

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by the Chair, Mrs. Perrotti.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cynthia Perrotti, Chair; Marilyn King, Clerk; David Croston, Thomas Vadney, Angela Volpicelli, and Jonathan Harris, Vice Chair (6:35 PM).

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Mark Dunham, Patti Cofield

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sylvia Wedge

A motion was made by Mr. Croston 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 6-0.

The Public Session recessed at 6:31 PM and resumed at 7:15 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mrs. Perrotti reported on the following:

- An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting. Two votes were taken and passed unanimously. One vote was to declare an impasse on contract negotiations with NEA Portsmouth. The other vote was to move forward with arbitration. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. So voted.
- The Superintendent Search Subcommittee held a public forum on March 30th to obtain input on what qualities the public wants to see in our next superintendent. The SSS feels they can review the applications and not use a search firm.
- A public forum regarding negotiations was held at Portsmouth High School on Monday, April 11th. Mrs. Perrotti thanked Mr. Harris for his presentation and Mr. Croston for his summary at the end of the forum. She acknowledged the concessions the teachers have taken in the past. She stated that we owe the students a rigorous and comprehensive program; however, the School Committee needs to be fiscally responsible.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi reported on the following:

- Commissioner Gist has rescheduled her visit to Portsmouth for Tuesday, May 31st.
- The Aquidneck Island Group is meeting tomorrow.
- RIDE has been doing school support visits, looking at implementation and following of regulations in Special Education and meeting the needs of all of our students. A verbal report will be given on Friday, April 15th. Some very positive comments were received from the people visiting our schools regarding co-teaching and meeting the needs of diverse learners.
- Business Agenda Item c) is being withdrawn.

- a) Teaching and Learning: Assistant Superintendent Jermain reported on the following:
- Attended the PMS Grade 6th Reflections of the Past exhibit today, as well as their Invention Convention. Mrs. Jermain thanked the 6th Grade teachers for their work.
 - RTI training was held today for teachers. Dr. Travers from UMASS Dartmouth presented. Mrs. Jermain congratulated Andrea Roberts and Lisa Moy for their work.
 - Melville is having Arts for Life Day on Friday.
 - Teachers are attending Dana training at the end of this week to continue curriculum writing and working on lessons during the summer.
 - Mrs. Jermain congratulated Elaine Amaral at PHS for the grant she received for the watershed project to work on local projects with high school students to help with environmental issues. This is the third year Ms. Amaral has been successful in being recognized as a grant awardee.
- b) Finance and Operations: Mr. Dunham reported on the following:
- The OPEB Trust is being set up through Citizens Bank in the same manner the Town has. Mr. Dunham will inform the Committee before the actual transaction takes place.
 - Mr. Dunham will update the Committee on the Consortium savings at the next meeting.
- c) High School Liaison: Absent.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 15, 2011, and March 22, 2011. So voted 5-0-1. Mr. Harris abstained due to his absence from the March 22nd meeting.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) **Appt. – Clerk, Category B, Hathaway School.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #1-4/5/11, to the position of Clerk, Category B, at Hathaway School, retroactive to April 4, 2011."
- b) **Requests for 1-Year Leave of Absence.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the requests for a 1-year leave of absence as presented."
- c) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement as presented."

- d) **Approval of Request for Permission to Home School.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee approves the request to provide home schooling for the 2010-11 school year for students HS #27-4/11, as listed in the confidential memo dated April 5, 2011, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2.”

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 6-0. Dr. Lusi announced the appointment of Katherine Damon to the position of Clerk, Category B, at Hathaway School; and the resignation for retirement of Robin Perry, Special Education Teacher at Melville School.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

6. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Discussion/Action – PHS Boosters Request to Use Display Advertising.** Mr. John Hamilton represented the PHS Boosters. He stated that they want to hang banner ads on the football field fence. The ads would be installed during the third week of August and would be taken down after the Thanksgiving game. The ads would be put back up for spring sports and taken down at the end of the school year. The ads would raise approximately \$10,000. The PHS Boosters supports all of the high school teams. The proceeds from the ads would be processed through the Boosters so that it gets divided evenly amongst teams. Dr. Lusi stated that our attorney reviewed the issue and determined that there isn't anything standing in the way in terms of law. He recommended that the School Committee's Policy Subcommittee drafts a policy to protect the School Department. Mr. Hamilton stated that the Boosters would approach companies such as CVS for advertising. A motion was made by Mr. Croston to approve a trial period of display advertising subject to a policy being drafted, so that the PHS Boosters may begin recruiting ads. Seconded by Mr. Harris. So voted 6-0. Mr. Croston stated that the policy should be based on Title IX, making sure there is equity in the disbursement of funds. In addition, the School Committee should reserve the right to discontinue any advertisements they deemed were inappropriate. He offered to work with Mrs. King to get the policy drafted quickly.
- b) **Discussion/Action – Procedures to Staffing Policy #4111, 2nd Reading and Adoption.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve as a second reading and adopt the procedures to Policy #4111, Selection and Appointment of School Personnel. Dr. Lusi explained that the School Committee chose to hold off on voting the procedures of Policy #4111 in February, thinking that there would be more time to discuss it with NEA Portsmouth. A response was ultimately received from NEA Portsmouth, but it was not in keeping with the requirements of the

BEP. Much discussion took place regarding whether or not this policy should be negotiated; what is required by the BEP; the possibility of future litigation; and the fact that the policy allows for administrative changes in the procedures, and the procedures call for a Staffing Advisory Committee to advise on this.

So voted 6-0.

- c) **Discussion/Action – Policy on Minimum Salaries for Teachers.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves the policy regarding minimum salaries for teachers and waives the second reading.” This item was withdrawn.
- d) **Approval – 2011-12 School Calendar.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris to approve the proposed calendar for the 2011-12 school year as presented. Seconded by Mrs. King. Dr. Lusi explained that she sought input from NEA and the administrators. So voted 6-0.
- e) **Approval of February Financials.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the February financials as presented. So voted 6-0.
- f) **Report on March Financials.** Mr. Dunham reported that the Department’s largest revenue sources, the Town appropriation and State aid to Education, are being received as projected. In addition to the small positive variance in tuition (\$3,000), there is also a positive variance being projected for Little Compton tuitions due to three more students than anticipated at this time. The negative variance in the Other Financing sources revenue line has increased to \$15,000. This is due to the potential loss of revenue due to down time by the wind turbine. Expenditures are tracking according to budget appropriations. At this time, the Legal Services budget line is projected to be overspent by \$50,000. This projection is an increase over expenditure for the budget line which was projected to be overspent by \$11,000 on February 28. This increase is due to the additional legal work required as a result of the protracted labor negotiations with the teachers’ union. This budget line will be closely monitored as there is a likelihood that the end-of-year final expenditures will be greater than currently projected. A transfer, likely from Special Education Tuitions, will be forthcoming to cover the negative projection. In summary, as we move forward into the year, the budget may still be impacted by the difficult financial climate and the outstanding unsettled labor agreement with the teachers. These conditions will be continuously monitored, and the budget will be managed accordingly. By far, the most significant unknown which will have the largest effect on the budget is the expired agreement with NEA Portsmouth. The manner in which these and similar events occur and are resolved will have an impact on the end of year result of the 2010-2011 budget. Please keep the caveats listed above in mind as you note the small surplus of funds being projected for year end, approximately \$183,000 (Revenue and Expenditures combined) about one-half of one percent. Last March 31st, the end-of-year projection was a positive \$300,000.

- g) **Discussion/Action – Resolution in Support of TORT Reform.** Dr. Lusi explained the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the resolution in support of TORT reform. So voted 7-0.
- h) **Discussion/Action – Resolution in Support of Moving the Date for Teacher Lay-offs.** Dr. Lusi explained the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the resolution in support of moving the date for teacher lay-offs. So voted 6-0.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Alternative Revenue.** No report.
- b) **Aquidneck Island Study Group.** Mr. Vadney stated that they have a meeting on April 13th at Oliphant School at 8:30 AM.
- c) **Facilities.** No report.
- d) **Finance.** No report.
- e) **Health and Wellness.** No report.
- f) **Healthcare Commission.** Mr. Harris stated that the subcommittee brought in bids and decided to stay with the Interlocal Trust. They will be looking for opportunities for June 2012.
- g) **Negotiations.** Mr. Harris reported that the School Committee just voted to move towards arbitration.
- h) **Policy.** No report.
- i) **Special Education.** Mrs. King reported that the subcommittee met on April 7th. The subcommittee asked the Special Education Director, Trish Martins, questions about transportation costs and out-of-district costs. Mrs. Martins gave them the PowerPoint presentation from the State on transportation. Because it is State transportation, the costs can't be changed at this point. Mrs. Martins informed the subcommittee that it is the best price for our needs. The big concern by many is the out-of-district cost to the system to educate the students. The cost is so much higher to send our students to out-of-district placements. Mrs. Martin's goal is to bring back every one of the students to our district. She stated that every year there is potential to bring students that have met their goals back to their neighborhood school. The intervention programs are working to keep students in the district with their peers and save money. The next meeting will be held on May 5th at 4:30 PM, at the Administration Building. The budget for the coming year is on the agenda.

A motion was made by Mrs. King and was seconded by Mr. Croston to adjourn the meeting.
So voted 7-0. Public Session adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Marilyn King, Clerk