

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 6:11 PM. The following members were present:

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

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Ms. Christine Tague, Mrs. Patti Cofield, and Miss 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 6-0.

Public Session recessed at 6:11 PM and resumed at 7:00 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** A moment of silence was held in memory of School Committee member, Douglas Wilkey. Ms. Wedge announced that Mr. Wilkey's Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, May 15th, at 1:00 PM, at the United Methodist Church.

Ms. Wedge announced that an Executive Session was held at 6:11 PM regarding a personnel matter, and no votes were taken.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She stated that she will miss Mr. Wilkey very much, especially his tremendous commitment to the community, and his wonderful sense of humor.

Dr. Lusi read a letter of thanks from Jenny Swider on behalf of Portsmouth Youth Basketball. She also announced that a meeting will be held at the State House on Wednesday, May 14th, at 10:00 AM, for the State Traffic Commission to address traffic safety in the area surrounding Portsmouth High School. The Commission will notify us, once they take action. On Thursday, House Bill 7957 is scheduled to be heard at the rise at the State House. Dr. Lusi stated that should this bill pass, Portsmouth will lose all state aid over a three year period. She supports the implementation of a funding formula; however, she does think that all of our districts need state aid as we struggle to live under the Senate 3050 cap. She feels that education and aid should be a universal benefit for all, and she will submit written testimony because she won't be able to attend the hearing. Mr. Carpender explained the devastation of this bill, and he urged everyone to contact their legislators in opposition. Mrs. Cortvriend inquired about Dr. Lusi's Funding Our Future group. Dr. Lusi stated that the group feels very strongly that a formula needs to be put in place so that funding is distributed in a fair fashion.

Dr. Lusi stated that Items A and B in the Spotlight section are being postponed because the two high school students were not able to attend tonight's meeting. She also stated that since the April financials were distributed just prior to the meeting, she is recommending that the Committee votes on them at the next meeting.

- a) **Teaching and Learning**: Assistant Superintendent Jermain welcomed the members of the Health and Wellness committees from Hathaway, Melville, Elmhurst, and Portsmouth Middle School. She stated that Mr. Wilkey was instrumental in establishing this committee. He felt it was very important to start good behaviors at a young age.

Mrs. Jermain stated that Science NECAP testing is taking place this month. She announced that this Friday, she and the high school science teachers will be attending a demonstration at MIT that ties into our Physics First program. She also announced that last week, she and Dr. Lusi attended the RISSA meeting. It was a very interesting forum, bringing all parties involved into one room to talk about the economy as a state, etc. They also learned about a Chinese initiative that is going on as an exchange program, and she will bring more information on that in the future.

- b) **Finance and Operations**: Ms. Tague stated that she enjoyed Mr. Wilkey's sense of humor and his commitment to the Committee. She announced that she will present the April financials tonight for the Committee to vote on at their next meeting.
- c) **High School Liaison**: Miss Julie MacDougall announced that a fellow Senior, Abby Little, will be holding a Fashion Show in new gymnasium on Wednesday, May 14th, at 7:30 PM, as her Senior Project. Miss MacDougall also announced that a Blood Drive will be held next Friday in the old gymnasium, and it is open to the public. A family picnic will be held on May 31st from 1:00-4:00PM; and a yard sale will be held in the high school parking lot on June 7th from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

3. **SPOTLIGHT**

- a) **United States Scholastic Art Competition**. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee commends PHS Senior, Meredith Fitzgerald, for being awarded a national silver medal in the United States Scholastic Art Competition." This item was removed from the agenda.
- b) **"Who Wants to be a Mathematician" Competition**. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee commends PHS Sophomore, Joseph Futoma, for winning the 'Who Wants to be a Mathematician' competition at Providence College." This item was removed from the agenda.
- c) **Health and Wellness Initiatives**. A motion was made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mr. Heaney to commend the staff and students at Hathaway, Melville, Elmhurst, and

Portsmouth Middle School, for participating in Health and Wellness activities. Five students from Hathaway School described the activities they have been doing in an effort to stay healthy. Assistant Superintendent Jermain stated that the Health and Wellness team meets every 6 to 8 weeks. She thanked Hathaway's School Nurse Teacher, Nan Souza, and parents Erin Aguiar, Blair Kinder, Martha Costa, and Elizabeth Wessman, for their efforts on the Committee. Dr. Martin announced that she has one student have lunch with her each month as a reward. Melville's School Nurse Teacher, Lin Alvarnas, and Dr. Olson were present on behalf of Melville School. Ms. Alvarnas described a program called, "Racing Across America," that the 5th graders participated in. In addition, the Physical Education Teacher, Rusty Forgue, is running after school sports programs for each grade. They also ran a program called, "The Biggest Loser," for the staff. They lost a total of 109 pounds by February 1st, and 165 pounds to date. Mr. Ettinger and parents, Jean Lehane and Sue Collins, were present on behalf of Elmhurst School. Mrs. Lehane described the karate and martial arts program in the fall. They recently started a walk-and-play program before school, as well. In addition, they have created a board game that parents may borrow called "All You Can Eat," which illustrates good snack choices. Their grant committee awarded them \$150 to purchase prizes for the students. They also initiated a Health and Wellness survey in March to gauge where they need to focus their initiatives, and it is currently being assimilated. Mr. Joe Amaral and House Leader/Teacher Lisa Mello were present on behalf of Portsmouth Middle School. Ms. Mello introduced students Erin Myers, Autumn Gomes, and Eileen Eades, who described the health and wellness initiatives they implemented at Portsmouth Middle School. Ms. Mello invited the Committee to eat lunch at Portsmouth Middle School on May 23rd, which is Walk to School Day. Karen Wetherill from the Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition was present. Ms. Wedge thanked the Hathaway students and parents for the providing healthy snacks for the Committee to enjoy during the meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2008, meeting. So voted 5-0-1. Mr. Heaney abstained due to his absence from that meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the minutes of the meetings held March 20, 2008, and March 25, 2008. So voted 6-0.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) **Request for Leave of Absence.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the request for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with the backup information."

- b) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee accepts the resignation of Beth Roman from the position of Special Education Teacher at Hathaway School, effective June 17, 2008."
- c) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee accepts the resignation of Kristen Heynen from the position of Art Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective June 17, 2008."

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 6-0.

6. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Bid Award – PHS Gym Mezzanine.** Mrs. Cortvriend made a motion to award the contract for construction of the Portsmouth High School gymnasium mezzanine, Phase 2, to the Alhambra Building Company, Inc., subject to appropriation of the impact fees, which go before the Town Council on May 27, 2008. Seconded by Mr. Heaney. Mrs. Cortvriend stated that the GCOC voted to approve Alhambra in the amount of \$425,487, which includes athletic flooring, new lights, and brace work. She stated that they have an 8 percent contingency. Mr. Carpender amended the motion to include the cost of the contract, \$425,487. The amendment was seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. The amendment passed 6-0. The main motion also passed 6-0. Mrs. Levesque stated that this process went so smoothly, and she thanked Mrs. Cortvriend and the GCOC.
- b) **Rescission of Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to rescind the teacher non-renewals as presented. So voted 6-0.
- c) **NECAP Report.** Assistant Superintendent Jermain distributed her Powerpoint presentation on the NECAP tests results and gave an informative overview on the assessments.
- d) **Approval of Policy #4353 – Portsmouth School Department Websites, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve Policy #4353, Portsmouth School Department Websites, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.
- e) **Approval of Policy #4354 – Computer and Network Resources Employee Acceptable Use Guidelines, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve Policy #4354, Computer and Network Resources Employee Acceptable Use Guidelines, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.
- f) **Approval of Policy #5151 – Computer and Network Resources Student Acceptable Use Guidelines, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by

Mrs. Cortvriend to approve Policy #5151, Computer and Network Resources Student Acceptable Use Guidelines, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.

g) **Establish Tuition Rate for 2008-09 School Year.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Heaney to establish tuition in accordance with Policy #5116 for the 2008-09 school year at the rate of \$11,299 for a general education student. Tuition for students with any additional needs beyond the general education program will be individually calculated in accordance with the policy. So voted 6-0. Dr. Lusi explained that the tuition rate is established by using the State's In\$ite data. Mr. Carpender requested that Committee members, as elected officials, notify the Superintendent if they have any indication that a student attending our schools may not be a resident of Portsmouth. He stated that it is the Committee's fiduciary responsibility to let the Superintendent know. Mr. Carpender will request the same from the Town Council.

h) **Request for Approval – Donation to Aquidneck Island Study Group.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to approve the donation of \$2,000 to the Aquidneck Island Study Group for continued study of island-wide collaboration.

Dr. Lusi explained that the Committee gave a donation to this group for the first study produced by RIPEC several months ago. The chairman of the group, Dr. Shoemaker, is asking each Town and School Department on Aquidneck Island to contribute \$2,000 toward a second study. The Portsmouth Town Council has approved \$2,000 with two provisions: that it is contingent upon each group putting forward \$2,000, and that it is not available until July 1st. Ms. Tague stated that the donation could be taken from the Gate Receipts account, which has more than \$10,000 in it from this year alone. Mrs. Cortvriend amended the motion to include "subject to all six public entities of the three communities making a \$2,000 contribution." Seconded by Mr. Carpender. So voted 6-0. The main motion passed 6-0.

i) **Ratification of Superintendent's Contract.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to ratify the Superintendent's contract renewal as proposed. So voted 6-0

j) **Discussion/Approval – April Financials.** Ms. Tague distributed the financial reports and announced that they will be presented on the next agenda for School Committee approval. She stated that the budget is where it should be from a benchmark perspective; and overall, she doesn't see any real issues. She announced that we do have a revenue shortfall; however, she does feel we can make it up in unexpended funds. She will generate a projection for the month of June to see where we will come in. She stated that the utilities account is a pressure point, but she feels we can cover those negative variances.

7. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Finance.** Mr. Carpender stated that the Council is meeting tonight for the provisional approval of the budget. He stated that he had a discussion with Mr. Katzman, who said they would be looking at the warrants tonight. He doesn't think there are any issues, but we won't know until tomorrow. We will then need to wait for the Public Hearing on the budget to see what kinds of questions are generated. The hearing is scheduled for June 11th at the PMS Little Theatre. Dr. Lusi stated that all three Administrators have been working on monitoring our budget for next year by watching state aid, etc. Mrs. Jermain has been working with the elementary and middle school principals on how to schedule co-curricular staff more efficiently in order to realize the reductions we already made in our budget. Dr. Lusi has been working with Mrs. Jermain, Mrs. Massarotti, and Mrs. Nash, on student enrollment as student registration continues. She stated that the numbers are interesting because districtwide, we have a very small opening in Grade 1, so we may need to add another Grade 1 teacher. Conversely, we have 30 openings in Grades 3, 4, and 5, and we are watching it carefully. Under the contract, we have the right to involuntarily transfer people if we have to. We are already moving a teacher from Elmhurst to Hathaway, and we are transferring a half-day Kindergarten teacher from Hathaway to Melville.
- b) **Policy.** Mrs. Levesque is reviewing the school booklets to include some of the things recommended by Berkshire in the Performance Audit. She would like to review the policy book page by page over the summer and add dates to all of the policies so that we know when they have been reviewed. Dr. Lusi stated that she would also like to look at our transportation policies.
- c) **GCOC.** Mrs. Cortvriend announced that the GCOC met in Executive Session last night to review the bids on Phase 2. Eight bids were submitted, and the GCOC voted on the three alternates and on the recommended candidate. The votes were unanimous.
- d) **Facilities.** Mr. Buddemeyer read a memo from our Facilities Supervisor, Don Davidson, into the record. The memo stated that, "The Portsmouth School Department hired the structural engineering firm of Odeh Engineers, from North Providence, to assess the area in question from the Berkshire Report at the Elmhurst Elementary School. A preliminary assessment of the lower level on April 30, 2008, indicates the foundation and load bearing walls to be sound and in good structural condition. The soil fill under the ground floor slab has settled in the southwest section. The floor slab along with the interior partition walls have settled and cracked as a result. This area should continue to be unoccupied, as it currently is. The lower level area to the west of damaged area along with the second level are unaffected by this and can continue to be occupied." Mr. Carpender stated that it was irresponsible journalism by Channel 12, and he sent a letter to the news director asking for an apology and for them to do a re-write. Dr. Lusi stated that she attended the Elmhurst PTO meeting last night, and the parents thanked the

school and district administration for getting an engineer there so quickly and putting the issue to rest.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Heaney to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk