

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 6:35 PM. The following members were present:

Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Chair	Mrs. Terri Cortvriend, Clerk	Mrs. Marge Levesque
Mr. Richard Carpender, V. Chair	Mr. Jamie Heaney	Mr. Douglas Wilkey
	Mr. Michael Buddemeyer	

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Christine Tague, and Patti Cofield

Absent: Asst. Supt. Jermain, Julie MacDougall

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation; or (a)(8) Student Discipline. So voted 7-0.

Public Session recessed at 6:35 PM and resumed at 7:05 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge reported that an Executive Session was held tonight on personnel matters, and no votes were taken. Mr. Carpender reported that an Executive Session was held on January 14, 2007, for a Negotiating Subcommittee meeting. The meeting was opened in Public Session and adjourned into Executive Session under R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exception (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation. The meeting was reported out in Public Session, and the minutes were sealed. Ms. Wedge read a letter from Mr. Jay Humphrey in support of the recent production of the Laramie Project at Portsmouth High School.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi announced that the Portsmouth High School boys' varsity basketball team beat Tiverton at the recent game. She also announced a message from the Town Administrator regarding the Governor's proposed reductions, which include a \$130,000 reduction for Portsmouth; and a proposed workshop with the Town Council scheduled for February 13<sup>th</sup> regarding 3-year budget forecasting, in accordance with Rhode Island General Law 16-2-21.2.

Dr. Lusi reported that she and Assistant Superintendent Jermain attended a joint meeting last week with the Rhode Island Department of Education regarding the performance-based graduation requirement approval process. All districts should be notified within the next few weeks as to whether or not their graduation plans have received approval. Information on the NECAP scores at the high school level were also shared at that meeting. This was the first year that high school students took this test. Of the three states who gave the test--Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, only 25 percent of the students across all three states were proficient on the math portion. Dr. Lusi reported that Rhode Island scores are generally lower than New Hampshire and Vermont because Rhode Island has very different demographics.

She stated that our scores won't be available until after the February break; however, she is optimistic that they will be comparatively good, and there will be a period of readjustment throughout the state.

Dr. Lusi announced that the approval of the minutes is being removed from the agenda, as well as the bid award for fitness equipment for the Portsmouth High School gymnasium. She also announced that the Facilities Committee Charter is being brought forward for discussion only.

a) **Teaching and Learning:** No report.

b) **Finance and Operations:** Ms. Tague reported stated that we are in the process of meeting with the principals regarding the 2008-09 budget, and we still need to meet with the Facilities Supervisor and Director of Technology. Once those meetings have taken place, the information will be compiled for a presentation to the Finance Subcommittee. Ms. Tague also reported that her department is in the process of completing W-2s and I-9s, which are due January 31<sup>st</sup>. She announced that Mary Sahady of Hague, Sahady, and Company, will present the audit report this evening.

c) **High School Liaison:** Absent.

### 3. SPOTLIGHT

a) **PMS Best Buddies Program.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to commend Ms. Samantha Cavanaugh, Ms. Alyse Jacobsen, and the PMS 'Best Buddies' students for their generous donation of nonperishable food items to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center's *Feed a Friend* food pantry in December. So voted 7-0.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the meeting held December 11, 2007, and January 8, 2008. This item was removed from the agenda.

### 5. CONSENT AGENDA

a) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Sarah L. Tarducci, Elementary Art Teacher, effective with the last day of the 2007-08 school year."

b) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the School Committee accept the resignation for retirement of Susan Small, Librarian at Melville School, effective with the last day of the 2007-08 school year."

- c) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accept the resignation for retirement of Gloria H. Schmidt, Librarian at Elmhurst School, effective with the last day of the 2007-08 school year.”
- d) **Salary Adjustment – PMS Asst. Principal.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves the salary adjustment for the Assistant Principal of Portsmouth Middle School, as presented.”
- e) **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 2007-08 school year for students HS#18 through HS#19-1/08, as listed in the confidential memo dated January 17, 2008, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2.”

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 7-0.

