

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH FEBRUARY 15, 2005**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School Committee held a meeting on this date at**

**7 p.m. in the Junior-Senior High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Bill Clay, Paul McFadden, William Munroe, and Frank Maher. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; Director of Curriculum Philip D. Thornton; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were present. Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester arrived at 8:30 p.m.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Vice Chairperson Cicero read the District Mission statement.**

**OPEN FORUM – Member Clay reminded committee members of the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony being held at the Senior High School Auditorium on Wednesday, February 16, 2005 at 6:30 p.m.**

**PRESENTATION – Student Member Report - Jaclyn Manchester was absent at this time.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the Consent Agenda. Member Clay asked that item Correspondence (2) Blue Cross/Blue Shield Credit to Self-Funded Accounts be pulled from the consent agenda. Vice Chairperson Cicero asked that the Budget Sub-Committee Minutes from February 3, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda.**

**Member Maher moved to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Member Clay.**

**Voted 7 – 0.**

**The following items were approved:**

**1. Minutes – Regular Minutes of February 8, 2005**

**2. Personnel Items**

**Appointments**

**Leaves of Absence**

**Resignation**

**Non-Renewals – Final List - (As recommended by the Superintendent with regret) – Superintendent Seitsinger noted there was one additional name to be added to the current list. Committee members were confidentially informed of the individual’s name.**

**Grievances -**

**3. Bills – In the amount of \$75,822.69**

**4. Home School Approvals**

**5. Correspondence – (1) Memo to School Committee Members from Administration regarding Lunch Table Purchase**

**End of Consent Agenda**

**NEW BUSINESS – Carpet Replacement Request-Room 4 – Wawaloam School – Teacher Diana Rotelli asked the School Committee for their assistance in remedying an issue she has been dealing with since January 2003. She stated that she has been diagnosed with severe allergy to the dust mites in her classroom carpet at Wawaloam School. She explained that she has tried all possible solutions to the problem but due to the high level of moisture coming through the**

**carpet due to the lack of sub floor and vapor barrier, the dust mites have remained out of control even with chemical treatments. She requested that the carpeting in her classroom (4) be removed and replaced with a moisture resistant product called Power Bond Carpeting. She provided the committee with a price of \$2,618.00 which included the removal of the old carpet, new carpet replacement, and installation.**

**Members asked several clarifying and probing questions.**

**Member Clay moved to replace the carpet in room 4 at Wawaloam School using funds other than 2004-2005 operating budget. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero.**

**Discussion – Mr. Ross noted the committee has the authority to choose to use the reserve fund to fund the project.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger read Policy #3305 – FUND BALANCE to the committee.**

**Member McFadden stated that he had no question to the merit or expense of this project; however he had a problem with the use of the reserve fund to fund the project and asked to amend the motion.**

**Member McFadden moved to approve the funding of this project, however not using the reserve fund to do so. Seconded by Member Munroe.**

**Discussion - Members asked several clarifying and probing questions and made comments with regard to the proposed product, where the funds should come from, and the leaky roof.**

**Member Maher stated he would go along with approving funding this project however wants to go on record as stating, “If the district uses this product, we will still have the same problem.”**

**Chair DeSack repeated the amended motion made by Member McFadden to replace the carpet in room 4 at Wawaloam School, using funds from the operating budget verses the reserve fund. Voted 3 – 4.**

**Chair DeSack, Vice Chair Cicero, Clerk Coutcher, and Member Clay voted no. Motion denied.**

**Discussion – Members made comments regarding when this project might be done and where students would go during the installation.**

**Chair DeSack repeated the original motion made by Member Clay to**

**replace the carpet in room 4 at Wawaloam School using the reserve fund. Voted 6 – 1. Member Munroe voted no. Motion carried.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger stated the district would seek (3) three quotes and plan a time for the work to be done.**

**Chair DeSack asked that this item be placed on the next School Committee agenda on March 8, 2005 or the following on March 22, 2005.**

**Diana Rotelli thanked the committee for their time and help concerning this matter.**

**Early Dismissal Debrief - Member Maher commented on the Early Dismissal 2005 Process and Procedure Review packet, noting that the review was very involved and he appreciated it. He made reference to page 7 – Early School Dismissal Procedure Lineham & Wawaloam Schools which was sent home with students. He felt that the correspondence should not have been sent home with students prior to School Committee members review and discussion and that it may cause confusion if a second edited version is distributed.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger explained that the correspondence was sent home in order to respond to (2) two early dismissals and the district has the capacity to send out an**

**amended copy without causing any confusion. He also noted that parents do have emergency plans in place for early dismissals.**

**Member Maher recommended the committee vigorously review the Early Dismissal 2005 Process and Procedure Review packet and dedicate a specific work session to addressing problems within the process and procedure packet.**

**Chair DeSack recommended a sub-committee be formed, the sub-committee meet with principals and parents in order to produce suggested modified procedures, and the sub-committee then makes recommendations to the School Committee to modify and adjust the present process and procedure packet.**

**Wawaloam teacher Diana Rotelli stated that she had looked into a service called Voice Broadcasting which cuts down on the amount of calls that need to be made. Mrs. Rotelli said she would be willing to work with the sub-committee or supply them with the information she has relating to this matter.**

**Member McFadden offered to work with Member Maher, should he decide to serve on the sub-committee.**

**Member Maher also noted that he felt one major flaw with the current process and procedure is that children under the age of 12, that were not able to be dropped at their usual stop, should not be brought to the bus company.**

**Chair DeSack responded that the sub-committee would need to specify to the School Committee how the proposed process would work, where student(s) would go, who would supervise the student(s), where funds would come from, and when all information is compiled, bring it to the agenda for consideration.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to establish a sub-committee to review the practices the district currently has in place regarding early dismissal.**

**Seconded by Member Munroe.**

**Voted 7 - 0.**

**Member Maher stated that he had 13 calls from parents within the district expressing concerns with the district's current process and procedure for early dismissal.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Truancy Court – School Social Worker Patrick Cozzolino spoke about the district's truancy sub-committee and the work they have done thus far, noting that most of the work was done last year.**

**Jr. High School Principal Mark Thompson gave an overview of the**

**Truancy Court program which will be implemented in our district this year and will be of no cost to the district. He explained that it is a very positive program that's goal is to reach out to**

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**individual communities to help reduce the truancy rate. Mr. Thompson noted that the program affects the junior high school mostly and targets students that show an absenteeism pattern and have been absent more than 10 days. He mentioned that he would need to check and see if the fact that our School Resource Officers are leaving the district will have an impact on the program, as one of the primary objectives of the program is that a legal person serves the summons to the parents.**

**Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester arrived at this time.**

**Student Member Report - Chair DeSack asked to revert back to the Student Member Report, as Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester had just arrived.**

**Student Representative Jaclyn Manchester stated that she had just returned from a field trip to New York City with the Senior Portfolio art students and teacher. She gave an overview of their walk through Central Park's exhibit of The Gates and their visit to The Metropolitan**

**Art Museum. She also noted that she felt the new exam schedule this year worked well and she heard from other students that they shared her feelings.**

**Strategic Plan Update – Superintendent Seitsinger explained that the School Committee is required to continually update and revisit the Mission Statement and the District Improvement Plan, there are grant funds available to manage the process, and yearly updates are required to rework it as it becomes obsolete. Superintendent Seitsinger recommended that a sub-committee should come together to work on the mission statement.**

**Chair DeSack asked if any committee members would be interested in working with a group to write the mission statement.**

**Member Clay stated that he would be interested.**

**Budget 2005 – 2006 – Superintendent Seitsinger noted the budget workshop meeting scheduled for this Friday, February 18, 2005.**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross reminded committee members that he needed their recommendations sent to him before Friday.**

**School Bus Idling Policy #2400 – Adopted – no comments**

**Member Maher moved to adopt School Bus Idling Policy #2400.**

**Seconded by**

**Member McFadden. Voted 7 – 0.**

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**Epi-Pen Update - Superintendent Seitsinger explained that Epi-Pen Update is continually being kept on the agenda until remedied, and to move to agenda item Contract Compliance Report.**

**Contract Compliance Report - Members asked several clarifying and probing questions regarding Laidlaw Bus Company. It was confirmed that a representative from Laidlaw will attend the School Committee meeting on March 8, 2005 to speak to committee members regarding contract compliance.**

**Member McFadden suggested the district solicit alternative bus companies to come before the committee to speak to how they typically address concerns their customers may have.**

**Consensus from the committee was Superintendent Seitsinger will research options and issue an invitation to two prospective school bus companies to attend a School Committee meeting to address**

**how they work with their customers.**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross noted that he would not cast Laidlaw as “not working with the district. Laidlaw Bus Company has been open and responsive.”**

**Metcalf Intercom System Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross explained there were no formal quotes to present at this time. He noted that two companies – Audet and CSI had evaluated the intercom system and were writing their quotes, and a third company, Symplex would be in this week to review the system.**

**Member McFadden said he believed this purchase is one which should be funded by means of the reserve fund and he would like to see the replacement take place before the end of March.**

**Member McFadden moved to appropriate funds from the reserve fund balance, not to exceed \$20,000, for the purpose of replacing Metcalf School’s intercom system, and any remaining funds to be returned to the reserve fund. Seconded by Member Munroe.**

**Discussion – Chair DeSack stated she wanted to see the quotes first, as the motion is asking the district to set aside funds that can not be touched should an emergency situation occur.**

**Member Clay stated that he wanted to see the magnitude of the**

**intercom system first.**

**Member McFadden stated the reason for this motion is to move as quickly as possible with the repair.**

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**Superintendent Seitsinger said he understood the purpose of the motion, but noted should the motion carry, the committee would be making the decision to spend down the general fund balance.**

**Voted 5 – 2. Chair DeSack and Member Clay voted no. Motion carried.**

**Maintenance Report – Director of Administration Robert Ross communicated the district was eligible for a capital fund reimbursement of 52 – 53 % from the state on housing projects. Projects must be completed before July 1, 2005 in order to get reimbursement. He noted the maintenance/repair plan listed projects the district would like to get done, however all items may not get done because there may not be enough time due to the bidding process.**

**Member Maher questioned, unless noted (unfunded), did the district**

**have the funds to complete the listed tasks on the maintenance/repair plan?**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross confirmed that was true.**

**Member Maher commented that if the district has the funds but does not know if they have the time to complete the tasks, they should consider using the unused funds to replace the carpet in room 4 at Wawaloam School because the health and safety of the district's staff is more important.**

**Member Maher requested that Director of Maintenance Bill Plumley provide a priority list, as he would like to know which maintenance/repairs Mr. Plumley feels are most important.**

**High School Graduation Requirements Policy# 7603 – 2nd Reading and Adoption – There were no changes suggested to the High School Graduation Requirements Policy #7603. The policy will be placed on the next School Committee agenda for adoption.**

**Request to Purchase (3) Three New Cafeteria Tables for Metcalf School– Member Munroe noted that he had researched the issue of purchasing new cafeteria tables for Metcalf School and had met with Metcalf School's Vice Principal Fish. Vice Principal Fish showed Member Munroe all the cafeteria tables at Metcalf School. Member Munroe noted that one particular table brand was of high quality and**

made by a company called Sico. He contacted Sico's factory to see if they would deal directly with the district in order to eliminate the middle man, thus cutting cost to the district, but they would not agree to do so. Metcalf is in immediate need of 3 new tables and hopes to eventually replace a total of 12 tables, which Member Munroe is in agreement with.

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Member Munroe contacted a second company, Adirondack, which the district can directly purchase tables from. The total cost of (3) three tables with shipping is \$2,700.00; however there is no warranty with this company.

Member Munroe explained the cost of (3) three Sico tables is \$4,000.00 assembled or \$3,500.00 unassembled. Member Munroe suggested buying the tables unassembled and having our maintenance department personnel assemble them. He noted the Sico table has a 15 year warranty and the table is of high quality.

After much discussion, School Committee consensus was that Member Munroe would contact Sico to assure that purchasing tables unassembled would not void the warranty and contact Adirondack to

**inquire about liability issues and to see if any local school district is using their product for our district to view.**

**Member Maher suggested waiting to make a motion to purchase tables until committee members' questions have been answered.**

**Chair DeSack thanked Member Munroe for all his research concerning this matter.**

**Chair DeSack reverted back to items pulled from the Consent Agenda - Vice Chairperson Cicero asked that the Budget Sub-Committee Minutes from February 3, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda, as they were incorrect. She noted that she was present at the meeting but not listed as being so. The necessary correction will be made and resubmitted for approval at the next School Committee meeting.**

**Member Clay asked that item Correspondence (2) Blue Cross/Blue Shield Credit to Self-Funded Accounts be pulled from the consent agenda, as he did not understand how Blue Cross/Blue Shield are raising their prices, yet giving funds back to the district.**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross noted that the bottom line is Blue Cross/Blue Shield is issuing a rebate to the self funded municipality accounts for whatever reason. He gave an overview of how EWG is a self funded account through its participation in the WB Community Health consortium program and he forecasted anticipated**

**information WB will provide to the district in order to help it plan for the future.**

**REPORTS/COMMENTS –**

**IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Budget Workshop Meeting – February 18, 2005, Notice to Canvassers – February 21, 2005, Budget Adoption – March 8, 2005**

**ADJOURNMENT – Chair DeSack moved to adjourn at 9:45 p.m. Seconded by Member Munroe. Voted 7 – 0.**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**