

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 7:12 PM, and the following members were present:

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

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Ms. Christine Tague, Mrs. Patti Cofield,

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge read a letter of appreciation from Robert J. Hurley, the grandparent of a PHS lacrosse player.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi announced that the Administration Building's phone system has had service issues, and she apologized for any inconvenience.

Dr. Lusi read a letter of appreciation from William Geasey, parent of a recent PHS student. She congratulated Mrs. Cortvriend for being recognized for graduating from the Rhode Island Association of School Committee's Leadership Development Academy. She also congratulated Ms. Rose Muller and Assistant Superintendent Jermain for their role in Portsmouth being selected as one of five districts nationwide to receive a grant for an emergency contact system called "Alert Now." This grant allows us to use the system free of charge for a 1-year period. The other districts receiving the grant are Grady County Schools in Cairo, GA; Pine Plains Central School District in Pine Plains, NY; Grandview School District in Grandview, MO; and Danbury Independent School District in Danbury, TX.

Dr. Lusi announced that the minutes of the meetings held on June 10th and 24th were being withdrawn from the agenda, as well as Item b) on the Consent Agenda.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain thanked Mrs. Rose Muller for writing the grant for Alert Now. She stated that we are very lucky to be one of the five districts nationwide to participate. Mrs. Jermain also reported that she is formulating and finalizing the Professional Development calendar for teachers for this coming year. She announced that we have several IT projects underway, such as the virtualization project at the elementary schools.
- b) **Finance and Operations:** Ms. Tague stated that we did end up with a slight surplus, which she will explain under the Business Agenda. She also announced that we have a new audit firm coming in in August to talk with our staff about programs and procedures.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the minutes of the meetings held May 27, 2008. So voted 6-0. The June 10, 2008, and June 24, 2008, minutes were removed from the agenda and will be presented on the next agenda.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Item b) was withdrawn from the agenda.

- a) **Appt. – Physical Education/Health Teacher, .4 Time, Melville.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #1-7/22/08, to the position of Physical Education/Health Teacher, .4 time, at Melville School, for the 2008-09 school year."
- b) **Appt. – Modern Language Teacher, F/T, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #2-7/22/08, to the position of Modern Language Teacher (Portuguese/Spanish), full-time, at Portsmouth Middle School, effective August 29, 2008." This item was removed from the agenda.
- c) **Appt. – Art Teacher, .6 PMS, .4 Hathaway.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #3-7/22/08, to the position of .6 Art Teacher at Portsmouth Middle School and .4 Art Teacher at Hathaway School, effective August 29, 2008."
- d) **Appt. – Library/Media Services Specialist, F/T, Melville.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #4-7/22/08, to the position of Library/Media Specialist, full-time, at Melville School, effective August 29, 2008."
- e) **Appt. – Library/Media Services Specialist, F/T, Elmhurst.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #5-7/22/08, to the position of Library/Media Specialist, full-time, at Elmhurst School, effective August 29, 2008, pending certification approval."
- f) **Appt. – Technology Integration Specialist, F/T, Grades K-8.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #6-7/22/08, to the position of Technology Integration Specialist, full-time, for Grades K-8, effective August 29, 2008."

- g) **Appt. – Computer Teacher, F/T, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #7-7/22/08, to the position of Computer Teacher, full-time, at Portsmouth High School, effective August 29, 2008."
- h) **Appt. – General School Aide, Melville.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #7-7/22/08, to the position of General School Aide at Melville School, effective September 2, 2008."
- i) **Appt. – Custodian, Category A, PMS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #8-7/22/08, to the position of Custodian, Category A, at Portsmouth Middle School, effective immediately."
- j) **Coaching Appts. – PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the coaching appointments at Portsmouth High School for the 2008-09 school year as presented."
- k) **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 2008-09 school year for students HS#1-7/08, as listed in the confidential memo dated July 9, 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 Items a) and c) through j) on the Consent Agenda. So voted 6-0. Dr. Lusi announced the appointments:

- a) Greg Sullivan, Physical Education/Health Teacher, .4 time, Melville
 - c) Crystal Paolucci, Art Teacher, .6 PMS, .4 Hathaway
 - d) Linda Gaskill, Library/Media Specialist, Melville
 - e) Beth Gorter, Library/Media Specialist, Elmhurst
 - f) Patricia Hill, Technology Integration Specialist, K-8
 - g) Nicole Rattay, Computer Teacher, PHS
 - h) Roberta Robella, General School Aide, Melville
 - i) Robert Singleton, Custodian, PMS
 - j) Coaching Appointments:
 - 1. Judy Coleman, Head Coach, Girls Tennis
 - 2. Matthew Levasseur, Asst. Coach, Football
 - 3. Kevin Vandenberg, Asst. Coach, Football
- Dr. Lusi stated that there were numerous reappointments, as well.

5. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Agenda Item Request – Prudence Ferry Location Change.** This item was requested by Mr. Bruce Medley, co-owner of the Prudence Island Ferry company. He stated that in 1986, the Prudence Island ferry landing moved from Portsmouth to Bristol. They had been leasing land from Hood/Pearson, which is now Hinkley Yachts, in the Melville area. He stated that they understand the Melville land is about ready to be turned over, and they would like to pursue moving the ferry landing back to that location. He stated that the ferry ride to Prudence Island would only be about 6 to 7 minutes from that location, they wouldn't have to worry about rough weather or ice in the winter, and they would save on fuel because it's about half the distance. He stated that they talked to the EDC and Senator Reed's office, but they're not sure who has a hand over this. He asked the School Committee for support for the concept of moving to Portsmouth so he could take it to Senator Reed's office and to the Governor's office, which is in charge of the RI EDC. He stated that it is just a matter of finding a place in Portsmouth to move to. He stated that he knows different departments in Portsmouth would like to see this happen, but there are other interested parties in town who would like to see other uses for the property. Mr. Medley stated that they would have to build a whole new dock like the one they have in Bristol and on Prudence Island, but there is federal funding available for ferry boats. Mr. Carpenter made a motion that the School Committee supports the concept of relocating the Prudence Island Ferry to Portsmouth. Seconded by Mr. Heaney. So voted 6-0.
- b) **Strategic Planning Presentation.** Dr. Lusi introduced Ms. Janice A. Williams. Ms. Williams distributed her Scope of Work to the Committee, and she described her extensive experience. Dr. Lusi explained that what she likes about the process is that it is positive and proactive and builds on strengths for what we want in the future. Dr. Lusi described the reference checks she did on Ms. Williams. She stated that the Performance Audit didn't give us a cohesive vision on how we are going to implement the steps. Ms. Williams showed a Powerpoint presentation and explained how the Strategic Planning process could work for us. She stated that Strategic Plans in school systems are usually a 5-year plan. Mr. Heaney asked Ms. Williams how a Strategic Plan is going to differ from the Performance Audit and how it will benefit us. Ms. Williams explained that the Performance Audit does a lot of analysis and provides a list of objectives, some are specific and some are too general; and we need to create a roadmap of all of the things that need to be done in a year. She stated that the Implementation Plan needs to be totally integrated into the Strategic Planning process. Dr. Lusi added that the state requires districts to have a Strategic Plan, and our current plan is five years old. Dr. Mary Canole, the former Director of the Progressive Support and Intervention Department at RIDE, suggested using the Implementation Plan to build a foundation for the Strategic Plan. Ms. Williams explained that an audit is intended to give a "what is" picture and does not talk about a district as a community or where you want to be in 5 to 10 years.

Mr. Heaney asked Ms. Williams what her cost would be, and Ms. Williams replied that it would be approximately \$18,000 to \$20,000. Dr. Lusi stated that she will be applying for a \$4,000 to \$7,000 grant through the Rhode Island Foundation and that she wanted to ask the Committee to authorize \$5,000 to lay the groundwork for the Strategic Plan. She stated that there is potentially some state grant money and restricted funds that could be used for this process. She stated that she did look into the Newport County Fund, but their timeline was prior to our receiving our Performance Audit. She also stated that, in theory, we will receive roughly \$131,000 to \$132,000 in state aid, dependent upon the revenue from the 24-hour gambling. This state aid is included in our bottom line in terms of overall expenditures. She added that we will also have some money left over in our Medicaid fund. Assistant Superintendent Jermain stated that the Strategic Plan needs to be aligned with our Consolidated Resource Plan. The state requires us to have a specific type of Strategic Plan, and a Technology Plan is one of the seven required areas. Mr. Carpender made a motion that the School Committee approves an amount not-to-exceed \$5,000 to start the Strategic Plan process for the Portsmouth School System. Seconded Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

- c) **Progress Report on Implementation of Berkshire Performance Audit.** Dr. Lusi stated that some of the items on the Implementation plan have already been completed. She was prepared to review each item; however, Mr. Carpender suggested that the School Committee be given time to absorb list and formulate questions, and then put it on the next agenda. Therefore, this item was postponed until the next agenda. Dr. Lusi stated that she has spoken with Mr. Driscoll but hasn't had time to sit down with him and Mr. Faucher to discuss shared services. Mr. Carpender reported that out of the 44 items, 4 are complete and 18 are in progress.
- d) **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. Dr. Lusi stated that of all of the people who were laid off and had recall rights, there are only two remaining on the list, one full-time and one part-time. However, there are still people who can collect unemployment, but we have made progress. Dr. Lusi stated that we had a Job Fair in June and July, and we may have one in August, as well.
- e) **Preliminary Report on Year-End Financials.** Ms. Christine Tague reported that we are ending the fiscal year with approximately \$46,466 in our operating surplus. She gave an analysis of variances by revenue and expenditure categories and asked the Committee to keep in mind that these numbers are preliminary and may change with the issuance of a final report. She stated that the revenue deficit is \$147,759. As previously reported, we anticipated a revenue shortfall throughout the fiscal year, primarily due to \$187,000 less in state aid and \$161,048 less in tuition-- primarily from Little Compton. Additional federal aid (Impact Aid and Medicaid) offset this shortfall by approximately \$202,000. Ms. Tague also reported that the total unspent balances in all appropriation categories are

0.58% or \$194,225. Once adjusted for the revenue deficit, the total annual operating surplus will be approximately \$46,466. She stated that salaries came in \$188,000 lower than budgeted primarily because of attrition obtained in the replacement of retirees. Employees' benefits came in \$136,493 higher than budgeted and were largely attributable to a larger number of enrollments in the family health plan versus the single health plan. Lower than budgeted Career and Technical Center tuition, out-of-district placement tuition, and transportation cost, is the primary reason for the \$278,831 positive variance in purchased services. This variance is net of the \$75,000 in higher than budgeted electricity cost. The \$60,000 shortfall in supplies was primarily attributable to \$63,000 higher than anticipated gas bills. While heating fuel came in slightly under budget by \$9,500; this is probably only as a result of our decision to top off the oil tanks last year when we were paying \$2.27 per gallon. The anticipated Newport County Special Education payment to the region is the main reason for the \$97,000 negative variance in the miscellaneous expense category. The variance is attributable to efforts on behalf of the Region to bring more service in house, ultimately lowering our Out of District placement cost. Ms. Tague stated that overall, the School Department was successful in effectively managing the FY 2008 operating budget. She is concerned that if utility costs continue to rise and other assumptions made in the FY2009 operating budget do not come to fruition, that there could be difficult challenges ahead in the next several fiscal years.

Mrs. Levesque inquired about the food service budget, and Ms. Tague replied that it appears we have a slight deficit in it. Dr. Lusi stated that the new peanut law hurt us because the food company could not use some of the items they had already purchased.

Mr. Carpender thanked Ms. Tague for the job she did this year. Mr. Carpender made a motion to accept the preliminary report on the year-end financials as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

- f) **Request for Approval/Adoption – Proposed Revisions to Policy #4160, Part-time Non-Certified Salary, 1st Reading and Adoption.** A motion as made by Mrs. Levesque to approve the proposed revisions to Policy #4160, Part-time, Non-Certified Salary, and that the second reading be waived and the policy be adopted. Seconded Mr. Carpender. So voted 6-0. Dr. Lusi announced the new hourly rates.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Finance:** No report.
- b) **Policy:** Mrs. Levesque stated that we had a meeting to go over the policy brought to you tonight. We were also able to go through the Administrative Policies. A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at 10:00 Am at the Administration Building on transportation policies.

- c) **GCOC:** Mrs. Cortvriend stated that the committee hasn't met, but work is ongoing with the mezzanine. She will get an official report card next week. The bricks are stored at JAM. We're waiting for another quote to install them. JAM originally volunteered to do the work, but then it got more extensive, and bronze plaques are being put in, so we're waiting for a quote from them.

- d) **Facilities:** Mr. Buddemeyer stated that a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at the PHS library at 4:30 PM to discuss the RFP for the facilities study and the strategic plan for the Facilities Committee going forward.

Ms. Wedge announced that the next meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2008, at 7:00 PM.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk