

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Block Island School
February 11, 2016
(Rescheduled from February 8, 2016)
4:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, February 11, 2016, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. The following members were present: Ann Hall, William Padien, and Christopher Willi. Elizabeth Connor and Patricia Doyle were not in attendance. Judith Lundsten was also present.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on January 25 and February 2, 2016, as presented carried with a vote of 3-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the minutes of the executive session meetings held on January 25 and February 2, 2016, as written carried with a vote of 3-0.

Reports

Susan Gibbons and the tenth grade students reported on the extremely successful Further A Field trip to St. Croix. The students spoke about their favorite part of the trip, the work they completed, and what they learned about themselves. One of the most important things to the students was being able to bond with each other. They planted a lot of trees, ate different foods than they normally have available to them, and enjoyed the educational experience of being on a tropical island with its different culture, animals, etc. One of the students stayed behind and worked with The Nature Conservancy rep on Block Island and learned a great deal about the Great Salt Pond. He also helped develop a web site for Further A Field. Dr. Gibbons stated that next year 10 students will be involved and the only thing to change is the time of year. Next year they will most likely go in March, which is between basketball and baseball/softball seasons.

The standing of accounts as of January 31, 2016, was submitted for School Committee review. It was reported that the severance for the retiring teacher has been added to this year's budget. It is anticipated that we will end FY16 with a surplus of \$33,691. A motion (Padien, Willi) to accept the finance report through January 31, 2016, carried with a vote of 3-0.

Mrs. Lundsten reported that last year the attendance data showed 15 Block Island School students missed at least 18 days of school (10%). Unfortunately, she did not have details on why students were out. She stated that five of those students from last year are continuing the trend this year. Attendance information went home with the report cards. If the trend continues, parents will be contacted by the classroom teacher followed by the principal and finally by the superintendent. The school will be considerate of the students with medical conditions.

Mrs. Lundsten reported on the following facility issues:

- Sam Bird is developing a site plan on the solar project for presentation to the Planning Board at its meeting scheduled for March 9.
- The additional LED lights have been ordered and installation is scheduled for the February recess.
- Mrs. Lundsten will need more information on the repair of the front façade to submit a fast track grant next fall.

- Mr. Bird is following up on the installation costs (approximately \$1000) for the sign for the front of the building. The specification sheet is missing, but it was suggested that information could be found online.
- The replacement glass for the front door has been ordered.
- Mrs. Lundsten has been in contact with the parents of the student who designed the trophy case for the front lobby as a senior project. It is hoped the project can be completed soon.

Old Business

The School Committee reviewed the proposed budget for 2016-2017. Mrs. Lundsten reported that the governor has proposed additional educational funding in her budget but it has not yet been approved by the legislature. It was decided to await final legislative approval before including it in our budget. The budget reflects a replacement at fifth step for the teacher who is retiring. It was noted that both contracts (teachers and non-certified employees) are still being negotiated. It was decided that if the health rate increases more than the budgeted 10 percent the use rate stabilization account will be used by the school and the town to cover the shortfall. A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the 2016-2017 budget with a 1.2 percent increase in town funding carried with a vote of 3-0. School Committee members thanked Mrs. Lundsten and Finance Director Melanie Reeves for their hard work in presenting a fiscally responsible budget.

New Business

The amount set aside last year from the teachers' co-share of health premiums was \$20,057.30. It was recommended that this amount be transferred to the OPEB Trust. A motion (Padien, Hall) to transfer \$20,057.30 to the OPEB Trust carried with a vote of 3-0.

After reviewing the information on our investments sent by Vanguard, Mrs. Lundsten recommended that we stay with a conservative investment program. A motion (Padien, Willi) to stay with the conservation investment carried with a vote of 3-0.

A motion (Padien, Willi) to approve the notice of non-renewal to one teacher in advance of the March 1 deadline carried with a vote of 3-0.

The letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement was submitted from Martha Velie-Gass. A motion (Padien, Hall) to accept with regret the retirement of Martha Velie-Gass at the end of the current school year carried with a vote of 3-0.

Calendar of Events

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2016.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 4:59 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 3-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: March 21, 2016