

# Minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees Meeting of Northern Gateway Public Schools

November 24, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

Division Office in Whitecourt, AB via Zoom

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## Opening

### A. Opening

Meeting to be recorded – started at 10:08 a.m.

## Call to Order and Roll Call

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The November 24, 2020 meeting was called to order by Chair Wigton at 10:08 a.m.

Chair Linda Wigton, Trustees, Barb Maddigan, Diane Hagman, Jim Hailes, Sherry Jeffreys, Judy Muir, Christine Peck, Anita Portsmouth, Gerry Steinke Administrators Kevin Andrea, Superintendent, Michelle Brennick, Deputy Superintendent, Leslee Jodry, Assistant Superintendent, Tamara Spong, Secretary Treasurer and Wendy Robertson, Recording Secretary.

Lisa Bakos, Communications Officer, was present at this time.

Rhett Czaban, Director of Transportation, Randy Lovich, Director of Maintenance and Dave Arcand, Audit Committee member, were also present at this time.

MLAs Todd Lowen and Shane Getson, will be watching the livestreaming of the Board Meeting on Youtube.

Treaty Land Acknowledgement

2. **Treaty Land Acknowledgement**

Trustee Barb Maddidan read the Treaty Land Acknowledgement.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

3. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**

Acceptance of Agenda

4. **Acceptance of Agenda**

4325-20

Moved by Trustee Maddigan– that the agenda for the November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Regular Board Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion Carried

Board Chair Linda Wigton, introduced Dave Arcand at this time. Mr. Arcand is an external member of the Audit Committee within Northern Gateway School Division. Mr. Arcand is the Branch Manager at the Servus Credit Union in Whitecourt, AB.

Appointments and Delegations

B. **Appointments and Delegations**

Audit Committee Report

**Audit Committee Report**

Trustee Diane Hagman, Audit Committee Chair, reviewed the Audit Committee Meeting Record.

Trustee Diane Hagman, reported on the Audited Financial Statement.

The Committee met for the first time on Nov 19. (copy of minutes in Board package Tab 1). Our meeting was virtual. Note that the record of

meeting in your package has been updated to say "Meeting Minutes" and not "Agenda" for Division records purposes.

Members present were: Trustee Diane Hagman (elected Chair of Committee), Trustee Judy Muir, Trustee Gerry Steinke, Trustee Linda Wigton (Board Chair), Dave Arcand, (member at large), Kathleen Thebeau CPA, CGA (member at large), Secretary Treasurer Tamara Spong, and Recording Secretary Wendy Robertson. John Shoemaker, with Shoemaker, Viney & Friesen Chartered Accountants, Division Auditor, attended the meeting via virtual connection with us.

The committee very much appreciates the knowledge and experience that both Dave and Kathleen bring to the committee. We wanted to give Trustees and Administration a chance to meet them so invited them to attend our Board meeting today. Unfortunately, Kathy is unable to attend today so we will look for a future opportunity to introduce her to you. Dave is with us today.

[Dave introduced himself.](#)

As per the *Audit Committee Terms of Reference*, the Committee met with John Shoemaker, Division Auditor, on behalf of the Board, to receive and review the Audited Financial Statements and the results of his audit. The committee looks for potential accounting or reporting issues; reviews results of the audit including any difficulties encountered; reviews the financial statements and considers whether they are complete and consistent with information known to committee members and that they reflect appropriate accounting principles. The Committee then communicates to the Board a summary of what was discussed in the Audit presentation and significant audit findings

including any significant deficiencies in internal controls identified. Our report to the Board is as follows:

Mr. Shoemaker provided the Committee with 3 Documents (see Tab 5 in your Agenda Package):

- 1) Document #1 - Audited Financial Statements- Aug 31, 2020 Year End (30 pages including 9 Schedules (pgs 9-18) and Notes to the Financial Statements (pgs 19-30). The Audited Financial Statements were received and reviewed by the Committee members prior to the meeting.
- 2) Document #2 - NGPS Board Report (6 pages). This report was received and reviewed by the Committee members prior to the meeting. On page 3 you will see that the report confirms that the auditor found no material weaknesses in internal control, no indication of possible fraud, no detection of illegal acts, no material misstatement from error, no noted fraud, and good controls in place overall. John noted that we have good controls with money at our schools. When asked about any issues that might be disputed with CRA, he reported finding none. Mr. Shoemaker verbally reported that he has a very good relationship with Division staff and finds them to be cooperative, honest, and open. He had no difficulties accessing information or interacting with our employees. He thanked office staff Milly & Jennifer for all their help and the staff in payroll and voiced confidence in Tamara's leadership and past knowledge that she brings to the table. This feedback certainly assures the Board of the quality of

staff we have at Division office in both their character and competency skills.

