

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 7:35 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. Michael Buddemeyer

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Ms. Christine Tague, Mrs. Patti Cofield, and Miss Julie MacDougall

Absent: Mr. Douglas Wilkey, Asst. Supt. Jermain

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge announced that the School Committee and NEA Portsmouth have come to an agreement on the Teachers' Contract, and she thanked Mr. Carpender and Mrs. Feather for this accomplishment.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi announced that the School Department's new website has been launched, and she invited everyone to visit it at: www.portsmouthschoolsri.org. She reported that the information regarding FTEs in today's Providence Journal is incorrect, and she will be working with the reporter to correct the information. She also announced that Assistant Superintendent Jermain is out of town this evening.
 - a) **Teaching and Learning:** No report.
 - b) **Finance and Operations:** Ms. Tague reported that she plans to present another year-to-date actual report at the next meeting.
 - c) **High School Liaison:** Miss Julie MacDougall thanked everyone who attended the Silent Auction on March 14th, where the Senior Class raised \$6,000. She announced that Portsmouth High School is the Number 1 high school in Rhode Island for blood donations, and the next blood drive will be held on Friday. She also announced that a Variety Show will be held on April 12th in the auditorium.
3. **SPOTLIGHT**
 - a) **RIASP Principal of the Year.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to commend Mr. Robert Littlefield, Principal of Portsmouth High School, for being selected "Principal of the Year" by the Rhode Island Association of School Principals." So voted 6-0. Mr. Littlefield accepted the honor on behalf of his entire team at Portsmouth High School.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the minutes of the meeting held February 12, 2008. So voted 6-0. The minutes of the February 26, 2008, meeting will be presented at the next meeting.

5. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Approval of Revisions to Policy #2010, Professional Relationship Between School Committee and Administration, 2nd Reading and Adoption.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpenter to approve as a second reading and adopt the proposed revisions to Policy #2010, Professional Relationship Between the School Committee and Administration. Mr. Littlefield, representing PSAA, spoke against the date change in the policy, stating that the hiring process for administrators happens earlier in the year than it does for teachers. He asked that should there be a reorganization in the future, that the Committee keeps the Administrators in mind so they may have sufficient time to prepare. Mr. Carpenter stated that he will support the policy revision because we don't know where we are financially in January. Mrs. Levesque stated that she wouldn't be opposed to having some stipulations; however, they are being asked to move it up to the same notification date as the teacher layoffs. So voted 5-0-1. Mr. Heaney abstained because he wasn't present for the first reading vote.
- b) **Discussion/Approval – FY'-09 Budget Request.** Dr. Lusi gave a PowerPoint presentation on the FY'09 budget request. She reported that the School Committee is requesting a 3.47 percent increase, which is below the rate of inflation and within the Senate 3050 Cap. It assumes level funding of State Aid to education for the second year in a row. It also absorbs building warrant expenses previously paid by the Town. She stated that the reductions are our best attempt across the district to use the resources we have to our greatest advantage. Dr. Lusi thanked Ms. Chris Tague for her efforts in putting this budget together. Mr. Carpenter stated that Dr. Lusi has presented a grim picture, and his fear is that we will be looking at this in the future, if 3050 is left unchanged. If we can't get any additional aid from the state, we will be facing the same dilemma in the coming year. He knows that Dr. Lusi does not want to make a number of these reductions, but he doesn't see an alternative. Fortunately, we have principals that work very hard at making this work. He announced that at last week's Finance Subcommittee meeting, a motion was made by Mrs. Cortvriend and seconded by Mr. Buddemeyer to recommend the budget request be presented to the full School Committee with regret. Therefore, Mr. Carpenter made a motion that the FY'09 budget be approved as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0. Ms. Wedge stated that if it weren't for the boosters and PTOs, this budget would be dreadful. Mr. Fitzmorris asked if there is a contingency connected to this budget, and Mr. Carpenter explained that we have an obligation to get our budget to the Town Council by tomorrow morning. We don't know what other cuts we will need to make, such as if the healthcare costs come in lower; but it is the School Committee's fiduciary obligation to manage this budget. So voted 6-0.
- c) **Presentation of School Survey Results re: Calendar and Full-Day Kindergarten.** Dr. Lusi explained the results of the survey regarding the school calendar and full-day kindergarten. She stated that she will be requesting a waiver from the Rhode Island Department of Education to keep school open on Primary Day, since none of our school

buildings will be used a polling sites. Dr. Lusi will also look into a policy regarding starting school before/after Labor Day. She stated that the results of the full-day Kindergarten question showed that most people are in favor of a full-day program, however, most people don't want to pay for it. Although she would like to see full-day Kindergarten, she has not figured out how to provide it in the existing budget.