## 5. BUSINESS AGENDA

- a) **Presentation of FY’07 Audit Report.** Mrs. Mary Sahady of Hague, Sahady, and Company, presented the results of the FY’07 audit report. She reported that she has seen some great improvements in the Finance Department over the last few months. She reported that the outstanding checklist has been improved; and the Student Activity funds, including PTO activities and athletic department transactions, have been moved to the appropriate accounts. Ms. Tague stated that one of the important issues going forward is to be able to account for our funds in the appropriate accounts and to have balance sheets for each account. Regarding the financial statements, Mrs. Sahady reported that on the Budget and Actual page, there is a positive bottom-line budget-to-actual of approximately \$330,000, because we were able to increase our unreserved fund balance. At the end of the fiscal year, we received State Aid in the amount of \$230,000, which we had not anticipated. This year, we have an unreserved balance of \$248,000; and if we subtracted the \$230,000 in State Aid, we would’ve ended up with only \$18,000.

Mr. Carpender stated that six of the thirteen issues have been resolved, and three have been modified. In addition, there were no material weaknesses. He stated that based on the audit, from a financial standpoint, the School Department is in good shape, is doing the right things, and is working on correcting the remaining issues. Mrs. Sahady was in agreement, stating that we are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Heaney asked about the two bank accounts. Mrs. Sahady stated that she believes they have been addressed and will report out in the 2008 audit. Ms. Tague stated that one has been corrected, and she is in the process of closing out the other one. It will be

corrected by the end of this fiscal year. Mr. Heaney asked about the encumbrances on Page 24. Mrs. Sahady stated that the majority of it is for textbooks.

Mr. Larry Fitzmorris asked Ms. Tague to identify the two accounts and the amounts. Ms. Tague stated that she can only give an historical answer. One was proceeds from a grant we received. She stated that she does not have documentation on the grant award, however, she believes it was awarded approximately eight years ago, and there's a balance of about \$14,000. She stated that the second account was for gate receipts, and historically they were deposited into the PHS Student Activity account. She eliminated that, and they are now being deposited into the School Department's checking account with Citizens Bank, which is now recorded in the General Ledger. There was a balance of approximately \$25,000.

- b) **Approval of High School Program of Studies.** Mr. Littlefield presented the proposed changes to the Portsmouth High School Program of Studies for the 2008-09 school year, as follows:

Mathematics Department:

Add course Algebra II with "Lab": This year we introduced Algebra I and Geometry with "Lab." This allows students to take the normal Algebra or Geometry course that meets every other day for one block (83 minutes) AND take an additional block on the other day to practice their skills, ask questions, work with other students and gain clarification in order to fully master the Grade Span Expectations in mathematics by their junior year. We would like to expand the concept to include Algebra II.

Add course Advanced Placement Statistics: Another possibility for students looking to meet the new graduation requirement of four years of mathematics, this provides motivates students an opportunity to study statistics in a college-level course. Taking the AP exam would be a requirement for the course.

Technical Education Department:

Add course Advanced Television Production: This year we ran two sections of the introductory course. Enrollments are high and the course is very popular. The result is a skilled group of students who would like to continue their study in television production on a more advanced level. This course requires no additional staff or equipment.

Science Department:

Add course Advanced Placement Biology: Another possibility for students looking to meet the new graduation requirement of three years of science, this provides motivates students an opportunity to study biology in a college-level course. With the new sequence of Physics in Grade 9 and Chemistry in Grade 10 we feel our students will have the proper background to succeed in AP Biology in their junior year. Taking the AP exam would be a requirement for the course.

Music Department

Add course Contemporary Vocal Techniques: Advanced vocalists will have the opportunity to perfect their skills of breathing, tone production, and diction. This is designed for the student who may want to move on to something more demanding than participation in Concert Chorus

Mr. Littlefield announced that ten years ago, there was one Advanced Placement class. However, with the proposed addition of two classes, there would now be twelve

Advanced Placement classes. A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and second by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the Program of Studies as presented. So voted 7-0.

