

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

October 19, 2009

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, October 19, 2009, 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, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway. Robert Hicks was also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on September 21 and 29, 2009, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the executive session minutes of the meeting held on September 21, 2009, as written carried with a vote of 5-0.

Reports

Mr. Hicks reported at last month's meeting that no scores were shown for grades 8 and 11 because each had fewer than ten students.

However, RIDE created indexes by rolling the percentages of all grades tested in a particular school into the highest grade. Therefore, the information RIDE gave to the Providence Journal indicated that 45

percent of our 11th grade students were proficient in the NECAP science test, which was an amalgam for the scores from grades 4, 8, and 11. Mr. Hicks has had several discussions with representatives from RIDE to see if they are going to continue this practice, but has not received a final determination. Mr. Hicks submitted examples of the different types of questions found on the tests (multiple choice, performance task, extended response). He feels the NECAP is a rigorous test and should work to bring up our science level.

A draft of the FY09 audit was received electronically on Friday and submitted to the School Committee for review. Jeffrey Wadovick will be in attendance at the meeting on November 16 to answer any questions the School Committee may have about the audit. Mr. Hicks highlighted a few items, including the fund balance of \$130,000. William Padien questioned whether the fund balance was that large considering the amount expended during the course of the year on items that were not budgeted

Mr. Hicks reported that RIDE recently published report cards for all Rhode Island schools under the requirement of No Child Left Behind. Block Island School's information has been posted on our web site.

Mr. Hicks attended the annual meeting of the Rhode Island Interlocal Trust where a proposed merger between the trust and a Rhode Island health group was discussed. This could possibly make the purchase of health insurance less expensive for the membership, although he

was not sure if it would be available to the smaller groups. The merger is to take effect January 1, 2010.

Mr. Hicks would like to make the supplemental agenda and accompanying materials available to the public via the school's web site beginning with the next School Committee meeting. School Committee members could access the information if unable to pick up their packets before the end of the day on Friday and community members would access to the information prior to the meeting. Committee members felt this was a good idea.

New Business

Mr. Hicks developed a Travel Reimbursement policy which would replace Policy HF: Commuter Teacher Travel with New England Airlines. Reimbursement for travel would be provided at the traditional ferry rate for part-time people who do not reside on Block Island and for full-time employees who must attend workshops on the mainland regardless of whether the hi-speed ferry or airplane is used.

The superintendent may approve exceptions, but those in excess of 10 rides per year must be approved by the School Committee.

Reimbursement for parking at the mainland ferry dock would be limited to one-sixth the annual rate for a DEM parking permit. Once adopted it will be provided to all new employees and referenced in annual contracts. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to post Policy HF: Travel Reimbursement for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks, who had concerns about the lack of information regarding early graduation contained in Policy FBF: Graduation Requirements, reviewed other district's policies and updated ours with the help of the faculty. The new wording adds a preference for students to remain in high school for the full four years and suggests they consider concurrent enrollment. Early graduation should be for students who are capable of entering post-secondary life ahead of the traditional schedule. Students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA and complete 14 credits by the end of the sophomore year. In addition, they must meet the RI Board of Regents requirement for performance on state assessments in the fall of their junior year, using their grade eight assessments as a guide. Mr. Hicks included a deadline for early graduation applications along with a rationale for the deadline. A motion (Padien, Hall) to post Policy FBF: Graduation Requirements for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks revised Policy DEA: Applications for Use of School Facility and Conditions Controlling the Use of School Facilities and included a fee schedule for the different classes of users. He suggested that school and town activities and affiliated groups be exempt from all fees. Non-profit community groups and civic organizations would be exempt for light usage, but pay a fee for the use of the cafeteria when the kitchen is included and the gymnasium. In addition, the policy would charge for actual expenses when school staff must be employed to support the activity, such as the use of the kitchen.

Sean McGarry stated that he does not want to restrict the use of the facilities, but under the 30/50 legislation the district has a fixed amount of money to use to fund its programs. He feels that the town's use of the facilities, outside normal school hours, should come from the town's budget, not the school's. Annie Hall stated that the most recent renovation was paid for by the community and they should be allowed to use it. In addition, she feels it is imperative that health and wellness be promoted by the district and this can be done through many of the town's recreation programs. A motion (Padien, Hall) to post Policy DEA: Applications for Use of School Facility and Conditions Controlling the Use of School Facilities for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 4-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

A request was received from Wendy Crawford to home school her three daughters (Fiona, Ruby, and Rory) while attending a family reunion in South Africa from November 30-December 16, 2009. A motion (Tretheway, Butcher) to approve Wendy Crawford's request to home school her children from November 30 through December 16, 2009, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A request was received from John and Kerri Spier requesting permission to home school their three children (David, Samuel, and Selena) from November 30, 2009, through the third week of January 2010, while they complete the last leg of their journey to sail around the world. A motion (Hall, Tretheway) to approve the Spiers' request

to home school their three children from November 30, 2009, through the third week of January 2010 carried with a vote of 5-0.

