

LAMOILLE NORTH SUPERVISORY UNION
BOARD NEGOTIATION COUNCIL
SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATIONS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2016
GREEN MOUNTAIN TECHNOLOGY & CAREER CENTER

BNC members present: Bernard Barnes, Mark Nielsen, Sue Hamlyn-Prescott, Chasity Fagnant, Matt Miller

Others present: Charleen McFarlane, Suzanne Dirmaier, Joan Aither, Cheryl Michaud, Santha Dahlin, Yvonne Heath, Darcey Fletcher, Linda St. Cyr, Nicole Chauvin, Ray Archbold, Koni Stoddard, Thad Tallman

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order and Approval of Agenda*

S. Hamlyn-Prescott called the meeting to order at 5:39.

2. *Support Staff Negotiations*

B. Barnes moved to go into executive session for support staff contract negotiations because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the school board at a substantial disadvantage, M. Nielsen seconded, the motion was passed and the BNC entered executive session at 5:39.

3. *Meeting with Support Staff Association*

At 6:30, Suzanne Dirmaier and 10 support staff joined the BNC and C. McFarlane. S. Hamlyn-Prescott reviewed the agenda. Introductions were made.

D. Fletcher said the association was able to come up with two dates that would work for future meetings: February 8 and March 23. S. Hamlyn-Prescott confirmed with them that January 24 will still work.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC had a few questions on their proposal. She asked if they could expand on the 5.5% increase. S. Dirmaier said one thing they are trying to do is reconcile the fact that Johnson staff coming in have a scale and they have been moving on the scale, but the LNSU scale is just a hiring schedule and people bargain raises for individuals after hiring. They looked at 5.5% initial across the board increases and all new employees being hired under the LNSU schedule. There are some changes they would like to see for some specialty areas based on feedback D. Fletcher has gotten from Dylan Laflam and heard from elementary units about the difficulty of the starting rate being too low to attract people in some areas.

D. Fletcher said the IT department is finding it hard to find people with the pay schedule they have been using. The pay study committee's work was based on people working here, but when we look at schools in other bargaining units with IT people, our base pay is almost \$10 lower. She had a conversation with D. Laflam and he indicated he is having a hard time finding and keeping food service people. He told her our food service people are among the lowest paid in the state of Vermont right now.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if they could clarify the 5.5% and Johnson piece a little more. S. Dirmaier said Johnson has a grid that looks similar to the LNSU one. People get hired and move down the schedule, which changes from time to time. There is not a uniform amount for every step. If we do away with that grid for Johnson, the association wants to make sure we find a way to compensate current employees in the same manner as everyone else. They feel the amount of money they propose is helpful to make sure we deal with the traditional wages Johnson staff have been getting.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if their proposal is 5.5% the first year. They said yes. D. Fletcher said they haven't thought much past the first year.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked why they are interested in an HRA vs. an HSA. D. Fletcher said part of it is because the HSA is only an option on 2 of the CDHP plans. If we are going to open up all plans they want an HRA rather than an HSA. S. Dirmaier said having only the HSA virtually eliminates or diminishes the ability to have choice among the plans because the board would only be offering out of pocket assistance for 2 of the plans. At a future meeting they would be willing to talk in more depth about the differences they see between HRA and HSA and the IRS regs relating to them. They think an HRA would be more attractive.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said their proposal for 7.11 already exists in the current contract. Johnson employees would automatically come in as Class 2 participants based on the current contract.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said it is the board's intent that any employee who transfers retains their sick leave and vacation time. D. Fletcher said that is not the practice right now.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said it is also our intent that any employee who transfers keeps the same salary. S. Dirmaier asked if that applies to Cambridge as well as LNMUUSD. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the contract is for all the schools, so that is the intent.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if they had any questions about the proposals we sent last time.

D. Fletcher asked about the part we proposed removing from 2.8 (removing "including those not subject to the agency fee" from the sentence "The Association shall notify the Superintendent by October 1st of any school year as to which members of the bargaining unit are not members of the Association, including identification of those not subject to the agency fee.") Why was this line taken off? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said we will get back to them on that.

The association handed out a counter proposal on leave days. They had a question about our proposal to take out family leave outside FMLA. They wanted to make sure everyone understood what the 5 days meant that we had crossed off. They don't get an additional 5 days for family leave. They get 15 days of sick leave and they can use 5 of that for sick family members. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said we will get back to them on that. S. Dirmaier

said if someone had a child who was sick for one day, that wouldn't qualify for FMLA so they couldn't use FMLA to stay home with the child.

D. Fletcher said they want to grandfather current JES employees for their personal leave – just current employees. They hope Johnson doesn't lose employees as part of their joining the contract. The talk around town is if they start losing benefits we might see a loss of qualified people at JES. They hope if they are grandfathered that won't happen. S. Dirmaier said in the Johnson personnel manual they have a special provision for number of personal days and they are able to convert unused personal days to sick leave. Their agreement, which is not part of the contract, allows that. D. Fletcher said she will get S. Hamlyn-Prescott a copy of that agreement.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott handed out the BNC's one new proposal: to add a student day in year 2 of the contract. She said this is based on our proposal to the teachers to add one student day. Obviously, an additional day would affect bus drivers, food service employees, paras, etc.

D. Fletcher asked, 175 student days is being changed to 176? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes, in the second year.

S. Dirmaier said there are a number of places the contract refers to 175 days. The BNC would want to make it consistent with what is done for teachers? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes; we would update the number of days throughout the contract.

D. Fletcher gave S. Hamlyn-Prescott info on IT wages from one other school.

It was agreed to caucus until 7:15.

B. Barnes moved to go into executive session for support staff contract negotiations because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the school board at a substantial disadvantage, M. Nielsen seconded, the motion was passed and the BNC entered executive session at 6:55. The BNC consented out of executive session at 7:16.

The session with support staff resumed at 7:23.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said "including those not subject to the agency fee" is struck out because there is currently no one who is subject to it. The new language is to be consistent with legislation.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said what they asked about on the grid for family leave was an oversight. The 5 days they mentioned are still in the contract in 6.1.3 (C3). S. Dirmaier asked, does that mean the BNC wants to get rid of it in the contract? Sue said no.

D. Fletcher said they haven't had a chance to talk to teachers yet about this, but she is wondering if we can have a smaller group of teachers, support staff and BNC members to work on health insurance in a unified way. S. Dirmaier said she told D. Fletcher she

would talk to the teacher group about this. It might make sense when we have more in-depth health care discussion to do it with both teachers and support staff because probably we will end up with something very much the same for both groups.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said she will bring the idea back to the two BNC groups. She reminded the association that the BNC is approaching healthcare and salary as a comprehensive package.

S. Dirmaier said they understand that, but if there is a long discussion about HRA vs. HSA, etc. a lot of that discussion could be done jointly.

C. Fagnant asked if this would be in addition to the meetings we have scheduled. Suzanne said maybe we would pick one of the already-scheduled dates for this.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said on the agenda for the January meeting the BNC would look for responses to our proposals and will respond to association proposals. The BNC will be looking for second healthcare and salary proposals. S. Dirmaier asked what she means by that. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said now that we have seen each other's proposals, she is talking about seeing what the next proposal would look like. S. Dirmaier asked, do you mean you are looking for counter proposals from us and we can expect one from you? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes. S. Dirmaier said they will need to talk about whether they can do that or not.

The session with support staff ended at 7:29.

The BNC consented into executive session at 7:31.

4. Adjourn

The BNC consented out of executive session and the meeting was adjourned by consent at 8:04.