

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

January 28, 2008

7:00 P.M.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, January 28, 2008, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, and William Padien. Richard Tretheway was not in attendance. Leslie Ryan and Davida Irving were also present.

Resignation/Retirement

A motion (Hall, Padien) to accept with regret Kathryn Ritter-Smith's resignation as the administrative assistant to the special education director and the guidance counselor carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Hall, Padien) to accept with regret Henry Lemoine's retirement at the end of the 2007-08 school year carried with a vote of 4-0. Mr. Lemoine will have completed 28 years at the Block Island School and with his retirement he is entitled to full medical benefits until Medicare begins or the age of 65, whichever occurs first, and severance pay for his unused sick days.

Award of Bids

William Padien and Leslie Ryan met with Howie Rice on Thursday, January 24 to discuss the bid submitted by his company and to negotiate a price for one school bus for the upcoming school year. Mr. Rice adjusted the bid to reflect the use of one bus at a price of \$37,300. If an additional bus is needed the cost would be \$2,375 per month. Extra trips for school functions will be billed at \$80 per hour and Mr. Rice will assume responsibility for driver(s), proper maintenance, and obtaining appropriate liability and other insurance (\$1 million coverage required). The Block Island School will provide the monitor and reimburse the cost of fuel for the period of use by the school department. School Committee members were concerned with the bid limiting the number of students to be transported at 56 when the bus can accommodate more than that. Mrs. Ryan stated that Mr. Rice was concerned with the number/size of backpacks and musical instruments that are being transported with the students. Another concern addressed was that the decision to add a second bus would be made by the school department, not the bus company. The committee agreed to a one year contract. A motion (Hall, Butcher) to award the bus transportation bid to Rice's Construction Co. Inc. for one bus at \$37,300 for the 2008-2009 school year carried with a vote of 4-0.

2008-09 Budget Work Session

An updated, balanced budget was submitted for School Committee review. Mrs. Ryan thanked Nancy Cole for the amount of work she did to present a clear budget. She then explained the changes made

to the budget since last week.

In the administration department, the wages/clerical line item was reduced to reflect the change in hours that the new administrative assistant to the special education director and guidance counselor will be required to work. With the reduced hours, the health benefits are being changed from family to single.

In the education department the wages/teachers was increased to reflect Henry Lemoine's one-time severance payment. There is an increase in the guidance counselor's wages because she feels she was originally misplaced on the salary scale. She is currently making \$46.63 per hour and has requested an increase to \$58 per hour. School Committee members expressed concern with the 20 percent increase for the guidance counselor when other staff members are getting three percent. Dr. Irving informed the committee members that it is not easy to get someone to come out to Block Island who is good and one of the things you can't put a price tag on is the amount of work she puts into the job when she is off island. In addition, she is putting together a guidance department that will be here long after she is gone. Dr. Irving requested that the School Committee give the guidance counselor time to finish what she has started. Annie Hall stated that parents have contacted her and report that they very happy with the work being done by the guidance counselor. A motion (Butcher, Hall) to keep the 2/5 guidance counselor funded at \$58 per hour in the 2008-09 budget and that her contract be

negotiated in July carried with a vote of 3-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

Continuing with the education department, the transportation/bus contract was reduced to reflect the new bid. In addition, the maintenance contract/computer licenses line item includes an increase in the cost of the spam filter. The amount of \$1,164 was added to the principal's budget line item, which will allow Dr. Irving to pay teachers \$20 per hour for work above and beyond the contract. She reported that she wouldn't be too extravagant because there isn't much money in the line item. Sean McGarry requested that \$25,000, which he later reduced to \$20,000.00, be added to the sports line item to properly fund and staff the athletic budget. He feels that the athletic director job description should be changed to an administrative position and increased to full-time in order to offer the requisite programs at the school. When asked where he would find the money in the budget to fund this line item he stated he would start with the wages/clerical and reduce the number of hours the administrative assistants would be required to work. The reduction in salary and related benefits could total \$12,000. Mr. Padien feels the athletic director should remain a stipend position as only a few Rhode Island public schools have full-time athletic directors. It was also pointed out that the superintendent, guidance counselor, and special education director are not full-time. Mr. Padien also felt it would be fiscally irresponsible for the committee to increase the budget for sports with no apparent breakdown of what the money

would be used for. Shea Butcher stated that he agrees athletics are an important aspect of education, but not when you have to cut other educational opportunities. Mr. Padien reminded Mr. McGarry that the stipend for the athletic director has moved over the years, not by leaps and bounds, but in the right direction.

In the building and maintenance department, the wages/custodian decrease reflects a part-time custodial position that will not be required next year. The School Committee expressed concern about the loss of a part-time custodian, but maintenance supervisor Amy Doran feels that the work can be done with the remaining custodians (two full-time and one part-time). With the maintenance contracts in place, custodians will not be spending time tightening belts and changing filters, which will allow them more cleaning time.

In the capital department the education equipment line item was reduced to \$2,108.51 because some of the computers requested for next year can be purchase with funds in this year's budget. It was stated that if this line item were level funded we would be \$20,000 in the red. It is hoped that there will be more money available next year to purchase computers.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to earmark at the end of the current fiscal year a portion of the fund balance (if any) for educational equipment and/or athletic situations carried with a vote of 4-0.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:37 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(2) for a discussion relating to the negotiations with the Town Employees' Association carried with a vote of 4-0.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:44 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to seal the minutes of the executive session carried with a vote of 4-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Butcher) at 8:45 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 4-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: February 4, 2008