

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 15, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Gregory Coutcher, Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Mark Rafanelli; Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden, and Claudine Pande. Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice Chairperson was absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar, Director of Administration Robert V. Ross, Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar, and Student Member Matthew French were present.**

**ORDER – Chair Coutcher called the meeting to order in Open Session at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.**

**Moment of Silence – Michael J. Messier – A moment of silence was observed for Michael J. Messier, 54, who passed away on February 25, 2010. Mr. Messier was Head Coach of the Exeter-West Greenwich High School Football Team and Head Coach of the School's Girls Softball Team.**

**District Mission Statement – Clerk Zuercher read the District Mission Statement.**

## **Open Forum – None**

**Presentation – Student Member Report – Student Member Matthew French stated that there was nothing new to report at this time.**

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

**Member Pande made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Member Donovan seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor.**

**The following items were approved:**

**A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of February 8, 2011**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments**

**2. Leaves of Absence**

**3. Resignations**

**4. Grievances**

**5. Non-Renewals**

**6. Recalls**

**7. Sabbaticals**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 15, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 2**

**C. Bills – In the amount of \$162,117.43**

**D. Home School Approvals**

**End Consent Agenda**

**Correspondence – None**

**Budget Update 2011 - 2012 – Dr. Geismar told the School Committee that following the joint meeting with the town councils, the administrative finance team reviewed the 2011 – 2012 proposed budget again and met with the auditor. The Director of Administration has brought a revised Budget Summary report to respond to the town councils and to include the reading supervisor position. It appears that the fund balance is stronger than anticipated. Therefore, cuts can be made to two areas of the Operations Budget, which would change the town shares to \$62,650 for Exeter and \$262,482 for West Greenwich. Director of Administration Robert Ross reported that he and the technology administrator are confident that the district is in a strong position and has enough funding in the budget to finance the reading program and to attend to laptop carts and ELMOS. He said that those items could be paid out over a four-year period, which is very affordable. Mr. Ross answered members' clarifying questions regarding the surplus projections and debt service bond expenditures balances. Chair Coutcher reminded members that by charter the School Committee is compelled to approve a budget at the next meeting. He asked for a consensus that**

each member at the table is in agreement with the budget summary and to present it to the town councils at the March 1 joint meeting. Members nodded in agreement. The 2011 – 2012 proposed budget will come before the School Committee for adoption on March 8, 2011.

**New Business – NECAP Scores Update –** Dr. Geismar stated that the school community is thrilled with the NECAP results. The challenge now is to keep the scores and to keep improving. Individual schools will report out on their scores at their School Committee presentation meeting night. Member Rafanelli asked not to lose sight of Assistant Principal Christopher Anthony's efforts with NECAP scheduling and student motivation. To address Member Rafanelli's concerns regarding Grade 8 scores, Dr. Geismar outlined areas being explored and strategies that will be used to improve. Clerk Zuercher offered her view that Metcalf School is doing a fabulous job proactively. One example of this is student referrals to the Math Academy. In response to Member McFadden's inquiry, Dr. Geismar said that Commissioner Gist would be visiting the district in April. He said that he would inform the committee in advance of the exact date of her visit.

**Unfinished Business – Healthy and Safe Schools Committee Update –** Chair Coutcher advised that Vice Chair Cicero has requested to table this item because she is interested in serving on the Healthy and Safe Schools Committee and she has some input to offer.

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 15, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 3**

**Member Pande made a motion to table item, Healthy and Safe Schools Committee Update. Clerk Zuercher seconded the motion.**

**Voted: 6 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

**Policies Review and Adoption – 4150: AIDS Virus – HIV/Hepatitis - Amendment –**

**Dr. Geismar reported that the school nurse teachers reviewed policy 4150 and they are confident that the only change was to add the citation.**

**Clerk Zuercher made a motion to approve amended policy 4150. Member Pande seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

**3203: Budget Approval by Referendum – 2nd Reading – This item will continue to the March 8 meeting agenda for adoption.**

**Approve Job Description for .5 Reading Supervisor Position – Dr. Geismar requested to table this item to a future meeting agenda. He said that he wants to do additional work on the document.**

**Member Rafanelli made a motion to table this item to the next meeting. Member Donovan seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.**