- 3) Document #3 - Capsule Summary (12 pages in total including the "Unique Policies & Terminology pages at the end. This summary was received and reviewed by Committee members prior to the meeting. This document provides a high level review of what we discussed in our Audit Committee meeting with the auditor. Of note: the page # references at the end of each item are the page numbers in the Financial Statements Document.

In summary of NGPS overall financial health- The committee reports that the financial health of Northern Gateway Public Schools is good. Operating reserves, which is the District's savings, are compared to expenditures to determine the District's ability to react to emergent situations and the ability to fund special initiatives.

In closing of our report - As per our meeting minutes, the Committee will be putting out a tender for a new Division Auditor. John Shoemaker has notified the Committee of his retirement. That process will begin sometime early in the New Year. Once tenders are in, a recommendation will be brought to the Board regarding final approval on the new appointment.

The Audit Committee members unanimously agreed to bring forward a recommendation to the Board.

Minutes of the  
October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Regular Board Meeting

C. Minutes of the October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Regular Board Meeting

4326-20

Moved by Trustee Hagman – that the minutes of the October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Regular Board Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion Carried

Dave Arcand left the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

**Action Items**

**D. Action Items**

**Audited Financial**

**Audited Financial Statement**

4327-20

Moved by Trustee Hagman – that the Board accept the Audited Financial Statement as presented for the period ending August 31, 2020.

Motion Carried

**School Operational Viability Study**

**School Operational Viability Study**

4328-20

Moved by Trustee Maddigan – that the Board accept the School Operational Viability Study as information.

Motion Carried

**Election – October 18, 2021**

**Election – October 18, 2021**

4329-20

Moved by Trustee Jeffreys – that the Board approve the appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer as Returning Officer for the October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 School Board election.

Motion Carried

**By-Law No. 2-20 Nomination Papers**

**By-Law No. 2-20 Nomination Papers**

- 4330-20 Moved by Trustee Peck – that By-Law 2-20 (Nomination Papers) receive first reading by the Board.
- Motion Carried
- 4331-20 Moved by Trustee Hagman – that By-Law 2-20 (Nomination Papers) receive second reading by the Board.
- Motion Carried
- 4332-20 Moved by Trustee Muir – that the Board approve to conduct the third reading of By-Law 2-20 (Nomination Papers).
- Motion Carried Unanimously
- 4333-20 Moved by Trustee Peck – that By-Law 2-20 (Nomination Papers) receive third and final reading by the Board.
- Motion Carried
- 4334-20 Moved by Trustee Maddigan – that the Board recess meeting until 12:45 p.m.
- Motion Carried
- Board meeting resumed at 12:50 p.m.
- Kelly Muir, Principal, Rich Valley, Ian Baxter, Principal, Fox Creek, Gord Ashmore (Fox Creek School Council Chair), and Debroa VanDeLigt, (Rich Valley, School Council Chair) entered the meeting via Zoom at 12:57 p.m.
- By-Law No. 3-20 -** **By-Law No. 3-20 – (Deposit)**

(Deposit)

4335-20

Moved by Trustee Portsmouth - that By-Law 3-20 (Deposit) receive first reading by the Board.

4336-20

Motion Carried  
Moved by Trustee Steinke – that By-Law 3-20 (Deposit) receive second reading by the Board.

Motion Carried

4337-20

Moved by Trustee Peck – that the Board approve to conduct the third reading of By-Law 3-20 (Deposit).

Motion Carried Unanimously

4338-20

Moved by Trustee Muir – that By-Law 3-20 (Deposit) receive third and final reading by the Board.

Motion Carried

Appointments and  
Delegations

B. Appointments and Delegations

School Council Reports -  
via Zoom

School Council Reports – via Zoom

Fox Creek: Ian Baxter – Principal  
Gord Ashmore – School Council Chair

- Gord was just elected to Council Chair this year and is very active in the community.

School Council Chair:

- The principal and staff at the school have done an amazing job, especially with all the changes taking place this year.



- Some of the concerns brought forward by parents have all been addressed
- A lot of positivity by parents and students. Everyone is glad to see that school is open and they are back into class.
- Students are interacting with their teachers and happy to be back with their friends.
- This year is going to be different in how we interact with parents and do fundraising because of COVID.
- So far, we have had a lot of participation and positive feedback.
- Going to try to do an online book fair and see how that goes.
- We are also going to do fundraising with a project call "Tinsel Town". This is a Christmas catalogue for elementary students where they can purchase inexpensive gifts for their family.
- Hoping to have another successful year at Fox Creek and everyone stays healthy and we can continue with in person learning.

Principal:

- Amazing staff, parents and community. Came together with no complaints during this pandemic.
- Proud to lead a school with a strong staff.
- Fox Creek School is very much supported by businesses and industry.
- Installing a new sound system for the gymnasium at the cost of \$35,000 paid in full by the Children's of Fox Creek Fundraising Community.
- Confirmation from Shell, Chevron and PC Energy would be paying for our new Greenhouse being built in our outdoor classroom this spring. We are very excited about that.
- Our track is now complete.
- We had some representations going through our data last week, the MIPP and HLAT Data.

