

**August 23, 2005**

**Public Session**

**The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge, at 6:36 PM. The following members were present:**

**Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Chair    Mr. Douglas Wilkey, Clerk                      Ms. Karen  
Gleason**

**Mr. Terrence Kavanagh, V. Chair    Mr. David Croston**

**Mrs. Marge Levesque**

**Also Present: Dr. Susan Lusi, Colleen Jermain, Cynthia Brown, Rick Updegrove, and Patti Cofield**

**A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Croston to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Personnel Matters, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation; or (a)(8) Student Discipline. So voted 6-0.**

**PUBLIC SESSION AGENDA**

## **1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Ms. Wedge reported that an Executive Session took place at 6:30 PM. No votes were taken. A motion was made by Mr. Croston and seconded by Mr. Kavanagh to seal the minutes of the meeting. So voted 6-0.**

**Ms. Wedge announced that the Town Council scheduled a budget meeting with the School Committee on Monday, August 29th, 7:00 PM, at the Portsmouth Middle School. The Council also scheduled a meeting to discuss the PHS gymnasium on Tuesday, August 30th, 7:00 PM, at the Portsmouth Middle School. Ms. Wedge also announced that a special School Committee meeting would be held on Monday, August 29th, 5:00 PM, at Portsmouth Middle School, to discuss the budget and the gymnasium issues.**

## **2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**Dr. Lusi stated that the Administration is still carefully reviewing and analyzing numbers and information as becomes available, and at this point it appears we are possibly facing a structural, rather than a one time deficit. The Administration will be working closely with the Finance Subcommittee to analyze this year's budget carefully, as we have done for this past year's budget.**

**An Administrators' Retreat was held on Thursday, August 18th, and Friday, August 19th, at Raytheon Company in Portsmouth. The participants included the Administrative team, Mr.**

**Portsmouth School Committee Minutes      Page 2**

**August 23, 2005**

**Public Session**

**Elmasian, Principals and Assistant Principals, as well as the high school's Director of Guidance, Mrs. Gomes. The retreat focused on:**

- the kind of leadership required to bring student learning to the next level;**
- team building and getting to know each other – leadership stories;**
- planning for the year;**
- the need for focus and to deepen initiatives already started;**

**Dr. Lusi thanked Raytheon for providing complimentary meeting space, as well as breakfast and lunch. She also thanked the retreat facilitator, Mr. Ed Doucette from the East Bay Education Collaborative.**

**Dr. Lusi stated that she met with Asst. Supt. Jermain, Mrs. Brown, and Mr. Littlefield to re-view course enrollment on the high school level. There are very high enrollments in some classes, including**

**freshman science, physical education, and music. It is being tracked very carefully with Mr. Littlefield, and Dr. Lusi will keep the Committee apprised**

**Dr. Lusi announced a change to the 2005-06 school calendar. Good Friday is listed as a professional development day, however, rather than using this as a stand alone day, we will be using the time in ways that we in Portsmouth and researchers across the country have found to be more effective – job-embedded professional development – time spread through-out the year for introduction, application, and follow-up on programs and practices we are working to introduce in our schools. One example is that we called our middle school house leaders back three days early to learn about new curricula that will be introduced at their grade levels, to look at data on student achievement, and to be trained in providing the professional development that they will be leading their colleagues in. Ms. Gleason inquired about calculating the cost of bringing in the House Leaders three days early. Dr. Lusi stated that the cost was approximately \$3,000, and Mrs. Brown stated that it is established in the contract.**

**a) Teaching and Learning: Asst. Supt. Jermain reported that math lead teachers in all three of our elementary schools have been conducting trainings and will hold grade-level meetings after school on a monthly basis to review successes, challenges, and how literacy data ties into children's learning.**

**Asst. Supt Jermain stated she is very proud of the teachers that participated in LCI (Literacy Classroom Initiative) training during the summer. They are:**

**Nancy Doucet Michele Polselli Claudia Divoll Denise Webster  
Sue Mixter Patricia Powell Carol Rosa Bryn Weymouth  
Margaret Waugh Laura Smith Nicole Bedard Vicky Flaherty  
Laura Backman Mary Stockard Karen Heller**

**Portsmouth School Committee Minutes Page 3**

**August 23, 2005**

**Public Session**

**Asst. Supt. Jermain reported that three Portsmouth teachers were selected to participate in a program titled, “Research Experience for Teachers (RET),” at Brown University over the past two summers. Through this program, Mr. Erin Escher, Mrs. Keri Masoin-Jardine, and Mrs. Rebecca Ragno, were given the chance to work with engineers to create science/math-based modules to enhance classroom practices. In addition to creating more advanced science based modules, the teachers attended various lectures, which broadened their knowledge of research practices happening through Brown University. On August 12th, Asst. Supt. Jermain and Dr. Christina Martin attended their presentations at Brown University.**

**Asst. Supt. Jermain thanked the four Raytheon engineers that worked with forty-five Algebra 2 students in the Ramp-Up program at Portsmouth High School over the past two weeks to help them brush up on their Algebra skills.**

**Asst. Supt. Jermain stated that work needs to be done on the Portsmouth High School Program of Studies so that students who opt out of taking the word processing class will have challenging electives to choose from. She will work on this over the winter with Mr. Littlefield.**

**Mr. Littlefield, Ms. Lisa Murphy, and Asst. Supt. Jermain attended the Commissioner's Peer Review training and information session. The purpose of the session was to inform high school leaders across the state that now is the time to make certain we are fulfilling the new regulations. This includes Graduation by Proficiency and High School Diploma System. It is very important that all School Committee members are informed of the new regulations and what needs to be in place. Mr. Littlefield and Asst. Supt. Jermain will be making sure that information is going out into the community and home to parents.**

**Asst. Supt. Jermain reported that Summer School was a success. She has information that she will share at the second meeting in September.**

**Asst. Supt. Jermain gave an update on AEDs. Mr. Littlefield is on the Advisory Board of the Southeastern New England Heart Safe Foundation, and he and Ms. Nancy Souza, School Nurse Teacher at Hathaway School, will give a presentation to the School Committee at the second meeting in September. Dr. Neil Brandon, who is a leading car-diologist and President of the Foundation, will attend as well. An information sheet on the recommended AED was distributed.**

**b) Finance and Operations: Mrs. Brown gave a brief report on the 2004-05 budget issue. She has been working with the Finance Subcommittee to understand what occurred. Administration is working on a line-by-line analysis of the 2005-06 budget, that includes placing all of the staff that have been hired recently as well as implementing the new benefits and salaries so that we can get a real picture of where we are for the 2005-06**

**Portsmouth School Committee Minutes      Page 4**

**August 23, 2005**

**Public Session**

**budget. There will be a report on that in the near future. Mrs. Brown also stated that we are in the midst of issues pertaining to the opening of the school year, such as finalizing bus routes, coordinating transportation, preparing for orientation, verifying certifications, etc.**

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Croston to approve the minutes of the meeting held August 10, 2005. So voted 6-0.**

### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Dr. Lusi removed Item e) from the Consent Agenda. It will be put on the next agenda.**

**a) Teacher Resignation. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee accepts the resignation of Mary Surber from the position of Special Education Resource Teacher at Elmhurst School, effective immediately."**

**b) Appt. – Art Teacher, 2/5 time, Elmhurst. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #1-8/23/05, to the position of Art Teacher, 2/5 time, at Elmhurst School, effective August 29, 2005."**

**c) Appt. – Special Education Resource Teacher, Elmhurst. The Superintendent recom-mends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Super-intendent's appointment, Recommendation #2-8/23/05, to the position of Special Edu-cation**

**Resource Teacher at Elmhurst School, effective August 29, 2005.”**

**d) Appt. – Grade 8 House Leader, PMS. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #3-8/23/05, to the position of Grade 8 House Leader at Portsmouth Middle School, for the 2005-06 school year.”**

**e) Appt. – Grade 6 Teacher, PMS. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #4-8/23/05, to the position of Grade 6 Studies Teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, effective August 29, 2005.”**

**f) Appt. – Library Science Teacher, PHS. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #5-8/23/05, to the position of Library Science Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective August 29, 2005.”**

**Portsmouth School Committee Minutes      Page 5**

**August 23, 2005**

**Public Session**

**g) Approval of Requests for Permission to Home School. The**

**Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee approves the requests to provide home schooling for the 2005-06 school year for students HS#6 through HS#8-8/23/05, as listed in the confidential memo dated August 17, 2005, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2.”**

**A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Wilkey to approve the Consent Agenda as revised. So voted 6-0.**

**Dr. Lusi announced the following appointments:**

- b) Lorna Burke, Art Teacher, 2/5 time, Elmhurst, Step 3**
- c) Sharon Raposo, Special Education Resource Teacher, Elmhurst, Step 2**
- d) Joao Arruda, Grade 8 House Leader, PMS, Step 10M + Stipend**
- f) Kimberly Lavoie, Library Science Teacher, PHS, Step 3M + 30**

## **5. BUSINESS AGENDA**

**a) Discussion/Ratification – PMS Septic System Change Orders. A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Croston to ratify the approval of the PMS Septic System change orders as listed in the backup memo. So voted 4-1-1. Ms. Gleason was opposed. Mr. Wilkey recused himself. The following change orders were ratified.**

1. **\$900.00: Reference #01-05 (Replacement of unsuitable ledge material excavated from the sewer force main trench;**
2. **\$4,370.14: Reference #03-05 (Telephone Service, wireless connection for the TCOM panel);**
3. **\$4,774.00: Reference #06-05 (Relocation of 8,000 septic tank)**

## **6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a) Finance Subcommittee. A draft of an Interim Report titled, “Town of Portsmouth School Department – Review of Fiscal 2005 Deficit and District Policy and Procedure, August 23, 2005,” generated by Mr. Croston and the Finance Subcommittee, was distributed. Mr. Croston reviewed highlights of the report. Much discussion took place. The Interim Report will be presented to the School Committee for acceptance at the special meeting scheduled for Monday, August 29th, 5:00 PM. The draft report will also be delivered to the Town Council members prior to Monday’s meeting.**

**1) Discussion/Action – 2004-05 Budget Shortfall.** A motion was made by Mr. Cros-ton and seconded by Mr. Kavanagh to approve the Finance Subcommittee’s recommendation to request a supplemental appropriation from the Town Council in the amount of \$321,982 to cover the shortfall in the 2004-05 School Department budget. So voted 4-0-2. Ms. Gleason and Mr. Wilkey abstained.

**2) Discussion/Action – 2003-04 Fund Balance.** A motion was made by Mr. Kava-nagh and seconded by Mr. Croston to request a clarification from the Town Council to authorize the use of the 2003-04 fund balance in excess of projections in the amount of \$47,205 toward the 2004-05 deficit. So voted 5-0-1. Ms. Gleason abstained.

**Ms. Wedge announced that the next Finance Subcommittee meeting will be held at 4:00 PM on Monday, August 29th, in the Town Council Chambers to discuss and accept the Interim Report and to prepare for Town Council Workshop.**

**b) Buildings and Grounds.** Mr. Kavanagh stated that a Buildings and Grounds Subcom-mittee meeting was held at 5:00 PM to discuss fundraising. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 26th, 6:30 PM, in the Town Council Chambers, to review bids and select a contractor for the PHS gymnasium. The bid opening for the second

**set of best and final offer bids is scheduled for 10:00 AM on Friday, August 26th.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Croston to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Personnel Matters, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation; or (a)(8) Student Discipline. So voted 6-0.**

**Public session recessed at 9:55 PM and resumed at 11:30 PM. Ms. Wedge stated that no votes were taken in Executive Session. A motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session was made by Mr. Croston and seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. So voted 6-0.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Croston and seconded by Mr. Kavanagh to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 11:31 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Patti Cofield**

**Recording Secretary for**

**Douglas Wilkey, Clerk**