

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Block Island School  
April 14, 2014  
(Rescheduled from April 15, 2014)  
7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, April 14, 2014, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The following members were present: Elizabeth Connor, Ann Hall, William Padien, and Christopher Willi. Patricia Doyle was not in attendance. Robert Hicks was also present.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 17, 2014, as presented carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the minutes of the executive session held on March 17, 2014, as written carried with a vote of 4-0.

**Reports**

A motion (Padien, Hall) to amend the agenda to place School Committee reports at the end of the meeting carried with a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Hicks reported that most of the retirement costs and tuition have been recovered. Some line items have been put on hold, but the supply account is still active. The newest electric and fuel oil bills were received after the report was completed. A motion (Padien, Hall) to accept the finance report through March 31, 2014, with the adjustments to the electricity and fuel oil lines carried with a vote of 4-0.

On March 27 Deborah Hart, Kate Mello, and Mr. Hicks visited a school in Middletown that has a unique organizational structure for a group of kindergarten and first grade students. They were able to take a wing of the school and turn it into a learning center with approximately 80 students, making it more un-graded rather than blended. The students are grouped according to what they know/need to learn and teachers can easily assess students and regroup them as necessary. Mr. Hicks stated that he did not hear any cons about this structure during the visit. The students enjoyed it and the teachers worked together well. Mr. Hicks stated that it would be difficult to find a comparable space at the Block Island School, but the visit did emphasize the need to find ways for our teachers to work collaboratively.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to amend the agenda to address Performance Based Report Cards after New Business – Appointments carried with a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Hicks reported that discussions regarding blended learning have been held with the staff and administration. The current plan for the secondary is to use Edgenuity, a software provider of coursework for grades 6-12 used by many of the state's public high schools. The major benefit of Edgenuity is the flexibility of use as it can provide supplemental support for the courses we now offer or provide complete courses for ones we have been unable to offer in-house. It has a strong parent and teacher monitoring component. While our class sizes are small, the teachers

have a lot of preps. Edgenuity would be able to alleviate some of the intensive planning required by teaching five different courses. The current plan for the elementary is to create a “dashboard” in one of the lower grades where students can access customized applications for their own individualized work. It will take a lot of extensive work to create and manage this model for the younger students. However, that teacher will then serve as the “expert” and help the other elementary teachers implement the program in the following year.

### **Old Business**

Since the School Committee adopted its budget in February, new information has been received. The Town Manager cut the school’s budget, leaving a gap of about \$86,000 from what we requested. Health care rates were budgeted at 10 percent, but will only increase by four. The out of district tuition will be reduced by \$20,000 next year. These two items lowered the gap to just under \$35,000. The Town Council, at its most recent budget workshop, discussed adding that amount back into our request. Mr. Hicks suggested revising the adopted budget to \$4,614,057 so it is consistent with the Town Council’s actions and in agreement for the upcoming financial town meeting.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to reopen the 2014-15 school budget carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to adjust the 2014-2015 school budget to \$4,614,057 so it agrees with the appropriation from the town carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to close the public hearing on the 2014-2015 school budget carried with a vote of 4-0.

### **New Business**

Mr. Hicks recommended awarding the boiler cleaning bid to Energy Efficiency Services in the amount of \$12,810 per year plus \$131 per hour for added services. This is not the same as the Town, but it is the lowest bid for the school boilers and the current contract holder. A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the bid submitted by Energy Efficiency Services, Inc. for the annual cleaning of the school’s boilers as presented carried with a vote of 4-0.

The only bid received for the lift replacement project was from Accessibility for New England in the amount of \$37,790 if the existing doors can be used or \$44,371 if new doors must be installed, which entails widening the shaft opening to accept the doors. Mr. Hicks stated that the work must be completed by August 1. The trash hauler has agreed to take away the old lift at no charge. A motion (Hall, Connor) to award the lift replacement bid to Accessibility for New England as stated carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Kelsey McElroy as the head coach for the junior high softball team carried with a vote of 4-0.

### **Reports**

Mrs. Monje submitted samples of the various report cards used at Block Island School (kindergarten, grades 1-3, grade 4, grades 5-7, and grades 8-12) and examples of performance based report cards used by other districts. It was noted that the terminology has been inconsistent and confusing, but performance-based/standards-based are the same. The report cards for grades 1-3 and grade 4 are performance based and were implemented several years ago.

The report cards for grades 5-7 are now generated by Aspen, as are those for grades 8-12. Mrs. Monje stated that she would prefer to have the report card for grades 5-7 more performance based, which includes details and specific language from the standards and/or common core units of study.

### **Calendar of Events**

The next regular School Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 19.

### **Executive Session**

A motion (Padien, Connor) at 8:07 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 (Connor, Padien) at 8:25 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 4-0.

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

### **Adjournment**

A motion (Padien, Connor) at 8:24 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 4-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: May 19, 2014