

# **NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Block Island School**

**November 16, 2009**

**7:00 p.m.**

**The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, November 16, 2009, in the media center of the Block Island School. Superintendent Robert Hicks 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 present. Robert Hicks was also in attendance.**

## **Annual Meeting**

**William Padien was nominated for chairperson by Annie Hall; the nomination was seconded by Shea Butcher. Being no further nominations, the vote was 4-0 to approve William Padien as chairperson.**

**Sean McGarry was nominated for secretary by William Padien; the nomination was seconded by Annie Hall. Being no further nominations, the vote was 4-0 to approve Sean McGarry as secretary.**

**Policy DCD: Contacting Legal Counsel requires the appointment of one person on the School Committee to coordinate requests for assistance from the appointed legal counsel. A motion (Hall,**

**Butcher) to appoint the chairperson to coordinate requests for assistance from legal counsel carried with a vote of 4-0.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**A motion (Padien, McGarry) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 19, 2009, as presented carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**The approval of the executive session minutes of the meeting held on October 19, 2009, was tabled until the December meeting.**

### **Reports**

**Mr. McGarry attended the Ethics Commission workshop held recently at Town Hall and learned that if an individual serves on more than one town board there is no conflict voting from one to the other. The largest topic discussed that evening was when to recuse yourself. Once a board member has been recused, in addition to filling out the form and filing it with the Ethics Commission, he/she should then leave the table. If it is a closed session, the recused person must leave the room.**

**Mr. Padien reported that he met with a representative from the boiler manufacturer, as well as Don Atkinson who services the boiler regarding its malfunction. They are trying to figure out how the insulation collapsed on brand new equipment. To date no report has been received. Mr. Hicks added that of the seven boilers, which are phased to share the burden, four are working fine right now. This**

puts more stress on the ones that are working. He stated that the four boilers will provide heat this winter, but it is something that will have to be addressed and resolved. The boilers are still under warranty if it is determined that it is a manufacture problem.

Mr. Hicks reported that the Rhode Island Ethics Commission has requested written information and comments concerning a draft of a new advisory relating to participation in union actions by public officials who are union members. The new advisory is intended to provide general information and explanation regarding the prohibitions placed on public officials who are union members and who are required, as part of their official public duties, to interact with representatives of either the local bargaining unit or the umbrella organization to which they pay membership dues.

Mr. Hicks submitted the fiscal report through October 31, 2009, in two formats. One was in the format used in previous years and the other utilized the new uniform chart of accounts, consolidated by object codes. Mr. Hicks highlighted several items including principal's wages, which should be around 33 percent, but is at approximately 44 percent. If each principal works 90 days this line item will be over expended by \$3000. Also expected to be over expended is housing and travel, but these items will be offset by not paying health benefits or retirement for the two principals. Mr. Hicks is developing a contingency plan in case there is a loss of state aid because of the \$200 million deficit in the state budget this year. School Committee

members requested a breakdown of all building maintenance expenditures as almost 75 percent of that line item has been spent. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to approve the fiscal report as presented with a request that the superintendent forward answers to questions asked tonight carried with a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Hicks outlined his thoughts for the upcoming meeting on the administrative structure of the school, which is scheduled for December 7. He has asked the two principals to write up what they consider to be the pros and cons of the current structure and at least one will be in attendance at the meeting. In addition, he plans to review the rules and requirements regarding employing retired individuals, review the various organizational options available to us, and discuss a timeline. Mr. Padien requested that the principals' reflections be made available to the School Committee prior to the meeting so they can review and develop questions if necessary.

### **Old Business**

Jeffrey Wadovick was present to answer questions and review the audit, which was received by the School Committee at last month's meeting. Mr. Wadovick stated that, as in previous years, the district received a clean audit opinion. He reported that even though state aid did not come in as expected the bottom line was not as bad as originally thought. The budget ended up with a negative \$7,770.00, which was covered by the previous fund balance. He assured the committee that as of June 30, 2009, there was a fund balance of

**\$130,000. Mr. Wadovick stated that he will have to make an adjustment by moving money for the HVAC from supplies to purchased services. He cautioned the committee to not re-appropriate any money from the fund balance to level the tax base and to be careful because of the many unknowns with state funding. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to accept the FY 09 audit as discussed this evening with the changes that will be made to the one line item carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**Mr. Hicks explained that at the last meeting the School Committee voted to authorize a lease of the Stern House on High View Lane in the amount of \$1400 monthly for the purpose of housing part-time administrators and the guidance counselor. Following that authorization the lease fell through. Mr. Hicks asked the School Committee to rescind that vote and authorize the lease of another house off High Street owned by Bellevue House Inc. for the same amount of money. A motion (Butcher, Hall) to rescind the vote approved at the October meeting to lease the Stern House and approve the lease for the house (AP 7, Lot 74 located at Fire 1001 off High Street) owned by Bellevue House Inc. in the amount of \$1400 monthly carried with a vote of 4-0. Mr. Hicks stated that the lease would run through June 18, 2010, with the exception of weekends beginning Memorial Day.**

## **New Business**

**Policy HC: Athletic Compensation was recently updated by Mr. Hicks**

**and Athletic Director Rob Closter. Some coaching position points were increased and a few positions were eliminated, which ended up with some overall savings. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to post Policy HC: Athletic Compensation as presented for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Kelsey McRae as a teacher assistant effective November 16, 2009, carried with a vote of 4-0. Ms McRae will be compensated at the rate of \$14.27 per hour and receive benefits pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Town Employees Contract.**

**Mr. Hicks reported that in the transition from site-based management several changes were required in the teacher evaluation process. The changes were made, but never formally ratified by the School Committee. This included the removal of “pilot status” and the addition of administrative evaluators other than just the superintendent. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to ratify the teacher evaluation process as amended carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**Mr. Hicks submitted a letter, provided by the Washington County Regional Planning Council, to solicit support for a regional application seeking ARRA (federal stimulus) funds for energy projects. Sending this letter of support would not preclude a sole application from the New Shoreham School Department, but would offer us another option to go after possible funding. A motion**

**(Padien, Butcher) to approve the signing of the letter of support for Washington County Regional Planning Council carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**A memo was received from the Town Manager regarding requests for the capital budget. She stated that the availability of money is limited, which in turn will limit the number of projects that can be funded. School Committee members suggested additional solar panels, security locks, repair of front façade, repair/replacement of the music room sky light, and repair of the drainage by the playground.**

### **Calendar of Events**

**An interim School Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 7 to discuss the administrative structure of the school. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 21.**

### **Correspondence**

**Various pieces of correspondence were forwarded for School Committee information.**

### **Executive Session**

**A motion (Padien, Butcher) at 10:01 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 4-0.**

## **Open Session**

**A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:22 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, Hall) at 10:22 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 4-0.**

**Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk**

**Date approved: December 21, 2009**