- d) **Approval – 2008-09 School Calendar.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the proposed calendar for the 2008-09 school year, contingent upon mutual agreement with NEA Portsmouth regarding the scheduling of Professional Development days. So voted 6-0.
- e) **Discussion/Action – PHS Gymnasium Mezzanine Update and Next Steps.** Mrs. Cortvriend stated that the GCOC has resumed meeting and is hoping to complete the mezzanine over the summer. She read the additional language in the GCOC Charter, which states that “the composition and authorities of the GCOC remain as outlined in the charter for the duration of Phase 2 and shall include the right to contract for architectural and other services within the dollar amounts allowed for change orders as described in the charter.” She stated that they are hoping that with this authority, the GCOC will be able to approve a contract with Torrado Associates when they meet on Thursday so that they may proceed with generating an RFP to send out. Mrs. Cortvriend made a motion that the Committee approves the additional language in the GCOC Charter as described above. Seconded by Mr. Carpender. So voted 6-0.
- f) **Discussion/Action – PHS Traffic Safety.** Mr. Carpender handed out his motion regarding traffic concerns in the area of Portsmouth High School. He stated that he feels it is the responsibility of the School Committee to ensure the safety of our students. We need to ask that something take place. He has driven around the high school and surrounding roads over the past few weeks. The Town Council talked about it last night. The traffic flow needs to be changed to one lane, similar to Turnpike, with turning lanes. They didn't take any action last night. It is going to be discussed tomorrow at the Town Center workshop. We need to make our position known and ask for certain things. Mr. Carpender made a motion that the Superintendent and School Committee Chair communicate in writing with the Town Administrator detailing the following School Committee position and request:
- 1. The School Committee supports the current direction of the Town Council and the Police department to remove the crosswalk at the bottom of Patriot Drive and reconfigure the traffic pattern on East Main Road to be reduced to one lane with a 25 miles per hour speed limit north to Sprague Street.*
 - 2. Request that the 2 Crosswalks at Village Way be repainted with cross stripes using yellow paint.*

3. *Request that all crosswalks between Patriot Drive and Sprague Street be identified with Florescent Yellow Crosswalk signs.*
4. *Request that Florescent Yellow School Zone signs and 25 MPH signs be installed in the North and South Lanes on East Main Road from south of Patriot Drive and North of Bradley School to Sprague Street to maintain a 25 MPH zone from the Police Station to Sprague Street.*
5. *Request that a yellow crosswalk be painted on Sprague Street at the bottom of Education Lane.*
6. *Request that Florescent Yellow School Zone and 25 MPH signs be installed in the East and West lanes of Sprague Street.*
7. *While the School Committee appreciates the concern and direction that the Town Council is pursuing the potential gravity of the current traffic situation cannot wait until the Town Center Plan is approved and moved forward. Therefore, we respectfully request that all of the signage and crosswalk issues requested above be addressed as quickly as possible and that the redesign of the traffic flow on East Main Road in the High School area be given a top priority and that the urgency of this situation be conveyed to the DOT.*

This Communication to be copied to the Portsmouth Chief of Police, DOT, and our Legislative Delegation.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. Dr. Lusi stated that Chief Hebert has been trying to remove the crosswalk at the bottom of Patriot Lane since he first became chief. She agrees with Mr. Carpenter's recommendations and feels that changing Turnpike Avenue from four lanes to two lanes with additional signage has helped a great deal. Ms. Wedge stated that it took three years to get the crosswalk installed on Turnpike Avenue. Mr. Heaney stated that he disagrees with the reduction to one lane on East Main Road and the miles per hour north of Sprague Street. The motion passed 6-0.

6. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Finance:** No further report.
- b) **Policy:** No further report.
- c) **Gymnasium Construction Oversight Committee (GCOC):** No further report.

- d) **Facilities:** Mr. Buddemeyer announced that the Facilities Committee conducted their first school tour last Wednesday at Portsmouth Middle School, and the results will be shared at a future School Committee meeting. A regular meeting will take place tomorrow at 4:00 PM at the Portsmouth High School Library.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk