

Approved 12/11/2007.

5.1

**NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting**

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER. Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called the Regular Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Thompson Middle School Beatrice Berman Bazarsky Performing Arts Center and Cafeteria.

ROLL CALL. Attendance was as follows: School Committee Members: Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker, Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin (absent), Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Jo Eva Gaines, Dr. Thomas P. Galvin, and Thomas S. Phelan; School Department: Superintendent of Schools Dr. John H. Ambrogi, Director of Student Services Amy Donnelly Roche (absent), Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Jacqueline Naspo, Ed.D., Business Manager Michael Saunders (absent), Director of Property Services Paul Fagan (absent), Director of Technology Anthony Tomah (absent), Director of Human Resources Fran Eames (absent), School Building Principals, Administrators, and School Committee Counsel Neil P. Galvin (absent).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1.0 MOMENT OF SILENCE.

- **Jean Frances Thomas:** who passed away on Tuesday, October 9, 2007, at Newport Hospital. Mrs. Thomas was a cook with the Newport School Lunch Program at Carey Elementary School and Rogers High School for 15 years before retiring in 1973.
- **Charles P Meehan, Jr.:** who passed away on Tuesday, October 16, 2007, at home. He was the father of Maureen C. Grimes, a school nurse at Cranston Calvert School and Carey School. He was also the father of Elizabeth M. Buckley, a Para-Educator at Thompson Middle School.
- **Agnes M. Johann :** who passed away on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 at Newport Hospital, at the age of 87. She is the mother of retired Newport Public Schools teacher Mary Alice Johann. Ms. Johann was a V.I.N.E. volunteer at Sheffield School for thirty years.
- **Urania Ventura:** who passed away Monday, October 29, 2007, at Village House Nursing Home, Newport, RI. She was the mother of Odette Bradfield, Business

Office Coordinator and Aida LeVasseur, Payroll Processor at the Newport Public Schools.

- **Florence Mae Gray:** who passed away Monday, October 29, 2007, at Newport Hospital. Ms. Gray was a tireless advocate for her city and its citizens, serving on many committees and boards.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT.

No Public Comment was received.

3.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.

3.1 Student Council:

3.1.1 **Update—Amelia Dias.** No report was provided.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT.

4.1 On behalf of the Newport School Committee, Chairman Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker publicly read aloud the Proclamation for American Education Week and presented a framed copy to the Superintendent of Schools for presentation to TAN leadership.

5.0 **CONSENT AGENDA.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented, with the exception of Personnel Actions: Item No. 5.5, to be acted on separately, at the request of Member Mr. Leary. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.1 **Approval of Minutes.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, October 9, 2007; as follows. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, October 9, 2007.** No amendments were made.

5.2

to

5.5 **Personnel Actions.**

5.2 **Resignations.**

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Resignation of: William Kimes, Special Education Department Head, RHS, effective November 14, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Resignation of: Kathy Sisson, Yearbook Advisor, RHS, effective November 5, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.3 Retirements.

There were no Retirements presented.

5.4 Leaves of Absence.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Maternity Leave of Absence of Kathryn Dusel, ELA Teacher, Thompson Middle School, from March 3, 2008, through June 19, 2008. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Leave Without Pay of Julie Frederick, PE/Health Teacher, RHS, for the 2008-2009 School Year. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve Paternity Leave of Absence of: James Horsman, PE/Health Teacher, Underwood School, from December 15, 2007, through January 4, 2008. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.5 Appointments/Transfers.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: John C. Dusel, English Teacher, RHS, effective November 14, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Katherine Olsen, Physical Therapist (.5), District-wide, effective November 26, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Melissa Henry, Job Share Reading Specialist, ALP, effective November 14, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Gretchen Pantig, Job Share Reading Specialist, ALP, effective November 14, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: William Kimes, Special Education Teacher, ALP, effective November 14, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Sharon McDonnell, Mathematics Curriculum Liaison, TMS, effective November 14, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Dave Cannon, Head Coach, Hockey, RHS, effective November 12, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Andrew Martucci, Head Coach, Boys' Indoor Track, RHS, effective November 26, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Andrew Martucci, Head Coach, Boys' Outdoor Track, RHS, effective March 2008. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Robert McEvoy, JV Basketball Coach, RHS, effective November 26, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Steven Schreiner, Head Coach, Girls' Outdoor Track, RHS, effective March 2008. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Brian Sullivan, Freshman Basketball Coach, Boys' Team, RHS, effective November 11/26/2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Emily Winsor, Assistant Basketball Coach, Girls' Team, RHS, effective November 11/26/2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Transfer(s).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Transfer of: William Simmons, Custodian, Thompson Middle School, Second Shift, to Custodian, Thompson Middle School, First Shift, effective November 13, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.6 Requests for Home Instruction. There were no Requests for Home Instruction presented.

Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., distributed the approved Personnel Actions (attached) dated November 13, 2007, as presented.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Facilities: Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reported we have been looking at the columns outside of Thompson Middle School. Several of the columns have rotted and we are investigating corrective action and plan on contracting with the low bidder. It is hoped that the columns will be repaired before the colder weather sets in. As the colder weather approaches, the energy manager is ensuring that thermostats are set appropriately and that our buildings are ready for winter and are energy efficient.

6.2 Subcommittee Reports:

6.2.1 Facilities Planning Subcommittee. Subcommittee Chairperson Mr. DeAscentis stated that he had no new business to report.

6.2.1.1 Ad Hoc Building Committee. Dr. Shoemaker reported that we are submitting to the state, a Stage I application for our new school construction. This is the first step in placing a bonding referendum on the ballot for next November.

6.2.2 Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison. Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker stated that he had no new business to report.

6.2.3 Policy. Subcommittee Chairperson Mrs. Gaines reported that the policy committee has met and prepared two changes that will be considered under the action section of the agenda tonight. One policy change has recommendations from the committee and one policy change has no recommendation.

6.2.4 Wellness. Subcommittee Chairperson Dr. Galvin stated that the wellness committee is moving from a community based committee to a school based committee. The wellness committee will be concentrating on employee health and will be preparing a survey to assess the implementation of health policy at the school level. Dr. Galvin reported that Newport seems to be well ahead of the wellness curve.

6.2.5 Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC). Dr. Shoemaker reported that the main agenda item at the last meeting was a discussion of the proposed changes to the Rhode Island Special Education Regulations. It seems that Rhode Island Special Education Regulations sometimes seem to be in conflict with Federal Regulations. In some cases, Rhode Island regulations are more restrictive than the Federal Regulations, Proposed changes are to leave the implementation up to local school boards. Another topic discussed was the RIASC recommendation for 6 hours of mandatory professional development for

school committee members. A discussion of this recommendation ensued and resulted in a poll of the committee regarding the recommendation for 6 hours of mandatory professional development. Five committee members, Mr. Leary, Mr. DeAscantis, Mr. Phelan, Dr. Galvin and Dr. Shoemaker oppose the recommendation, Mrs. Gaines is in favor of the recommendation.

6.2.6 Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force. No Report.

6.2.7 Discussion on Funding, Consolidation and Efficiency Improving Education Funding in Rhode Island. Dr. Shoemaker reported that he attended an interesting symposium this morning. Mr. Flanders, chairman of the Board of Regents provided the opening address, which was very insightful.

7.0 ACTION.

7.1 Policy Amendments. Mrs. Gaines reported that the policy committee believed that the appropriate place for the appointment of the school committee counsel would be at the organizational meeting in January following the election. Mrs. Gaines moved to approve first reading of Appointment of Legal Counsel Policy:

(Article I – Organization – Section 3, and Article II – Meetings – Section 7)

Section 3. Appointments

- a. Sub-committee Chairs and members; Liaison representatives shall be appointed annually.
- b. Legal Counsel for the School Committee shall be appointed at the Organizational meeting that follows the General Election of School Committee Members.

(Article II – Meetings – Section 7)

Section 7. Order of Business

1. Call to Order by Clerk
2. Election of Chair
3. ~~Sub-committee Appointments (City Council Liaison, Policy, etc.)~~

Mr. DeAscantis seconded the motion. Discussion was held concerning the proposed changes. Procedures for Interviews and requests for proposals for legal counsel were discussed. The process needs to be ongoing from November through January. Newly elected members of the committee need to be properly indoctrinated to the committee policies and procedures. Mrs. Gaines indicated that she would research the new member orientation responsibilities and include appropriate changes. The question was called and the motion to approve the first reading carried unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Gaines presented for first reading, Policy 5.2.4 Academic Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities. The members of the committee could not come to consensus; therefore this policy change is being presented to the committee without the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee.

5.2.4 Academic Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Students may participate in Newport Public School Department sponsored extracurricular activity only if they are academically eligible.

At Rogers High School, a student with one "F" is on academic probation throughout the entire quarter. Every two weeks, it is the responsibility of the student to approach the teacher and ask for the progress report to be completed. If the form is not completed the student is removed from the team or activity.

*Any **Rogers High School** student receiving more than one grade of "F" for a quarterly grading period will be declared academically ineligible for participation in any extracurricular activity for the next quarter. A grade of "F" for a course worth two or more credits (meeting 10 or more periods per week) will be considered two "F's" for eligibility purposes, and the student will be academically ineligible.*

*Students attending **Thompson Middle School** who earns an "F" at the end of a marking period, shall be placed on academic probation until mid-term assessments. If, by the mid-term assessment, a passing grade has not been achieved, the student shall be deemed academically ineligible.*

~~Students must pass all courses in the grading period immediately preceding that during which they wish to participate in the extracurricular activity.~~

Mrs. Gaines moved to approve first reading of Policy 5.2.4 Academic Eligibility for Participation in Extracurricular Activities as presented by the Policy Committee. This policy concerns academic eligibility at the secondary level. Language being deleted is ~~struck through~~ and new language is in *italics*. The motion was seconded by Mr. DeAscentis. It was requested that the language from the TMS section "*If, by the mid-term assessment, a passing grade has not been achieved, the student shall be deemed academically ineligible.*" also be added to the Rogers High School section. There was discussion that requested that the Policy Subcommittee provide more specific language regarding the reporting of interim

academic progress, align the policy with the current requirements of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League and resolve the differences between the middle school and high school policies. Mrs. Gaines will incorporate the suggestions with the subcommittee and present the changes for a second reading. The motion to approve first reading of the proposed policy change was carried (5-1) with Mr. DeAscentis opposing.

7.2 Interim Elementary School Redistricting Plan

Mr. Hugo DeAscentis, Jr. moved "As an interim plan to ensure that Newport's current Elementary buildings are operated for maximum efficiency and educational effectiveness; to direct the Superintendent to investigate and formulate a plan that incorporates the following utilization of our current buildings: Surplus the Cranston-Calvert Building, move the current Cranston-Calvert population primarily to the Triplett Elementary Building, and then to the Carey and Underwood Buildings as needed, move the current programs and activities currently in the Triplett building into appropriate excess space within Newport's public school buildings, pair up and operate Triplett and Coggeshall buildings as sister schools with all K-2 grades in the Triplett building and all 3-5 grades housed in the Coggeshall building, pair up and operate the Underwood and Carey buildings as sister schools with all K-2 grades in the Underwood building and all 3-5 grades housed in the Carey building, incorporating a family center in each Newport Public School elementary building, incorporate an accelerated enrichment program in each Newport Public School elementary building, incorporate a program that effectively addresses classroom order, discipline, and rigor in each Newport Public School elementary building." Pros and cons of this proposal were discussed. The consensus of the committee was that with our current Stage I application being submitted, this is not the time for consideration of any other alternative plans. Closing another elementary school at this time would be sending the wrong message to the community. If the bond referendum is defeated, then other alternatives will be explored, but to explore those now would be a mistake. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion which failed (1:5) with Mr. DeAscentis supporting the motion.

8.0 Reports from Superintendent and Staff: Expenditure and Revenue Reports, Enrollment Reports, Damage Reports, and Superintendent's Update.

8.1 Expenditure and Revenue Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Expenditure and Revenue Reports as of October 31, 2007. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Expenditure and Revenue Reports, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

8.2 Enrollment Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Enrollment Reports as of September 28, 2007. Mrs. Gaines

made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

8.3 Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report for the month of October 2007. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center report, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

8.4 Superintendent's Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi briefed the Committee on activities to date: Newport Community Gardening Underwood School; Virtual High School Global Consortium; Wellness Committee; Rhode Island Schools Superintendents Association Commissioner's Forum; Rhode Island Interlocal Trust Board Meeting; Teacher In-Service Day; American Council On Education Meeting; Newport Public Education Foundation—Cause Meeting; Policy Subcommittee; Parent Leadership Council Quarterly Meeting; Newport Public Education Foundation –Monthly Meeting; East Bay Education Collaborative Board Meeting; Ad-Hoc Building Committee; Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council—Shared Services. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed suggested meeting dates and agenda topics for the months of November and December, 2007, as follows:

- Thursday – Friday, November 22-23, 2007:
Thanksgiving Recess [No School]
- Monday, December 3, 2007:
4:00 p.m. Policy Committee Meeting, Administration Center
- Tuesday, December 4, 2007:
4:30 p.m. Special Newport School Committee Meeting, Administration Center
Executive Session
- Tuesday, December 11, 2007:
Regular Newport School Committee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Cafeteria
- Monday – Tuesday, December 24, 2007 – January 1, 2008:
Holiday Recess [No School]

Special Meetings may be scheduled, as required.

10.0 Executive Session.

At 8:23 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. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES SEALED

OPEN SESSION

At 8:50 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

Adjournment. At 8:51 p.m., Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).



Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.
Chairperson



John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.
Clerk