access to those recordings. They like to use the minutes as a reference point in planning for future meeting and sometimes there is a longer gap between the meeting and when the minutes are available. It would be helpful to be able to access the recordings within a reasonable timeframe. C. McFarlane said this meeting isn’t being recorded. Meetings are recorded when the minute taker is not able to be present. With the BNC’s approval, she can share those recordings following their receipt. The recordings come fairly quickly via email after the meeting. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC agrees to make available recordings of meetings that are recorded. P. LaClair asked if a 48-hour timeframe is acceptable for sending out recordings. C. McFarlane said the recording usually comes within minutes after the meeting. She could send it out the next day.

E. Hutchins asked if all meetings can be recorded. P. LaClair said he would echo that question. Can recording all meetings be part of our ground rules? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said she is not sure why we would record meetings if our minute taker was available. D. Fletcher said recording would be helpful due to the lag time between the meeting and when minutes are posted. There was a question about the legalities around that. C. McFarlane said she thinks minutes have to be posted within 5 business days. D. Griffiths agreed. D. Griffiths said she thought remote meetings had to be recorded, but maybe that doesn't apply to this particular type of meeting. P. LaClair said he thinks recording meetings adds transparency and is quick to do. B. Barnes said remote school board meetings are recorded. That may be a legal requirement or may be guidance. D. Clark said she thinks it is strong guidance that they be recorded.

It was agreed to add to #1 a statement that all open session negotiation meetings will be recorded and the recordings from the open session meetings will be made available to both parties within 2 business days or as soon as possible.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC has found C. Gallagher's role in past negotiations very valuable as a facilitator of discussions between the parties and someone who can translate for the individual parties when requested. The BNC is looking for agreement with the associations that C. Gallagher can continue in this role. P. LaClair and D. Fletcher agreed.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC is proposing that the first sessions when proposals are put across be in January, as the BNC is still gathering information about where finances are. The BNC wants to hear what the associations foresee as the first time for being able to put forward proposals. The BNC will not be ready to put forward any financial proposals before very late December or early January.

P. LaClair said one priority for the teachers is reducing the number of steps in the salary scale. Our scale is 26 steps long, which is extreme compared to other salary scales in our region. Some are as short as 16 and many are 18 to 20.

P. LaClair said mid-January is suitable for a first meeting. D. Fletcher said she thinks December is pretty busy. The beginning of January is probably good. Both groups agreed waiting until January is fine. C. McFarlane said she can send out possible dates. Some dates the BNC has suggested are January 13, 14, 20 or 21.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths