

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH June 28, 2005**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

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

**7:00 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, Frank Maher, and William Munroe. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were present. Director of Curriculum Philip D. Thornton was absent.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.**

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

**OPEN FORUM – None**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to move up agenda item E. Teacher of the Year Results. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.**

**Teacher of the Year Results – Superintendent Seitsinger recognized**

**Junior High School Special Education Teacher Kathleen Levett as 2005 Teacher of the Year and offered congratulations to her and her family. He explained that at teacher orientation on opening day 2005 - 2006, all nominees and Mrs. Levett, will be recognized for their accomplishment. Mrs. Levett gave special thanks to Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo for providing her the opportunity to teach in the district.**

**PRESENTATION – Facilities Presentation – Director of Maintenance William Plumley gave an overview of a June 28, 2005 District Maintenance Report handed out at the meeting. He explained one immediate matter the district must address concerns the junior – senior high school fire alarm system. He gave specific details regarding the problems the system is experiencing, noting there have been 15 false alarms in the month of June thus far. He reported he met with West Greenwich Fire Chief Hoxsie and Chief Hoxsie communicated he will be issuing a letter to the district stating there have been too many false alarms in the building and the problem must be repaired. Chief Hoxsie also communicated to Mr. Plumley he is prepared to close the building should this problem not be repaired. Chief Hoxsie fears students and fire personnel will eventually begin to disregard the fire alarm. It was noted that the fire alarm system is in working order for the detection of an actual fire. Members discussed options for addressing this issue.**

**Chair DeSack moved to allow Administration to go forward in seeking**

**options for the repair of the fire alarm system at the junior – senior high school and to bring**

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**recommendations forward to Chair DeSack as soon as they become available, noting this is a time sensitive issue. Seconded by Member Clay.**

**Discussion – It was agreed the district will pursue a permanent fix to remedy the problem.**

**Voted 7 – 0.**

**Mr. Plumley continued to highlight his report, explaining another area of concern is the inadequate size of both the junior and senior high school cafeterias. Consensus was Mr. Plumley will contact members of the School Improvement Team, as they have already researched this situation and may have volunteers capable and willing to address this issue.**

**Mr. Plumley expressed concern regarding the junior – senior high school septic system lift station, noting it is recommended the system be changed every 10 – 12 years, the approximate repair cost is \$12,000 - \$15,000, and this item should be listed on the Capital**

**Asset Plan. Director of Maintenance Robert Ross will introduce this item on the July 14, 2005 Capital Asset Plan. Members discussed the current system's longevity and the impact it would cause should the system shut down. Consensus was Mr. Plumley will arrange for a septic system expert to evaluate and produce a written report for School Committee to review for its next meeting on July 19th.**

**Mr. Plumley discussed other areas of concern at the junior – senior high school, Metcalf School, Lineham School, Wawaloam School and district wide. After lengthy discussion on these issues, consensus was Mr. Plumley will contact a roofing expert to assess the cost to repair the junior – senior high school roof, keep a close check on Wawaloam's septic system, if action is taken on roofs in the district – Wawaloam will be included, and await district-wide compliance with new fire code timeline results from the State Fire Marshall and then review when compliances must be met.**

**Member McFadden moved to allow Administration, in addition to the junior – senior high school task, to also go forward in seeking options for bringing the Metcalf School fire alarm system up to state compliance, and to bring recommendations forward to Chair DeSack as soon as they become available, noting this is a time sensitive matter. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 7 – 0.**

**Member Clay related Mr. Plumley provided a very thorough and comprehensive report and recommended that the monthly**

**maintenance reports, indicated in Mr. Ross' status report, include capital issues updates as well as routine items.**

**Member Maher requested a 5-minute recess at 8:35 p.m.**

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**Meeting reconvened at 8:40 p.m.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Member Maher requested agenda item, A. Regular Minutes of June 14, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda.**

**Member McFadden requested agenda items, 3. a. Letter of resignation from David Key as a .8 Elementary Music Teacher at Metcalf School effective June 22, 2005, and C. Bills be pulled from the consent agenda.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger requested agenda item, 3. c. Letter of Resignation from Phil Thornton as Curriculum Director effective August 12, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda for comment.**

**Member Clay moved to accept the consent agenda with items A., 3 a.,**

**3 c., and C. pulled. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.**

**The following items were approved:**

**A. Minutes –Executive Meeting Minutes from June 14, 2005**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments – (As recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. Michael Messier as Sr. High School Head Football Coach for the 2005 – 2006 school year.**

**b. Jim Alves as Sr. High School Assistant Football Coach for the 2005 – 2006 school year.**

**c. Sharon Sutton as Summer School Coordinator effective July 5, 2005.**

**2. Leaves of Absence – (As recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. Joan M. Aker request for an extension of her leave of absence (for an additional 3-months) from her 1.0 FTE Jr.-Sr. High School Custodial position.**

**3. Resignations – (As recommended by the Superintendent with**

regret)

b. Linda Luther resignation (correction from previous vote of retirement)

effective June 22, 2005.

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d. Karen Oxholm letter informing Superintendent Seitsinger of no longer

being able to job share for the guidance counselor position with Merilee

Wilbur for the 2005 – 2006 school year.

e. Letter of Resignation from Rockie Bromell as Jr. High School Softball

Head Coach effective June 13, 2005.

#### **4. Non-Renewals Rescinded – Update**

a. Michael Penza, as a result of the Job Fair, recall changed to 1.0 FTE

from .5 FTE secondary teacher. (No FTE impact on the budget)

b. Cynthia Donnelly Job Fair recall clerical adjustment to 1.0

**FTE from .5**

**FTE elementary teacher. (No FTE impact on the budget)**

**End of Consent Agenda**

**Budget Projection 04 – 05 – Member McFadden voiced his concerns regarding whether or not School Committee has the right to appropriate funds beyond those authorized at the District Financial Meeting. Member McFadden explained should administration report an overdrawn expenditure at a future date; he will put forward a motion to act on that additional expenditure, as he is not comfortable with appropriating funds beyond those authorized at the DFM. Chair DeSack communicated the current end operating budget shows a general fund balance of \$130,000 in the black and that matters mentioned by Member McFadden are in legal proceedings.**

**Sodexo Contract Renewal – Member Maher asked for better clarification as to why there was a need for a .40 increase in the cost of a student's lunch, which would generate an \$8,000 - \$15,000 increase per year, if the Sodexo program works at a breakeven margin.**

**Chair DeSack explained the last meal price increase was four years ago and since that time costs to provide lunch has increased.**

**After lengthy discussion, consensus was to accept the contract without specifying the meal cost, to further discuss meal cost, to**

perhaps allow a moderate meal price increase, to look at what meal choices are being offered to students in order to increase sales, and to review increasing the proposed price increase for an adult meal, as Member Munroe recommended the adult meal price increase should not be the same as the students’.

Member Clay moved to approve the renewal of the Sodexo Contract and to postpone discussion of meal prices until the July 19th School Committee meeting. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero.

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Discussion – Member Maher voiced concern that if the committee is unable to resolve this issue, it will face prices every year until the contract ends. He agreed to go along with approving the contract renewal, but asked members to keep this in mind.

Voted 6 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.

Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the correspondence.

G. Correspondence – (1) State of RI - Brief of Petitioner Anne Gorman, (2) Letter to Attorney Nicholas Gorham from Department of Attorney General Regarding McFadden v. Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School Committee, (3) Case Studies of SALT Survey Improvement Indicators, (4) Letter to Superintendent from Town of

**Exeter Regarding 5.5% tax cap, (5) Final Teacher Recall List 2004-2005, (6) 2005 Certified Job Fair Results, (7) Council 94 Job Fair Results, (8) Memo from Commissioner McWalters Regarding Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Schools - (Recommended Agenda Discussion), (9) Confidential Memo from the Superintendent to School Committee Members, (10) Memo to School Committee Members from the Superintendent regarding Student Enrollment**

**Superintendent Seitsinger explained correspondence item (1) was provided as information in the event the committee may have similar dealings in the future.**

**Member Clay referenced correspondence item (8) and explained the general assembly will provide funding to schools for AEDs.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger recommended correspondence item (9) should be placed on a future agenda in Executive Session.**

**Member Clay requested correspondence item (5) be pulled from correspondence because this item requires a vote by School Committee. Superintendent Seitsinger explained a vote was taken at the last School Committee meeting and correspondence item (5) was provided as an accurate updated list due to the changes brought forward tonight in the consent agenda.**

**NEW BUSINESS – SORICO Funding Proposal to RI Foundation for**

**School System Improvements & Cost Reduction Support – Superintendent Seitsinger referenced an enclosed \$30,000 grant proposal from SORICO that all superintendents were asked to bring before their School Committees. He explained the grant would enhance the capacity to support the collaboration of nine school districts to work together and reduce costs, and it would be of no cost to the district. Superintendent Seitsinger strongly recommended School Committee members to support this issue.**

**Member Maher moved to support the SORICO Funding Proposal to RI Foundation for School System Improvements & Cost Reduction Support. Seconded by Member Munore. Voted 7 – 0.**

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**School Committee Members to Sit on Interviewing Team – Superintendent Seitsinger explained School Committee members were needed to serve on the interviewing teams for upcoming interviews for the positions of High School Director of Student Affairs and Director of Curriculum.**

**June 30, 2005 High School Director of Student Affairs – One member needed to serve. Member Clay volunteered to serve.**

**Director of Curriculum – Two members needed to serve. It was suggested one member from each town be represented. Member**

**McFadden volunteered to serve as the primary for Exeter. Member Munroe volunteered to serve as the alternate for Exeter. Vice Chair Cicero volunteered to serve as the primary for West Greenwich. Member Clay volunteered to serve as the alternate for West Greenwich.**

**Adoption of New Textbook – Superintendent Seitsinger expressed his feelings that new textbook adoption is a practice that is not done often enough. He explained that Director of Curriculum Phil Thornton is just in the process of making this a more structured procedure. Dr. Seitsinger gave an overview of the textbook, noting that History Department Chair Louse Oliveira and senior high school history teacher Helen King believe this textbook will be an excellent addition and enhancement tool for their American Government and Law courses.**

**Member Munroe recommended tabling this item to the next meeting in order to allow time for him to review the contents of the textbook.**

**Chair DeSack explained past policy has been to trust department heads and administrator to choose textbooks appropriate for the classroom, as School Committee members are not the experts, and asked if this request was going to become a common practice, which would result in the need for more time to order books as it typically takes at least 6-weeks for delivery of new textbooks.**

**Member Munroe said it would depend on the type of textbook.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to adopt the new textbook. Member Clay seconded.**

**Discussion – After lengthy discussion, consensus was as there was only one copy available and other members also wanted the opportunity to review the textbook, and this textbook would be supplemental to the regular textbook therefore the time factor would not be as detrimental, to allow members wishing to review the textbook to do so prior to the next School Committee meeting on July 19th.**

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**Member McFadden moved to amend the motion on the floor to allow any member wishing to, the opportunity to review the textbook within the next three weeks. Seconded by Member Munroe.**

**Chair DeSack asked members to vote on the amendment to the motion to allow any member wishing to, the opportunity to review the textbook within the next three weeks. Seconded by Member McFadden. Voted 5 – 2. Vice Chair Cicero and Member Clay voted**

**no. Amendment approved.**

**Chair DeSack repeated the original motion to adopt the new textbook. Voted 2 – 5. Members Munroe, McFadden, Maher, Chair DeSack, and Clerk Coutcher voted no.**

**Summer Interview Committee – Chair DeSack explained job interviewing may occur during the summertime and the committee needs to secure members to sit on various interviewing teams. She suggested securing two members, one representative from each community, in advance for last minute interviews. She explained interviews typically take place during the daytime, consist of 6 – 8 candidates, and Superintendent Seitsinger will contact members serving with specific details such as time and place. Vice Chair Cicero, Clerk Coutcher, Members McFadden, and Clay agreed to be the primary members available. Chair DeSack and Member Maher will be available as alternates.**

**Coach's Handbook – Member Clay explained the Coach's Handbook needs to be reviewed each year and one change was made to page 2 with regard to the use of Epi-pens.**

**Member McFadden moved to approve the changes made to the Coach's Handbook. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 7 – 0.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS – School Facility Use Policy #9700 – 2nd Reading – Members discussed concerns relating to the implementation of a \$10 application fee for all facility use forms filed for all non-school sponsored events. They discussed setting a one-time fee or leaving the fee charge to the discretion of the superintendent. Superintendent Seitsinger voiced concerns regarding fee implementation to groups historically using facilities at no charge. Members’ consensus was to reword the policy to include no application fee to youth and children groups. Changes will be made and this item will continue to the next agenda. Superintendent Seitsinger noted that an implementation date is essential as this policy is a major cultural change to the way the district did this work in the past.**

**Lineham Roof – Update – This item was addressed during the Facilities Presentation earlier in the meeting.**

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**Property & Liability Insurance Bid Results – Director of Administration Robert Ross explained that Starkweather & Shepley have provided outstanding customer service to the district for the past four years and his recommendation was to award the bid to Starkweather & Shepley. He communicated the district’s current**

**liability is at \$1,000,000 per incident and \$3,000,000 aggregated.**

**Member Clay recommended increasing liability insurance to double the amount, as at today's costs the current figures are not adequate.**

**Mr. Ross communicated the premium conservatively would be approximately \$2,000 per \$1,000,000. He explained it was necessary to vote on approving the three-year contract now and at anytime the district may make adjustments to the coverage.**

**REPORTS/COMMENTS – Chair DeSack reverted back to items pulled from the consent agenda. Member Maher requested the Regular Minutes of June 14, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda, and requested an amendment be made to add text to page 6: Member Maher abstained, stating the motion made no sense, as there is no way to predict future budgets.**

**Member McFadden moved to accept the regular minutes of June 14, 2005 with amendments made. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.**

**Member McFadden requested item a. Letter of resignation from David Key as a .8 Elementary Music Teacher at Metcalf School effective June 22, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda and inquired if music classes were eliminated because of the reduction and were all students still offered music. Superintendent Seitsinger confirmed all**

**students were still offered music. The reduction to .8 is based on the committees' decision to reduce regular classroom teachers.**

**Member McFadden requested C. Bills – In the amount of \$ 427,326.08 be pulled from the consent agenda to inquire about a bill for chiropractic care to an injured student. Member McFadden asked if the district can be reimbursed for the costs and if all students are being offered RITECARE applications to bring home to parents as he had previously requested. Superintendent Seitsinger confirmed the applications were sent home with students and he said he will follow-up on this matter.**

**Superintendent Seitsinger requested c. Letter of Resignation from Phil Thornton as Curriculum Director effective August 12, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda for comment. Dr. Seitsinger commented that Dr. Thornton has provided outstanding service to the district, will be greatly missed, and wanted to record in the minutes the district's thanks to Dr. Thornton.**

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**Member Clay referenced Dr. Thornton's letter of resignation, noting the committee needs to address the one-year administrative contract structure the district currently has in place and requested the issue**

**be put on a future agenda.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to accept the pulled agenda items, 3 a., 3 c., and C. Seconded by Chair DeSack. Voted 7 – 0.**

**IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – July 19, 2005 – School Committee Meeting,**

**August 9, 2005 School Committee Meeting**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION –**

**Adjournment – Member Maher moved to adjourn at 10:30 p.m. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**