

BOARD NEGOTIATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2020
REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA GOOGLE MEET

BNC members present: Sue Hamlyn-Prescott, Bill Sander, Bernard Barnes, Mark Nielsen
Support staff present: Darcey Fletcher, Nicole Chauvin, Santha Dahlin, Thad Tallman, Earl Domina, Yvonne Heath
Others present: Charleen McFarlane, Deb Clark, Cat Gallagher

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

S. Hamlyn-Prescott called the meeting to order at 5:50. No changes to the agenda were suggested.

2. Board Negotiations Council – Executive Session

B. Sander moved and M. Nielsen seconded to go into executive session to discuss support staff contract negotiations because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the school board at a substantial disadvantage, inviting D. Clark, C. Gallagher, C. McFarlane and D. Griffiths to remain, the motion was passed and the BNC entered executive session at 5:51. The BNC consented out of executive session at 6:01.

3. Joined by Support Staff Association

The BNC was joined by support staff at 6:03.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said at this point the BNC feels we can move forward based on the current financial status. There are some items that were on the table that the BNC would like to take off the table based on all the uncertainty going forward.

The BNC is withdrawing the proposed change to 7.5 (B) saying that employees receiving health insurance from any Vermont school district would not be eligible for cash in lieu of health insurance. In the second paragraph of 7.5 (B), we were going to remove “by law” and the association had previously agreed to that. The association had previously agreed to remove 7.5 (D) and (E) but that was not TA’d. D. Fletcher confirmed that the association agrees with removing (D) and (E).

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said in the section for the new healthcare year effective January 1, 2021, the BNC is withdrawing the proposal that grievances go to the commission. The proposal that employees receiving health insurance from any Vermont school district would not be eligible for cash in lieu of health insurance would be removed and “by law” would be removed as in the previous section.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said there is one TA both groups signed that the BNC would like both groups to come to agreement to change – the duration of the contract. Based on the unknown financial situation going forward, the BNC is looking to agree on a one-year contract. D. Fletcher said the association will caucus on that.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC feels we can take off the proposal for 7.15 for the current negotiations. The proposal was that an employee resigning before June 30 without fulfilling

their contract year would forfeit the sick leave buyout. (*Yvonne Heath joined the meeting at 6:15.*)

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the proposal for 5.1 was only in there to clean up the language but if the association was not in agreement with that one the BNC would take it off the table. D. Fletcher said she thinks that is fine because all holiday schedules are the same now but she will caucus with her group on it.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC is willing to withdraw the proposal for 5.4 regarding vacation for this negotiation session.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said in Article 6, the first paragraph is to clarify what is currently in practice. D. Fletcher had a note that it was okay. She thinks we discussed but didn't TA it. The association agrees to it.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said regarding the package deal, the BNC is willing to have for (G) that the board shall continue to pay its share of the health insurance premium cost for a period of up to 6 months from the first date of eligibility for LTD coverage. D. Fletcher asked, the BNC wants to remove "for a single plan?" S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC is proposing a 50 cent raise – the current proposal we had on the table. Based on the financial situation, that remains the BNC's proposal.

D. Fletcher asked for clarification on the package deal for 6.1.3, 6.4 and 7.9. Are the 6.4 and 7.9 proposals still on the table? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said with the 50 cent proposal, hiring would be as in the last round of negotiations, with a 20 cent difference between current employees and the hiring grid. The hiring grid would go up 30 cents.

D. Fletcher said the association will take off the table the proposal regarding resolution of complaints, because as the BNC pointed out, it is already statute. She will chat with her group about their proposal to have Veteran's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Presidents Day as floating holidays.

D. Fletcher said the two groups already TA'd the proposal regarding probationary period in 4.1.1. S. Hamilton-Fletcher said the intent was agreed on. We have to tweak the language to indicate it will be 180 days from the day of hire.

C. McFarlane brought up the language just sent out for 12.1, about non-discrimination. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if the association sees any issues with that. D. Fletcher said no; they agree to that proposed language.

Support staff left to caucus at 6:23 and returned at 6:36.

D. Fletcher said with regard to floating holidays they are looking for consistency from year to year. Employees might get a holiday off one year and the next year an in-service or community event that requires some maintenance/custodial staff to come in is scheduled for that day. If those can't be floating holidays for employees to use at their discretion they are just asking for some consistency.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said she thought we had discussed that this was more of a procedural issue. D. Clark said she thought it came down to the word "required." S. Hamlyn-Prescott said we changed it from "required" to "requested."

D. Fletcher said she believes we just settled the contract.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if the association is in agreement on a 1-year contract. D. Fletcher said yes. The association agrees on a 50 cent raise for current employees with a 20-cent differential between that pay and the hiring grid.

C. McFarlane said D. Fletcher and S. Hamlyn-Prescott can agree verbally to TA all the items discussed and she will create a redline version for the BNC and support staff. Each school needs to vote and the board needs to vote. The raise will be retroactive to July 1.

The BNC and support staff reviewed proposals that had not previously been agreed upon. Both sides had previously signed off on the 7.2 proposal.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC was going to take the 7.15 sick leave buyout proposal off the table, but did the association say we didn't have to? D. Fletcher said the BNC withdrew that.

The association agrees to the 5.1 proposal.

The association agrees to the clarifying language on leave in the first paragraph of Article 6.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked about the package deal. Is the association okay with the language saying the board will continue to pay its share of health insurance costs for up to 6 months from the first date eligibility for LTD coverage begins? D. Fletcher said yes. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if they are okay with the 6.4 proposal to increase bereavement days and the proposed increase in life insurance. D. Fletcher said yes.

The association agrees to a one-year contract.

D. Fletcher asked, the BNC withdrew 7.5 (B) and (C)? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes. She asked, the association is okay with the keeping the language change where "by law" was removed? D. Fletcher said yes.

The association agrees to the language about discrimination for 12.1.

Support staff left at 6:51.

4. Other Business

It was agreed that C. Gallagher will reach out to teachers and see if they want to resume negotiations.

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths