

**REGULAR NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
NOVEMBER 14, 2007**

**The North Providence School Committee met on November 14, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in the Library at the High School. Members present were Chairman Cataldi, Mr. DaSilva, Mrs. Reall, Mr. Marciano, Mr. Martinelli, Mr. Iannetta, and Mr. Palmieri. Also present was Superintendent Ottaviano and Mr. Scungio. Ms. Celona, Mr. Gerardi, Mr. Lynch and Mr. Milazzo were present for the regular session only.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to recess the regular session and go into Executive Session at 5:35 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Potential Litigation, Local 1033 Contract Negotiations, Litigation Update, Personnel Sub Committee, and School Department Finances and Accounts.**

**The meeting reconvened at 6:35 p.m. It began by saluting the flag. Next, Chairman Cataldi asked for a moment of silence. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Marciano for a special intention. Mr. Marciano asked that the moment of silence be dedicated to the passing of a long-time town resident, George Medina. Mr. Medina was very active with the Fogarty Center since 1950 as an advocate for children with special needs.**

**The first item on the Agenda was Correspondence. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was the Superintendent's Report.**

**First was the Affirmative Action Policy. Mr. Martinelli asked that this item be deferred pending an answer to his question regarding language in the policy he would like to remove. He spoke about the language “marital/parental status” and asked for clarification from legal counsel as to whether or not the language has to be there by law. He felt that the language is already on every memo and does not need to be included in the policy. He expressed concern with the language being in the policy.**

**Motion by Mr. Martinelli, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the policy with the exception of the language “marital/parental status”.**

**Next was the Request for Records Policy. Chairman Cataldi stated that the Request was being deferred until the December meeting.**

**Next, Chairman Cataldi requested that the RIIIL and Classical High School Agenda item be moved forward on the agenda if there was no objection. Hearing none, Chairman Cataldi turned the meeting over to Mr. DaSilva for his comments. Mr. DaSilva explained that he put this item on the Agenda because of the article in ProJo. He read the points in his request and recommended that a strongly-worded communication be sent to Classical High School and the Providence School Department as well as the RIIIL demanding that the parents of the North Providence Football team members not incur any medical expenses for**

their children as a result of the call made for the rescue to treat their children for hypothermia. He also spoke about the fact that, in his opinion, it was irresponsible for Classical High School not to reschedule the football game on November 3, 2007 with monsoon-like conditions. He asked Joe Goho to speak about the incident. Mr. Goho thanked the members of the Committee for addressing this issue. He began by taking full responsibility as principal of the High School. The interscholastic league is under the auspices of the principal. Therefore, the responsibility rests with him. It is an internal decision-making process that commenced with an investigation immediately. There was discussion with the Superintendent, the coach, the interscholastic league, and Classical. The meeting was very helpful and the kids are safe and healthy. He also touched base with the kids and parents. The reaction of the parents was that there was never any immediate concern for the students. However, once 911 is called, the EMT's are obligated to transport them to the hospital. He next reflected on what he learned in the process of the internal investigation and the fact that it is in the early stages and will be ongoing. Chairman Cataldi told Mr. Goho that the Committee realizes that there was a series of mistakes made that day and that the Interscholastic League policies and procedures need to be revisited. He added that there was a great lack of communication. Their office was closed on Friday and Saturday and there were no telephone numbers available to get in touch with anyone. They also need to focus on eliminating the threat of forfeiture – it is not the NFL. Mistakes were made by both coaches,

by the athletic directors, and the schools. Mr. Martinelli agreed with the Chairman's comments. He added that the focus needed to be on meeting the medical needs of the children and that they are our number one priority. Although there are other valid issues, it is important that the investigation be completed and that the results are given to the Committee. He commended Mr. Goho for keeping everyone informed. He added that everyone trusts that he is doing a good job and will be expeditious. Mr. Marciano concurred with everyone's comments and felt that people learn from their mistakes. The important thing to remember is that there has to be assurances that this will never happen again. Mr. Goho spoke about the potential penalties under the league rules, including forfeiture, suspension, probation for a year. However, none of the penalties are automatic. Once the game occurred, the proper steps were taken. Mr. Iannetta spoke about keeping the focus on the safety of the children and to make sure that it never happens again. Mrs. Reall focused on a mother's angle. She asked if the players are uniformed adequately. Mr. Goho explained that is part of the investigation. The players have overcoats but they cannot wear them when they play. They will also look at the equipment. Mrs. Reall felt that it was wrong to make the team stay outside during halftime. Mr. Goho spoke about the way that Mr. Williams handles home games and the fact that he lets the coaches know where their teams can go inside our building. Mrs. Reall thanked Mr. Goho for his honesty. Mr. Palmeiri spoke about his initial concerns because the Committee did not know what happened. He asked how long Mr. Williams has been coaching. Mr. Goho

explained that Mr. Williams has been coaching for half his life. He spoke about the fact that there was a whole series of unfortunate events. He spoke about the fact that the North Providence coaching staff asked for an announcement to be made asking for the Classical athletic trainer – she did not respond to the announcement. She assumed that North Providence had staff. He added that it was the North Providence coaching staff that called for medical assistance once there were symptoms. Mr. DaSilva wrapped up by stating that the President of the Interscholastic League needs to make the expectations clear. He added that he has the utmost respect for Glen Williams. Mr. Goho spoke about the fact that the Interscholastic League realizes that there are a lot of interpretations that need to be made clear. Mr. Palmieri feels that it should be made clear during the next meeting with the Interscholastic League that they are on probation. Mr. Martinelli asked everyone to be careful about making any accusations until the investigation is complete. Mr. Goho assured everyone that the lines of communication are wide open and that after their meeting, everyone felt that it was a valuable learning experience. Chairman Cataldi asked if anyone would like to speak regarding this issue. He asked Mr. Morris if he would like to take this opportunity to address the Committee regarding his request to speak on this issue. Mr. Morris read a list of questions and asked Mr. Goho to respond to the questions.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Palmieri and carried to submit the comprehensive list of questions to Mr. Goho as part of his

investigation and once the investigation is complete and the Committee has reviewed the report and it is made public, that a copy be provided to Mr. Morris.

Mr. Aiello asked who is responsible for canceling the game. Mr. Goho explained that it is under the RIIIL rules that it is the home team. Chairman Cataldi added that this is one of the biggest issues under the investigation and it is the reason why the School Committee is so intent on assuring that the Interscholastic League procedures are made clear. Next, Brian Bowser, a member of the NPHS football team spoke. He began by explaining that he has been playing for the team for three years with Coach Williams. The game was played because it was scheduled. He also addressed the equipment issue and explained that the team has appropriate gear, hand warmers, and jackets. They had all the right equipment but you cannot play with the gear on. The coach told them to keep the gear on and keep warm. He did everything he was supposed to do. He also spoke about the fact that the players that needed to be treated for hypothermia removed their wet gear – that is when they started to have symptoms. The team members that kept their wet gear on did not need medical care. He also spoke about the fact that no one from Classical offered the team any area to warm up. The coaches had to take the team in back of the bleachers. He felt that the coaches took care of them. The members of the Committee thanked Brian for his comments and commended him on his presentation.

**Next the Committee continued with the Superintendent's Report. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the 2008 School Committee Meeting Schedule.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the 2008 School Committee Meeting Schedule.**

**Next was Field Trip Requests. Mr. Gerardi recommended that the field trip requests be approved as presented in accordance with School Committee policy.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to approve the November 14, 2007 Field Trip Requests as presented.**

**Next was the Special Education Local Advisory Committee. Mr. Lynch asked for the Committee's approval of the revised By-Laws. There are three minor revisions. Mr. Martinelli asked the Committee to defer this for a few days so that he can look at the proposed revisions. He also asked Mr. Lynch if legal counsel reviewed the policy.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to approve Changes to the By-Laws with the understanding that a member of the Committee can request that the Policy be amended again.**

**Next was the Monthly Financial Report. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the November 2007 Monthly Financial**

**Report as submitted.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the November 2007 Monthly Financial Report as submitted.**

**Mr. Palmieri and Mr. Cataldi asked for clarification on some of the budget items being expended. Ms. Celona spoke about her new assistant and the fact that some of the items could have been put on the wrong line. Chairman Cataldi spoke about the Committee's request for an enhanced report with the requested changes corrected as soon as possible.**