- c) **Approval of Facilities Committee Charter.** Dr. Lusi announced that the Facilities Committee Charter is being brought forward for discussion only. She reported that she reviewed a Facilities Committee charter from another community, and she tried to outline membership and the charge, while trying to make clear the purpose of the Facilities Committee. The first order of business for the Facilities Committee would be to advise the School Committee and Administration regarding the assessment of current building conditions and facilities needs and to develop a long-range facilities plan for the School Department. The Facilities Subcommittee shall appoint one of its members to record meeting minutes and shall act at all times in ways consistent with School Committee policy, the Rhode Island Open Meetings Law, and all other applicable laws and regulations. Mr. Buddemeyer stated that he is hoping to have the interview process done by the end of the week. Dr. Lusi stated that Matt Sheley wrote an article in the Newport Daily News about seeking volunteers for the Facilities Committee. Mr. Carpender asked if the long-term goal is to determine what we need to do at each school, and Mr. Buddemeyer replied that it is at a higher level. He stated that the School Department needs to set aside a certain amount of money each year to take care of each building. It's a 2-fold problem now in that we have buildings that have immediate needs, and then we need to determine a long-range plan that needs to be built into our budget.
- d) **Approval of Revisions to Policy #1330 - Community Use of School Facilities, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpender to approve the proposed revisions to Policy #1330, Community Use of School Facilities, as a first reading. Mrs. Levesque stated that the Policy Subcommittee will continue to work on the fee schedule and will bring it back for the second reading at the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- e) **Approval of Revisions to School Committee By-Laws, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpender that the Committee approves the revisions to the By-laws, as a first reading. Mrs. Levesque stated that the change is on Page 3, Item IV B, which gives the Committee the option to schedule a second meeting, if needed, due to the amount of subcommittee meetings taking place. Ms. Wedge stated that the Committee should reserve the second meeting of the month in case we need a second School Committee meeting and for subcommittee meetings. Ms. Tague stated that there is a change on Page 7 regarding the purchase order sign-off process. Mr. Carpender offered an amendment to the original motion that it be changed so that the School Committee approves the revision to Section 4, Subsection B, of the By-laws as a first reading. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-1. Mr. Heaney was opposed. Mrs. Levesque made a motion that the Committee approves the revision to Section VI C, Items 3 and 4 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Carpender. So voted 7-0.

- f) **Bid Award - Fitness Equipment, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee awards the contract for fitness equipment at Portsmouth High School, as presented.” This item was removed from the agenda.
- g) **Bid Award – Fire Alarm and Sprinkler Design, PHS.** A motion was made by Mrs. Cortvriend and seconded by Mrs. Levesque that the Committee awards the contract for the fire alarm and sprinkler design at Portsmouth High School to Hughes Associates, in the amount of \$68,500, as presented. Ms. Tague stated that the funds were coming from the bond. Mr. Fitzmorris asked that the vote be delayed because the bond was deferred by the Council at their last meeting. Ms. Tague stated that \$1.8 million was already approved, and the Town Finance Director notified us that we could use those funds. Dr. Lusi added that there is excess money from the borrowing for the middle school work that we can use for the high school. So voted 7-0.

#### 6. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Finance.** Mr. Carpender stated that Dr. Lusi and Ms. Tague are meeting with the Principals regarding the 2008-09 budget. He will be meeting with Dr. Lusi on Monday to discuss the subcommittee meeting timeline. He stated that the issue with Governor Carcieri’s proposal of the deficit could have an impact on us, even this year.
- b) **Policy.** Mrs. Levesque announced that the next Policy Subcommittee meeting will be held on January 30<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM, at the PHS Library. The agenda includes revising the building use fee structure and changes to the by-laws.
- c) **Gymnasium Construction Oversight Committee (GCOC).** No report.
- d) **Facilities.** Mr. Buddemeyer stated that he is hoping to conduct interviews by the end of this week. Once the committee has been established, he is hoping to conduct additional tours of the buildings.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Heaney. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield  
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk