

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by the Chair, Mrs. Perrotti, and the following members were present:

Cynthia Perrotti, Chair; Jonathan Harris, Vice Chair; Marilyn King, Clerk; David Croston, Thomas Vadney, Angela Volpicelli, and Sylvia Wedge

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Patti Cofield, Attorney Robinson, and Madison Burns (7:00 pm).

Absent: Mark Dunham

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

The Public Session recessed at 6:31 PM and resumed at 7:10 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mrs. Perrotti reported on the following:
 - An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting and would reconvene after the meeting.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi reported on the following:
 - Commissioner Gist will be visiting Portsmouth on January 27th. She will be meeting with teachers in the afternoon, and will host a Public Forum will be held from 6:30 to 8:00PM in the PMS Little Theatre.
 - There was a meeting of the Aquidneck Island Study Group on Monday. The NESDEC Report, Phase 1, is now completed. The revised report was received today and will be posted on our website. Discussion on regionalization continues.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain reported on the following:
 - Participated in the PMS 7th Grade Science Fair last week. Thanked Christine Homen, Rebecca Silveria and Kim O Neill and the engineers from NUWC and Raytheon for organizing and participating in the event.
 - Thanked NEA President and Vice President Joe Cassidy and Sue Hatch and teachers who participated in the RI Model. Teachers and administrators will have actual hands on experience using the tool and will give input and feedback on their likes and dislikes.
 - Strategic Plan work continues. All committees are in full swing. Looking at implementing a full-day kindergarten in terms of long-range planning and early interventions. Student support task force is also seeking more members. One of the primary and key points of our Strategic Plan is focusing on putting in enough supports for our students to be successful.

- b) Finance and Operations: No report.
- c) High School Liaison: Madison Burns reported on the following:
- The blood drive will be held on Thursday, January 27th.
 - A dance will be held on Saturday, January 29th.
 - Midterms end tomorrow.
 - Expressed appreciation for the high school teachers. Performance of students is not only due to the students themselves but to the effort of the teachers.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Kathleen Caron, School Nurse Teacher at Hathaway, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.”
- 2) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Andrew J. Schlachter, Grade 8 Science Teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.”
- 3) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Joan Stevens, Science Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.”
- 4) **Appt. – Music Teacher, Hathaway/Melville, .4 time.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee affirms the Superintendent’s appointment, Recommendation #1-1/25/11, to the position of Music Teacher, .4 time, at Hathaway and Melville Schools, effective January 26, 2011, 2010.”
- 5) **Appt. – Art Teacher, Hathaway/Melville, .4 time.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee affirms the Superintendent’s appointment, Recommendation #2-1/25/11, to the position of Art Teacher, .4 time, at Hathaway and Melville Schools, effective January 26, 2011, 2010.”

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 7-0. Dr. Lusi announced the following appointments:

- 4) Shawna Gleason – .4 Music Teacher, Hathaway/Melville
5) Katelyn Guignard Safford – .4 Art Teacher, Hathaway/Melville

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**: None.

5. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

Mrs. Perrotti requested that Item b) be addressed first.

b) **Approval of Policy #4111 – Selection and Appointment of School Personnel.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves as a second reading and adopts the changes to Policy #4111, Selection and Appointment of School Personnel.”

Mrs. Perrotti stated that this policy was supported by the School Committee unanimously at the last meeting. Dr. Lusi explained that the policy changes are an outgrowth of the new Basic Education Plan and Portsmouth’s mission statement, both of which have the overarching goal of continuous improvement of student learning. Achieving this goal must be the primary reference point for all decision making, including personnel assignment and evaluation. The policy itself is the first page of the document, followed by a set of procedures. The policy acknowledges that the Administration has the authority to revise these procedures over time. An Advisory Committee is being established for the purpose of advising and creating the procedures in a way that would work for all of us. She has one or two volunteers already and hopes to have many more if the policy is put in place. Mr. Harris made a motion to approve as a second reading and adopt the changes to Policy #4111. Seconded by Mrs. King. Mr. Croston amended the motion to approve the first page only of Policy #4111 and table the procedures to the February 8, 2011, meeting in the hopes that the people who approached Dr. Lusi and NEA can have serious discussions. Seconded by Ms. Wedge. Several teachers voiced their concerns regarding this policy and their frustration about not being able to be part of making the policy.

Mrs. King stated that as the Policy Subcommittee Chair, she would like to table this and address it at the February 8th meeting.

Dr. Lusi stated that she would like very much to come to an agreement. She asked for clarification from School Committee and NEA Portsmouth as to whether this work would be done in a negotiating session or with the membership.

Mrs. Perrotti stated that there are a lot of good things in this policy, such as the Superintendent having the authority to find the best qualified teacher for our children, not necessarily the most senior teacher. She further stated that she would support passing the first page only if there is a timeline with certain objectives.

Mr. Cassady, NEA President, voiced his concern about a lower paid teacher being favored over a higher paid teacher. Mrs. Perrotti stated that nowhere in the policy does it mention who is the “cheapest.” Ms. Wedge moved the amendment.

The amended motion passed 7-0. Mrs. Perrotti stated that this policy will be addressed at the February 8th meeting. Attorney Steve Robinson has requested mediation of this matter, and a mediator is being appointed with the agreement of the union. He thinks that would be the appropriate vehicle to discuss this, and he will try to reach the mediator tomorrow.

The policy motion was passed 7-0.

The Committee took a 2-minute recess.

- a) **PHS Presentation on Statistics, Program Information, and Course of Study.** Mr. Littlefield gave an informative presentation on Portsmouth High School's performance data, graduation plan, school improvement initiatives, and Program of Study changes.
- c) **Approval of Policy #8050 – Minutes of Meetings of School Committee.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve as a second reading and adopt the changes to Policy #8050, Minutes of Meetings of School Committee. So voted 7-0.
- d) **Approval of Educator Code of Conduct Policy.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris to approve the Educator Code of Conduct policy as a first reading. Seconded by Mrs. King. Dr. Lusi gave a summary of the policy. She stated that it applies to all educators in the state, teachers as well as administrators; and she recommended that it be adopted in our community. Mr. Croston asked if it is a regulation. Dr. Lusi stated that the Board of Regents has approved it, but she would get clarification as to whether or not it is a regulation or recommendation. Mrs. Perrotti stated that she is going to support this motion because it is important to have a Code of Responsibility and it is what RIDE abides by. Several teachers expressed their concerns about the policy. Mr. Croston made a motion to table this item until the February 8th meeting in order to gather further information about the Educator Code of Conduct. Seconded by Ms. Wedge. The motion failed 2-5. Mr. Croston and Ms. Wedge voted in favor. The original motion passed 5-2. Mr. Croston and Ms. Wedge were opposed.
- e) **Agenda Item Request – Rights of Chair to Appoint Non-School Committee Members to Subcommittees.** This item was requested by Mr. Croston. He read the Duties of the Chair as listed in the School Committee By-Laws and stated that the Chair does not have the right to form the Superintendent Search subcommittee; the entire School Committee does. He requested a written formal charter for the subcommittee. Mrs. Perrotti stated that she agrees that the By-Laws should be followed.
- f) **Agenda Item Request – Use of Personal Emails for Formal School Committee Business.** This item was requested by Mr. Croston. He stated that anyone using personal email for professional business is opening themselves up to having their personal emails

made public in the event of a public records request. In addition, personal emails are not auditable or backed up for future retrieval. Mrs. Perrotti stated that she was in error when she requested that anyone interested in serving on the Superintendent Search Subcommittee should send her an email; and she forwarded all the emails she received to Mrs. Cofield at Central Administration. Mr. Croston asked that the Policy Subcommittee creates a policy that bars the use of personal email for formal school committee business.

- g) **Discussion/Action – Superintendent Selection Subcommittee.** Mrs. Perrotti requested this agenda item to discuss with the full committee what they want out of the Superintendent Selection Subcommittee. Mr. Croston stated that a charter needs to be developed, and the subcommittee needs to include enough professionals from the district to balance the outside voices, represent administration, principals, facilities, and teachers. He thinks the subcommittee should have 5-7 members. Mr. Harris thinks the perfect subcommittee has 7-9 members. Mrs. Perrotti stated that the subcommittee is not going to hire anyone but rather narrow down the candidates to bring forward to the full committee.
- h) **Discussion/Approval – Legislative Agenda.** Dr. Lusi distributed the 2010 Legislative Agenda and described the action that was taken over the past year. Mrs. Perrotti stated that she would like the Committee to have a chance to digest it, so it will be put on the next agenda.
- i) **Discussion/Approval – November Financial Reports.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the November financial reports. So voted 7-0.
- j) **Report on December Financials.** Dr. Lusi stated that Mr. Dunham will give the report at the next meeting.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Alternative Revenue.** Mr. Croston reported that the subcommittee met on January 13th to discuss Little Compton and the Aquidneck Island Math and Science Academy. They held an Executive Session, and no votes were taken. There will be a meeting with Little Compton in February. They are seeking funding sources for AIM Academy planning.
- b) **Aquidneck Island Study Group.** Tom Vadney stated that he and Ms. Wedge attended the subcommittee meeting on January 24th. The NESDEC Report, Phase 1, is now completed.
- c) **Facilities.** Mr. Croston reported that the subcommittee met on January 13th. They set 6 core goals: Quality buildings/modern systems/safe/adequate; Full-day Kindergarten; move 4th Grade to elementary level; move Administration within a school environment;

enhance storage; and possible update of “E” Wing at PHS to accommodate the AIM Academy.

- 1) A motion was made by Mr. Croston to approve the use of \$29,709 of unanticipated National Grid Energy Conservation funds to create a Facilities Phase II fund. Said funds will be used to pay costs associated with the RIDE Phase II construction aid application process. These funds are eligible for reimbursement if a bond issue is approved. Seconded by Mr. Harris. So voted 7-0.
- d) **Finance.** Mrs. Perrotti stated that the first Finance Subcommittee meeting will be held on February 3rd.
- e) **Health and Wellness.** Ms. Volpicelli stated that the next subcommittee meeting will be held on February 7th.
- f) **Healthcare Commission.** Mr. Harris stated that the subcommittee met on January 19th. The discussion primarily centered on the means by which we get health insurance, which is The Trust. We use the Blue Cross network; however, they are not our insurer. The subcommittee is looking at whether the rates we are being charged by The Trust are right for us. We may look at getting quotes directly from Blue Cross, etc.
- g) **Negotiations.** Mr. Harris stated that negotiations are heading into mediation.
- h) **Policy.** No report.

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to adjourn the public session and reconvene the Executive Session. So voted 7-0. Public Session adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Marilyn King, Clerk