**Next was the Local 1033 Contract Negotiations. Mr. Marciano spoke about the proposal presented to the members of the Committee in Executive Session and recommended passage as presented.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to approve the Contract as presented.**

**Chairman Cataldi thanked Mr. Marciano for a job well done.**

**Next was the Personnel Sub Committee. The matter was deferred until the December meeting and referred to Legal Counsel.**

**Next were School Department Finances and Accounts.**

**Motion by Mr. Palmieri, seconded by Mr. Marciano and Mrs. Reall to approve the requested changes to the form and content of the finance reports as discussed in Executive Session.**

**Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 3-5. First, Mr. Aiello identified himself and asked about the 2008 meeting schedule. Next he asked Mr. Lynch who was on the Advisory Committee. Mr. Lynch explained that it is mostly parents and that the decisions are mostly informational.**

**Next was Requests to Address the Committee.**

**Mr. Morris asked what the procedure is for obtaining a copy of the meeting packet. Mr. Scungio explained that a person can make a written request to the Superintendent and a copy of the packet will be sent out. Any information that is public will be provided in the packet.**

**Mr. Morris next asked questions regarding the Hiring Policy and explained that the Taxpayers Association received numerous complaints regarding the hiring of the Director of Finance and requested a full investigation be conducted.**

**Mr. Marciano explained that all personnel issues are handled by the Personnel Sub Committee and asked Mr. Morris to give the information to the Sub Committee. Mr. Martinelli explained that Legal**

**Counsel needs to make sure that the Committee adheres to all the requirements under the law. Chairman Cataldi added that the Sub Committee will give the Committee an update.**

**The next item on the Agenda was New Business.**

**First was Resignations. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the resignation, which was voted on as follows:**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to approve the resignation of Joseph Capone – Faculty Treasurer NPHS effective December 21, 2007.**

**Mr. Iannetta spoke as a former colleague and wished Mr. Capone well in his retirement.**

**Next was Retirements. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Retirement of Joseph Capone – Math Teacher at NPHS effective December 21, 2007.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve with regret the retirement of Joseph Capone as presented.**

**Next was Old Business. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Use of Property Requests.**

**Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Use of**

**Property Requests as submitted in the November 14, 2007 School Committee Packets based on availability and the requests meeting all the necessary requirements.**

**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to accept the Superintendent's Recommendation for Use of Property Requests as presented.**

**Next was Approval of Bills. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the N.**

**Providence School Department List of Bills dated November 7, 2007 as amended and paid.**

**Motion by Mrs. Reall, seconded Mr. DaSilva and carried that the N. Providence School Department List of Bills dated November 7, 2007 be paid with the amendment made in Executive Session.**

**Next was Approval of Minutes.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried that the Minutes of the October 24, 2007 School Committee Executive Session be approved as presented and kept closed in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-44-4 and 42-44-5.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried that the Minutes of the October 24, 2007 North Providence School Committee**

**Regular Session be approved as presented.**

**Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 7-12. Mr. Aiello asked for clarification on the various bank accounts in town government. He also spoke about how the high school conducts business. He asked if anyone would be able to make a check out to cash. Chairman Cataldi stated that the auditors would have to make a report during the audit and to the best of his knowledge, there has been no checks written to cash. However, he requested that a letter be sent to the auditor and finance director asking if there was ever a check written to cash. Next, Mr. Aiello asked for an update on the fire issues. Mrs. Reall explained that a meeting was held and most of the items were corrected. The remaining issues are the alarm system and the fire escapes and the Committee is working on them with the plan to look into a bond. Next, Mr. Aiello felt that it is vital that every classroom be air conditioned and felt that it should be part of the bond. He next spoke about the approval of bills. Mr. Martinelli explained that the Committee is making tremendous progress and that everyone is making an effort to address any concerns.**

**The next item on the Agenda was Pending Business. Mr. Palmieri requested that an Item be added to the Agenda dealing with a Master Plan for the Elementary Schools, including more money, consolidation, and addressing the complete and total concerns of the elementary schools.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ronald Iannetta**