

To be Approved 05/10/2005.

5.1

NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2005

MINUTES

Call to Order. Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called the Special Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Thompson Middle School Beatrice Berman Bazarsky Performing Arts Center and Cafeteria. Attendance was as follows: School Committee Members: Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker, Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Jo Eva Gaines, Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr., and Thomas S. Phelan; School Department: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary C. Canole, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Robert B. Power, Ed.D., Director of Special Education Linda Martin, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Judith M. Droitcour, Business Manager Bruce Alexander, Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, Coordinator of Human Resources and Information Services Fran Eames (absent), School Building Principals, Administrators, and School Committee Counsel Neil P. Galvin (absent).

ROLL CALL.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1.0 Personnel Actions. Request for Executive Session.

1.1 Appointments.

1.1.1 Rogers High School Principal.

1.1.2 Thompson Middle School Principal.

Executive Session.

At 7:05 p.m., Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to go into **Executive Session** under jurisdiction of Rhode Island State Law, Chapter 46, 42-46-5 – Exceptions (a)(1) Personal Matters, and the person or persons affected have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held in an open session; and (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation. Dr. Hilton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

OPEN SESSION

At 8:15 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

1.0 Personnel Actions.

1.1 Appointments.

1.1.1 Rogers High School Principal. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Appointment of: Patricia M. DiCenso, Principal, Rogers High School, with a starting date of July 1, 2005, as presented. Dr. Hilton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0). Ms. DiCenso addressed the Committee.

1.1.2 Thompson Middle School Principal. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Appointment of: Richard F. Tresky, Ed.D., Principal, Thompson Middle School, with a starting date of July 1, 2005, as presented. Dr. Hilton seconded the motion. Discussion followed by Committee Members: Mr. Leary stated he did not support the individual's salary; Mr. Carlin stated that the salary was too high; Mrs. Gaines stated she was convinced that this is the person we need; and Dr. Hilton stated that the individual has a wealth of knowledge. The motion carried unanimously (7-0). Dr. Tresky addressed the Committee.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the following:

1.2 Terminations. Termination of: Patricia Gunn, Para Educator, Thompson Middle School.

1.3 Retirements. N/A.

1.4 Leaves of Absence. Leave of Absence of: Alfred J. Boutin, English Teacher, Rogers High School, Sabbatical, 2005-2006 school year.

1.5 Transfers/Recalls. Recalls of: Lisa Wilson-Monahan, K-5 Literacy Coach, 2005-2006 school year; and Sharon H. Martin, .5 K-5 Mathematics Coach, 2005-2006 school year.

Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary C. Canole read aloud the approved Personnel Actions dated April 26, 2005, as presented.

2.0 Student Survey. Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert B. Power reviewed with the Committee the request to administer a Survey to students at Rogers High School under a grant entitled: "Project SUCCESS". Discussion followed. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the administration of the Project SUCCESS Student Survey to students at Rogers High School, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried (6-1). The Member voting against the motion was: Thomas S. Phelan.

3.0 2005-2006 Budget Workshop.

- **Thompson Middle School Clusters—Principal Jane Regan.**
 - 191 students presently in grade 5.
 - 36 students added in grade 6 from outside Newport Public Schools.
 - 17 moved in during the school year.
 - Estimating that the 6th grade numbers will be over 200.

Mr. Carlin made a motion to approve the Budget. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion. No vote was taken. Mr. Leary made a motion to move grade 6 from three clusters to two clusters for a savings of \$264,000. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mrs. Gaines stated she did not support the motion based on Ms. Regan's projections. Public input was received from: Anne Galvin—It would be a disaster; it was terrible for 8th graders; Robert Oliveira—It's important to think outside the box; we're having the wrong conversation; you need to talk about the number of schools; you need to address the structural problems; figure out how to macro manage versus micromanage. Mrs. Gaines stated that we need to rethink closing an elementary school. Mr. Carlin stated that no one knows for sure what the numbers would be. The motion failed (3-4). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, and Thomas S. Phelan. Those Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Jo Eva Gaines, and Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr.

- **Rogers High School—Staffing.**
 - Need 5 ½ hours of instruction/day/regulations.
 - Need appropriate safety nets in place.
 - Dangerous to make cuts at the High School that's starting to turn the corner.
 - We've increased the graduation requirements.
 - Advanced placement.
 - Mr. Carlin requested that Rogers High School Principal John Harrington provide School Committee a listing of the Rogers High School College Placements.
 - Public input was received from: Sandra DelBonis—Closing an elementary school will not harm the quality of instruction.
 - Mr. Leary made a motion to look at Budget Line No. 9295 and reduce it by \$550,000 and mandate that all employees and retirees pay a 10 percent health care cost share. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Public input was received from: Robert Oliveira—In South Kingstown and Warwick, they did this, and it blew up in their face; Tia Scigulinsky—If you do this, this will preclude good faith negotiations. The motion carried (4-3). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, Hugo J.

DeAscentis, Jr., and Thomas S. Phelan. Those Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., Jo Eva Gaines, and Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr.

- **Positions: Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools.**
 - Mr. Leary made a motion to eliminate the Positions of Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary C. Canole requested that the Committee not vote on this motion until recommendations are received from Berkshire Advisors. The motion carried (5-2). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr., and Thomas S. Phelan. Those Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., and Jo Eva Gaines.
- **Budget Line No. 9310—Professional and Technical Services.** Review followed.
- **Alternative Program Delivery.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary C. Canole distributed and reviewed the 2005-2006 Alternative Program Delivery Projections, stating that the cost of the Middletown Alternative School would be \$135,616. Discussion followed. Mr. Phelan made a motion not to include the \$135,616 in the 2005-2006 School Budget for the Middletown Alternative School Program. Mr. Leary seconded the motion, which failed (2-5). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary and Thomas S. Phelan. Those Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., David R. Carlin, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Jo Eva Gaines, and Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr.
- **School Closures.** Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert B. Power distributed and reviewed statistics relative to potential school closures. Discussion followed. Mrs. Gaines stated she wants to close one of the elementary schools. Dr. Hilton stated he thinks it is too late; we missed the opportunity; we will look like idiots. Mr. Carlin stated that the decision should be left to the new Superintendent of Schools. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to reconsider the closing of an elementary school. Dr. Hilton seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Carlin requested to know which school would be closed. The motion failed (1-6). The Member voting in favor of the motion was: Jo Eva Gaines. The Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Dr. O. William Hilton, Jr., and Thomas S. Phelan. Public input was received from: Robert Oliveira—Facilities Planning Subcommittee is a joke; don't need anymore draft plans.

- **Payscale.** Business Manager Bruce Alexander stated that pay periods could not be moved.
- **Unemployment.** Business Manager Bruce Alexander stated that the Teachers' Union received an Arbitration Award for 22 pay periods; once the paychecks stop, unemployment begins.
- **Suggestions from Each School Committee Member.**
 - Mr. Leary: Eliminate Dean's Position; Eliminate Nurse's Position.
 - Mrs. Gaines: It's the City's responsibility to fund the education of our students.

The next Workshop to be held on the proposed budget will take place on Tuesday evening, May 3, 2005, beginning at 7 p.m., at the Thompson Middle School Beatrice Berman Bazarsky Performing Arts Center and Cafeteria. The Committee concurred with the City Council's request for a date change from May 19, 2005, 6:30 p.m., to May 26, 2005, 6:30 p.m., for the Newport School Committee to present its Budget to the City Council.

Adjournment. At 10:35 p.m., Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Hilton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.
Chairperson

Robert B. Power, Ed.D.
Acting Clerk