We were told that the MIPP data for our Div. 1 is the best in the province.

- Thanks to everyone that makes Fox Creek School so amazing.
- Also thanks to Janice Hailes, School Secretary. Janice has been with Fox Creek School for 45 years.

Rich Valley: Kelly Muir – Principal  
Debora VanDeLigt – School Council Chair

- This is Debora's second year as School Council Chair.

School Council Chair:

- Staff interaction during COVID has been great.
- Online has had its challenges - supports having been amazing by school.
- Ending off last year, the school did a "Celebration of Learning", drive through, COVID safe. Students appreciated very much.
- Everyone is happy to be back in the school, we did lose a few to online learning.
- Students came back to a brand new playground structure. The school council and our enhancement society, along with Principal Muir and other staff worked together to get this structure in.
- Principal Muir is very interactive with the kids.
- School Council participation has gone down with COVID, some of that is related to the poor internet service.
- Going into parent/teacher interviews in the next few weeks.
- Great community feeling in the school. Staff have always made the kids feel like part of the community.
- Split classes have not been a challenge, not complaints from parents or students. Huge thanks to the Administration at Rich Valley.

Principal:

- COVID has shown that the community has pulled together to help each other.
- COVID has been a great opportunity for staff to engage in technology as never before. Positive outcome of COVID.
- "Year end Celebration" was a great way to end the year in a positive manner.
- Cohorting of same grades has been positive. Friendships have developed within the same grades.
- Two new teachers this year.
- Principal is teaching 7/9 classes of gym this year.
- Rich Valley will be getting a new gym and will be ready for sometime in April.
- Best startup we have ever had. Kids were so glad to be back in school.

Ian Baxter, Gord Ashmore, Kelly Muir and Debora VanDeligt, left the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

#### Action Items

By-Law No. 4-20 -  
(Arrangement of  
Electoral Wards  
and Trustees)

4339-20

4340-20

#### D. Action Items

By-Law No. 4-20 – (Arrangement of Electoral  
Wards and Trustees)

Moved by Trustee Hailes – that By-Law 4-20  
(Arrangement of Electoral Wards and Trustees)  
receive first reading by the Board

Motion Carried

Moved by Trustee Maddigan – that By-Law 4-20  
(Arrangement of Electoral Wards and Trustees)  
receive second reading by the Board.

Motion Carried

4341-20

Moved by Trustee Muir – that the Board agree to go to third and final reading of By-Law 4-20, recognizing we are going against Board Motion 4314-20 (Oct. 27/20) to bring Motion to the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting.

Motion Defeated

Third and final reading will go to the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting.

Policy 2 – “Role of the Board”

Policy 2 – “Role of the Board”

4342-20

Moved by Trustee Maddigan – that No. 2.4 under Policy 2, be amended to read: “Establish plans for collaborative work between the Division, **First Nations, as well as other** culturally-based communities.

Motion Carried

Policy 2 – “Role of the Board”

Policy 2 – “Role of the Board”

4343-20

Moved by Trustee Steinke – that Policy 2 – “Role of the Board” be affirmed as amended.

Motion Carried

Policy 3 – “Role of the Trustee”

Policy 3 – “Role of the Trustee”

4344-20

Moved by Trustee Steinke – that Policy 3 – “Role of the Trustee” be affirmed as amended.

Motion Carried

Policy 4 – “Trustee  
Code of Conduct”

4345-20

Policy 4 – “Trustee Code of Conduct”

Moved by Trustee Steinke – that Policy 4 –  
“Trustee Code of Conduct” be affirmed  
as amended.

Motion Carried

Additional Action Items

Additional Action Items

Nil

Information/Reports

E. Information/Reports

ASBA/PSBAA

ASBA/PSBAA

ASBA: (Jim Hailes)

No meeting report.

- ASBA AGM was held along with some  
Professional Development sessions.

PSBAA: (Christine Peck)

- PSBC Zoom meeting held November 13,  
2020.
- There was anywhere from 40-46 participants.
- Highlighted in the meeting was asking the  
Government to use the wording Provincially  
Funded and not Publically Funded.
- Some concern regarding ASCA newly adopted  
definition of public Education which includes

Public, Separate and Francophone. So that is something that PSBAA would like to discuss this with ASCA and see if they could change that.

- There is some developed in tools to assist Boards in using the proper language and to education our Public.
- It was decided that the Association will be applying for intervenes status in the Theodore Case.
- There was a workshop on the Belief Statements. There seems to be some different ideas so there will be continue work on them.
- The Charter Schools mandate review has not been supported by the Minister of Education. PSBAA has asked the Minister to go to the Auditor General and ask that, that mandate is being followed and the Minister did not follow that. So the PSBAA is going to go ahead and ask that themselves of the Auditor General.
- PSBAA would like all of the member Boards to discuss that and see if that is something we want PSBAA to move forward and ask the Auditor General for that.
- There was a presentation on “Privatizing Public Choice” by Curtis Riep. This was sent to us earlier but the format was difficult to understand. This will be linked to the PSBAA website to review.
- Also had PD session on November 19 – Political Landscape Advocacy” put on by Catherine Keill. It was great. PD are free sessions for all of us to participate in.

Rhett Czaban and Randy Lovich, left the meeting at 2:59 p.m.

Standing Committee  
Reports

Standing Committee Reports

*Policy Committee* – meeting was held on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. Meeting record will be presented at the November 24, 2020 Board meeting.

*Support/Admin Compensation Committee* – meeting was held on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

*Audit Committee* – Meeting was held on November 24, 2020 via Zoom.

*Group Benefits Ins. Plan Committee* – Deputy Superintendent to contact Brad Seib to determine need for meeting.

*Advocacy Committee*

## Superintendent's Report

## Superintendent's Report

Report provided for information.

COVID Update:

9 cases in Whitecourt  
26 School staff impacted  
130 students impacted  
60 students on the bus impacted

For a total of 216 impacted by COVID

## Finance

## Finance

Reports provided for information.

## Correspondence

## Correspondence

Letters provided for information.

## Board Annual Work Plan

## Board Annual Work Plan

## Motion Review Cycle

Provided for information.

## Motion Review Cycle

Provided for information.

## Trustee Reports

## Trustee Reports

### Sherry Jeffreys

- My area has been very busy
- The School Operational Viability report has been much anticipated by the community as uncertainty has come up once again.
- Trustee Jeffrey's' read about small schools and how they always have to struggle to stay viable.
- Sangudo School keeps the community alive.
- There is no simple or easy solution.

### Christine Peck

- Parent Teacher interviews have taken place at OHS. All held by 10 minute telephone conversations booked online. Has not heard back from any parents on how that went.
- Onoway Elementary alleviated some parent concerns about not being able to go into the school the first day. The school did a virtual tour of classrooms for parents to see where their children are going everyday. YouTube video attached to the website.

### Linda Wigton

- Attended three parent council meetings. Two meetings were online and one was held in person.



- Great questions from parents on testing and what happens if COVID hits Pat Hardy.
- A lot of concerns from parents on COVID.
- Central School was electing new Council.
- Great questions from Hilltop High on Diploma Exams, Grad pictures etc.

Judy Muir

- Attending parent councils as well – incredible attendance. Parents are so thankful students are back in class.
- Staff is very upbeat as well.

Diane Hagman

- Attended MHS parent council last night – no meeting as only two people showed up.
- Principal reported students are in good spirits, accepting the reality as is.
- Lots of reshuffling of staff due to a positive case of COVID in a student.
- Elmer Elson parent council meetings next week and I will be attending that.

**Upcoming Events**

**Upcoming Events**

- November 30 & December 1 Board Workshop – postponed until New Year.
- December 15 – Regular Board Meeting
- January 12 – Regular Board Meeting
- Board Workshop Committee – tentatively Jan. 25 & 26 or Feb. 2 & 3

**Additional Report Items**

**Additional Report Items**

Nil

4346-20

Moved by Trustee Jeffreys– that the Board of Trustees accept Information/Reports

E1- E11 as information.

Motion Carried

**Topics for Future Discussions**

**F. Topics for Future Discussions**

Board Workshop  
Board Work Plan on future Agendas  
Keep Communities Viable

**Requests for Information**

**G. Requests for Information**

Nil

**Meeting Highlights**

**H. Meeting Highlights**

1. Audited Financial Statement
2. School Operational Viability Study
3. School Council Reports

Electronic recording of meeting discontinued at 3:22 p.m.

**In-Camera Items**

**I. In-Camera Items**

4347-20

Moved by Trustee Peck – that the Board move into In-Camera at 3:22 p.m., and Kevin Andrea, Michelle Brennick, and Tamara Spong were invited to stay.

Motion Carried

4348-20

Moved by Trustee Hagman – that the Board move out of In-Camera at 4:24 p.m.

Motion Carried

4349-20

Moved by Trustee Jeffreys – that effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, all NGPS support staff covered by the Terms of Employment – Central Services Staff, Maintenance &

Transportation Staff, School Based Support  
Staff (non-union) – receive a 2% pay increase.

Motion Carried

**Adjournment**

4350-20

**J. Adjournment**

Moved by Trustee Jeffreys - that the meeting  
be adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Motion Carried

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Board Chair

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Secretary-Treasurer