

School Committee Meeting  
July 10, 2012  
Public Session

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Mrs. King, at 6:00 PM.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Marilyn King, Chair; Jon Harris, Vice Chair; Angela Volpicelli, Clerk; David Croston; Michael Daly; Thomas Vadney; and Sylvia Wedge (6:15 PM)

Also Present: Dr. Krizic, Superintendent; Jeffrey Schoonover, Interim Director of Instruction and Assessment; Mark Dunham, Director of Finance and Administration; Patti Cofield, Administrative Assistant; Joseph Quinn, Little Compton Liaison

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

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 Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 6-0

Public Session recessed at 6:00 PM and resumed at 6:45 PM.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

2. **RECOGNITIONS**

A. Mark V. Dunham, Director of Finance and Administration: Mrs. King thanked Mr. Dunham and acknowledged his contributions to the Portsmouth School Department for the past three years. She stated that he has been efficient and transparent regarding the finances and the budget process. When asked to clarify expenditures or revenue, he would gracefully respond to all questions without hesitation. If additional information was required, he would provide it at the next meeting. She wished him the best of luck in his new position.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mrs. King believes that now is the time to research consolidating our finance department with the Town. She requested that a meeting be scheduled with the Town Administrator, Dr. Krizic, Jon Harris, and herself to discuss consolidation for as soon as next year. Dr. Krizic explained that the Town Council approved the formation of a town/school subcommittee to look for efficiencies and collaborations, and Mr. Harris and Mrs. King were appointed to that subcommittee by Mrs. Perrotti. Mr. Klimm is in the process of sending suggested meeting dates to Dr. Krizic. Ms. Volpicelli fully supports researching consolidation with the Town. Mr. Vadney suggested that the research should include East Greenwich, where the result of consolidating has not been favorable. Mr. Fitzmorris stated that consolidation was discussed back in 2008 or 2009 with the Town Council and the School Committee, and there may be historical information to use. He believes North Kingstown has also collaborated.

Mrs. King expressed appreciation to Mr. Fitzmorris for his role in making School Committee meetings available for the community to view in order to stay informed of the work of the school department. A brief discussion on how to improve the sound quality was held.

Mrs. King reported that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting, and one vote was taken on a personnel matter. The vote to increase the stipend of the recording secretary was passed 5-1. Mr. Croston was opposed. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mr. Daly to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. So voted 7-0.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATION**

A. New Rhode Island Accountability System: Dr. Krizic gave a Powerpoint presentation on the New Rhode Island Accountability System. She explained that the state of Rhode Island had applied for a waiver from accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and proposed a new accountability plan that included multiple data points in order to help schools further advance student performance. Under NCLB, schools were designated as meeting Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) or not meeting AYP. In the new accountability system, there are six levels of designation: Commended, Leading, Typical, Warning, Focus, and Priority. In Portsmouth, Hathaway, Melville, and PMS have been designated as Typical Schools, and PHS was designated as a Leading School.

Mr. Croston requested that the Administration comes forward at a future meeting to explain the groups, the gaps, and what is being done to narrow those gaps. He inquired about our high school graduation rates and thinks the numbers works against us because of our military population. Dr. Krizic stated that there is a survival cohort rate but does not know what is taken into account without the information in front of her. Mr. Croston asked Dr. Krizic or Mr. Schoonover to follow-up with RIDE to inquire further about the graduation rate calculation and what considerations are in place to address military families.

B. Investment Policy: Mr. Dunham, Director of Finance and Administration, presented a template for an investment policy. The School Committee discussed having this policy further discussed at the Finance Subcommittee level and bringing it back to the School Committee for approval.

6. **APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2012 meeting. So voted 6-0-1. Mr. Harris abstained due to his absence from that meeting.

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Appointment – PMS Grade 4 Teacher (1 year appt.)

B. Appointment – PHS Assistant Principal

- C. Appointment – PHS Spanish Teacher, .6 time
- D. Appointment – PHS Custodian, Category A
- E. Teacher Resignation – Christine Homen
- F. Teacher Resignation – Amanda MacDonald
- G. Second Reading and Adoption of Policies:
  - 1112 Other Media: Communications from Outside the Schools
  - 1250 Visits to Schools
  - 1330 Community Use of School Facilities
  - 1440 Parent/Guardian Involvement in Chapter I Programs
  - 1500 Smoking Policy for School Visitors
  - 1600 Advertising in Schools (New)
  - 6144.5 Social Networking and Text Messaging (New)

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mr. Croston to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 5-0-2. Mrs. King and Ms. Volpicelli abstained due to having insufficient time to review the backup information.

Dr. Krizic announced the appointments.

- A. Appointment – PMS Grade 4 Teacher (1 year appt.), Meg Loftus
- B. Appointment – PHS Assistant Principal, Colleen Larson
- C. Appointment – PHS Spanish Teacher, .6 time, Anabela Olsen
- D. Appointment – PHS Custodian, Category A, Jeffrey Walkden

Dr. Krizic thanked Mrs. Homen and Ms. MacDonald for their years of service to the Portsmouth School Department.

## 8. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- A. Agenda Item Request – Discussion/Action re Use of Consent Agenda for Staffing and Contract Approval (Requested by Mr. Larry Fitzmorris). Mr. Fitzmorris stated that he was present on behalf of the Portsmouth Concerned Citizens group. He appealed to the School Committee to stop the use of the Consent Agenda for staff hiring and contract approvals, as he feels these items warrant public discussion. He clarified that he is more concerned with senior staff appointments being on the Consent Agenda rather than on the Business Agenda. Much discussion took place regarding transparency and accountability. He recommended that the School Committee adopts a policy that prohibits the hiring decisions, public budget reports, and contract approvals from being approved on the Consent Agenda. Mrs. King stated that the Tiverton and Middletown School

Departments also use the Consent Agenda for personnel matters. Mr. Harris added that dis-cussions regarding appointments are held in Executive Session under RIGL 42-46-5, prior to the Committee approving the appointments. Mr. Quinn explained how Little Compton's agendas are set up. This issue will be further discussed with the Policy Subcommittee.

- B. Budget Transfers: A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli to approve the budget transfers as presented. So voted 7-0.
- C. Approval of Request to Declare Technology Equipment as Surplus: A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli to approve the designated technology equipment as surplus. So voted 7-0.

9. **SUBCOMMITTEE COMMUNICATION**

- A. Facilities: No report.
- B. Finance: No report.
- C. Health and Wellness: No report.
- D. Negotiations: Mr. Harris reported that the subcommittee is awaiting an arbitration date with Council 94.
- E. Personnel: No report.
- F. Policy: Mrs. King reported that a meeting will be scheduled next month.
- G. Portsmouth Joint Subcommittee on Fiscal Health: Mr. Harris reported that the Town Council appointed their subcommittee members at last night's Council meeting. A subcommittee meeting will be scheduled soon.
- H. Technology: No report.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield  
Recording Secretary for:

Angela Volpicelli, Clerk