

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cynthia Perrotti, Chair; Jonathan Harris, Vice Chair; David Croston, Thomas Vadney, and Sylvia Wedge.

Also Present: Dr. Lusi and Patti Cofield

ABSENT: Marilyn King, Clerk; Angela Volpicelli; Asst. Supt. Jermain; Mark Dunham; and Madison Burns

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 5-0.

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

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mrs. Perrotti reported on the following:
 - Mrs. King was attending the National Honor Society ceremony at PHS.
 - Ms. Volpicelli was away on business.
 - An Executive Session was held prior to the meeting. One vote was approved unanimously to reopen the early retirement notification and extend the deadline to May 15th. A motion was made by Mr. Croston and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. So voted 5-0.
 - The American Association of University Women will hold a public forum to discuss the results of the RIPEC and NESDEC studies on regionalization at Gaudet Middle School in Middletown on May 3rd at 6:30 PM.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi reported on the following:
 - Mrs. Jermain was attending the National Honor Society ceremony at PHS.
 - Mr. Dunham was out of town.
 - Mr. Dunham alerted the School Committee by memo that the School Department locked in the prices for electricity and natural gas. The electricity price is .0754 per kilowatt hour, which is a 16 percent savings (approximately \$50,000) from our current price, and 8.41 per dekatherm (approximately \$10,000 savings).
 - At the April 25th Town Council meeting, there was a discussion of looking at implications of level funding the town departments. If that were to happen, the School Committee's proposed budget would need to be reduced by the \$1,198,665 of new revenue requested from the Town, in addition to the almost \$500,000 of reductions to be determined. If we have a level funded budget, we would have to reduce the current request by nearly \$1.7 million.

- For the first time, PHS has a unified basketball team for athletes with special needs to play with their peers. The games are reported to be phenomenal and the best thing that has happened at PHS in a long time. The next game is tomorrow in Middletown at 3:30 PM. The final game is Wednesday, May 4th, home vs. Mt. Hope. Dr. Lusi encouraged everyone to attend.

a) High School Liaison. Absent.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 12, 2011. So voted 5-0.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**: Larry Fitzmorris, 50 Kristen Court, asked why the Little Compton contract was discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Perrotti stated that the purpose of the Public Comment section of the agenda is for the public to give the School Committee information. It is not for discussion purposes. Mr. Fitzmorris stated that contracts should be negotiated in public session. Dr. Lusi will forward Mr. Fitzmorris' comments to the School Department attorney for review.

5. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

a) **Approval of March Financials**. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to approve the March financials as presented. So voted 5-0.

b) **Summary of Financial Benefits of Closing Elmhurst School**. Dr. Lusi distributed the financial spreadsheet that was presented to the Committee back in April 2010 and a revised spreadsheet showing the actual financial benefits. She explained that the district did not end up needing the 3 additional buses and 21 additional monitors originally projected. Additional bus monitors were not needed, as we were able to increase hours for some of them. There was very little additional cost, resulting in a positive variance that will be used for the retiree payouts at the end of the school year. The estimated cost of \$45,000 for the 1-time move was actually \$36,100. The savings for the 2010-11 school year were \$418,000; and the continuing savings are \$454,268. Mrs. Perrotti stated that she was most concerned about the salary/benefits line and would talk to Dr. Lusi separately about manpower.

c) **Review/Approval of Policies as a first reading:**

- 1) **#4351 Webmail Guidelines**. Dr. Lusi explained the changes to the policy. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to approve the changes to Policy #4351 Webmail Guidelines as a first reading. So voted 5-0.

- 2) **#4355 Information Technology Equipment.** Dr. Lusi explained the changes to the policy. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to approve the changes to Policy #4355 Information Technology Equipment as a first reading. So voted 5-0.
- 3) **Portsmouth Title I Parent Involvement Policy.** Dr. Lusi explained the changes to the policy. In addition, the Committee agreed to add a sentence at the end of the policy that states that specific programs and providers may be subject to change in keeping with the intent of the policy. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to approve the Portsmouth Title I Parent Involvement as a first reading with the addition of the last sentence. So voted 5-0.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Alternative Revenue.** Mr. Croston reported that Jamestown has approved the STEM Academy resolution; however, Newport has declined to do so. We are still waiting for Tiverton, Little Compton, and Middletown to approve it.
- b) **Aquidneck Island Study Group.** Mr. Vadney stated that a public forum to discuss the benefits of regionalization will be held on May 3rd at 6:30 PM, Gaudet Middle School. On May 4th, the subcommittee will meet at 8:30 at Oliphant School. Mr. Vadney does not agree that regionalization would benefit students or tax payers of Portsmouth, but he does agree that we should remain closely involved on this issue. He urged people to attend the forum. The state could step in and say that they will regionalize us if the financial situation gets worse. He urges the Town Council to seriously consider the long-term ramifications of flat funding the school department because it could lead to the possibility of forced regionalization. We need to work together as a team to get through this crisis. Mrs. Perrotti encouraged that we put an agenda item on a future School Committee meeting to talk about our opinions and take a position publicly.
- c) **Facilities. No report.**
- d) **Finance.** Mrs. Perrotti stated that a subcommittee meeting would need to be scheduled if what the Town Council did last night happens.
- e) **Health and Wellness.** No report. Mr. Croston stated that Chartwells does not offer water at lunch, but a study has recently come out about having water available at meals to help cut down on obesity. Dr. Lusi stated that water is available for purchase at PMS and PHS, but not at the elementary level. She will look into it at the elementary level.
- f) **Healthcare Commission.** No report.
- g) **Negotiations.** Mr. Harris stated that two negotiation meetings have been held with Council 94 so far.

h) **Policy.** No report.

i) **Special Education.** No report.

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Wedge to adjourn the meeting.
So voted 5-0. Public Session adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield

Recording Secretary for:

Marilyn King, Clerk