**2011 – 2012 School Calendar Update – Dr. Geismar referenced the calendar survey results enclosed in members' supplemental packets and stated there are interesting comments and there was a good return with 660 parent responses and 220 staff responses. He requested that if the committee decides to move professional development (PD) days, to consider that one PD day is used to judge senior project and he would need enough people to staff that. Another professional development day is used for parent/teacher conferences. Moving parent/teacher conference day is a negotiation issue. A lengthy discussion followed and members exchanged views and ideas concerning next year's calendar format and the survey results. The committee came to a consensus to inform parents/staff that the School Committee decided to change next year's calendar to eliminate February vacation and to have one week off instead of two. A second survey would be sent out to query whether parents/staff prefer to have spring vacation in March or April. Chair Coutcher requested that the superintendent bring two draft calendars on March 8 with the results of the survey showing where spring vacation will be. One of the calendars will show school starting before Labor Day and the other starting after Labor Day. Member Rafanelli asked to identify day 171 for seniors.**

**Approve Make Up Days – Chair Coutcher told members that he and Dr. Geismar determined that if an extra make up day becomes necessary for seniors this year, options would be explored at that time. However, at this point seniors should graduate on schedule. Dr. Geismar verified that Senior Project day does not need to count as a make up day for seniors right now but would if it became necessary.**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 15, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 4**

**Legislators' Night Discussion – In anticipation of local legislators accepting the committee's invitation to attend the March 8 School Committee meeting, Chair Coutcher asked members to share ideas or questions they might have to communicate that night.**

**Student Member French left the meeting at this time, (7:05 p.m.).**

**Member McFadden expressed his opinion that the new education reform that bases state-aid on family income is unfair. Clerk Zuercher stated that unfunded mandates, such as funding out-of-district busing of parochial and private school students is unfair. Chair Coutcher said that one idea he had proposed a long time ago was to place tuitioned-out special education students into a state pool budget to reveal a more identifiable figure if a student transfers to a different school district. A school district would receive**

reimbursement from the state wherever that student travels. Consequently, the state funds the tuition rather than the school district. Member Rafanelli proposed group homes should follow a student as well. Member McFadden said it bothers him to hear talk about the cost of educating a child because it is disproportionate, i.e. \$15,000 in EWG and \$9,000 in Providence. Dr. Geismar reported that on March 7 the Uniform Chart of Accounts, UCOA becomes public based on 2009/2010 figures. It will take awhile to make district-to-district comparisons. However, it will be interesting to see how EWG looks in its spending patterns. UCOA will be presented in terms of average cost and will reveal lowest to highest and average spending. The district will be able to see where it fits in.

**Capital Project Update – Dr. Geismar stated that there is nothing to report at this time on the Capital Project.**

**Approve High School Program of Studies – Dr. Geismar requested to table this item to the next regular meeting agenda. Chair Coutcher advised this item would continue because the Program of Studies is not complete yet.**

**Reports/Comments – None**

**Important Dates and Meetings – Chair Coutcher pointed out that the next Joint Meeting is on March 1, 2011.**

**Tuesday, March 1, 2011 – Joint Meeting; Wednesday, March 2, 2011 – Budget Workshop; Tuesday, March 8, 2011 – School Committee Meeting (Budget Adoption); Friday, March 18, 2011 – Deadline for Motions to Change the Budget by more than \$10,000; Monday, March 21, 2011 - Public Hearing; Tuesday, March 22, 2011 – School Committee Meeting – (Metcalf School Presentation); Tuesday, April 12, 2011-School Committee Meeting – (Sr. High School Presentation); Monday, April 11, 2011-All Day Referendum; Tuesday, April 26, 2011-School Committee Meeting – (Junior High School Presentation)**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH February 15, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 5**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Clerk Zuercher moved to go into Executive Session at 7:15 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C-94/Teachers' Association)-Negotiation Discussion and/or Pending Litigation and 42-46-5 (2) – Anthony K. vs. Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District and Janine P. vs. Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District; seconded by Member Rafanelli; and voted as follows:**

**Gregory Coutcher Yes**

**Valerie Zuercher Yes**

**Mark Rafanelli Yes**

**Theresa Donovan Yes**

**Paul McFadden Yes**

**Claudine Pande Yes**

**Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 7:15 p.m.**

**Clerk Zuercher moved to reconvene to Open Session. Member Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor.**

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 7:55 p.m.**

**There were no votes taken during Executive Session.**

**Adjournment – Clerk Zuercher moved to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. Member Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**