A request was received from Jessica Howarth and James Murray requesting permission to home school their daughter, Ayla, for the 2009-2010 school year. A motion (Butcher, Tretheway) to approve the request received from Jessica Howarth and James Murray to home school their daughter for the 2009-2010 school year carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Tretheway) to accept the resignation of Nancy Cole from her position as fiscal clerk with regret carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Butcher) to accept the resignation of Paul Cunningham as the head coach for the junior high basketball team with regret carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Yordanka Martin to the fiscal clerk position carried with a vote of 5-0. Mrs. Martin will be compensated at the rate of \$18.00 per hour and receive benefits pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Town Employees' Union.

A motion (Padien, Butcher) to consent to the appointment of Sara Turenne as a food service helper carried with a vote of 5-0. Mrs. Turenne will work two to three days per week and share the position

with Molly O'Neill. She will be compensated at the rate of \$12.50 per hour.

A motion (Hall, Butcher) to consent to the appointments of Lauri McTeague and Lisa Sprague as co-coaches for varsity girls' basketball, Matthew Moran as head coach for junior high boys' basketball, and John Tarbox as assistant coach for junior high boys' basketball carried with a vote of 5-0.

Requests were received from Town Clerk Fiona Fitzpatrick and Recreation Director Rob Closter to waive the facility use fees for upcoming Town Council meetings and Recreation Department activities that are scheduled to take place at the school. Ms Fitzpatrick requested the use of the cafeteria for a special financial town meeting on Wednesday, November 4 and for a Town Council meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 18 when a large audience is anticipated. Mr. Closter's request for a waiver for badminton and volleyball was tabled at last month's meeting. A motion (Hall, Butcher) to waive the facility use fees as requested by the Town Clerk and Recreation Director carried with a vote of 4-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

To help defray some of the costs associated with the lunch program, Mr. Hicks recommended the following for adult lunches: a la carte items would increase by 50 cents and the tray lunch would increase from \$2.75 to \$3.50. Snacks, beverages, and other small items would

remain unchanged. A motion (McGarry, Hall) to approve the increase in the adult lunch prices, both a la carte menu items and the tray lunch, carried with a vote of 5-0. It was suggested that this be revisited at the end of the school year to see if it needs to be adjusted.

After the suggestion was made at the meeting on September 29 regarding housing for the administrative staff, Mr. Hicks, with the help of Mrs. Hall, began researching the possibility of leasing a house that would accommodate the two principals, the special education director, the guidance counselor, and himself. Leasing a house instead of paying for all of them to stay at the 1661 Inn would save the district money, make the stay less isolating, and eliminate an additional cost when one or more of them got “stuck” on the island. A house on High View Lane, which is within walking distance of the school and ferry, is available for \$1400 per month, including all utilities. It is available from October 26 through the end of the school year (June 18). Leasing this house could save the district approximately \$2500 over the course of the year. A motion (McGarry, Tretheway) to approve the lease with High View Glen LLC for a house on High View Lane for \$1,400 per month from October 26, 2009, to June 18, 2010, carried with a vote of 4-0, with Shea Butcher having recused himself. All agreed that the 1661 Inn has been very generous and accommodating in providing hotel rooms for school administrative personnel and thanked them for their support and generosity.

Calendar of Events

A calendar of events for the months of October and November was submitted for School Committee information. School Committee members were invited to attend the Town Council meeting on October 21 when representatives from Washington County Energy Program would be in attendance. The next regular School Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 16, 2009. In addition, committee members were urged to attend the workshop with the RI Board of Ethics, scheduled for Thursday, October 22 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

Correspondence

Various pieces of correspondence were forwarded for School Committee information, including resolutions regarding binding arbitration from Portsmouth and East Greenwich school departments. In addition, correspondence was received from Megan Mitchell thanking the School Committee for its support, but she has decided not to graduate early.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:15 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, McGarry) at 8:45 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to seal the minutes of the executive session carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:46 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: November 16, 2009