

Approve 05/13/2014.

5.1

**NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**1.0 OPENING ITEMS.**

- 1.1 Call to Order.** School Committee Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., called the Regular Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:04 p.m., at the Newport Public Schools' Administration Center, in room 924.
- 1.2 Roll Call.** Attendance was as follows, in alphabetical order: School Committee Members: Rebecca Bolan, Sandra J. Flowers, Ph.D., Vice Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines, Robert J. Leary, Thomas S. Phelan, Robert B. Power, Ed.D., and Chairperson Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D. School Department: Superintendent of Schools Colleen B. Jermain, Director of Human Resources Frances Eames, Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, and Director of Administrative Services Joan Tracey.
- 1.3 Pledge of Allegiance.** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- 1.4 Moment of Silence.** Moment of Silence was presented, as follows:
- **Captain Eugene Sheehy**, of Boston, passed away Monday, March 17, 2014, at Fleet Landing Retirement Community in Jacksonville, Florida. Captain Sheehy retired after serving 30 years in the U.S. Navy. He leaves behind his daughter, Sheila DeAscentis, para educator at Pell School, and son-in-law, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., former member of the Newport School Committee.
  - **Don "Jitters" Roderick**, of Newport, passed away Wednesday, March 26, 2014, at Rhode Island Hospital. For over 20 years, Mr. Roderick served as a traffic guard for the Newport Public Schools, namely the former Cranston-Calvert School and most recently Pell School. In the 1960's, he served as an auxiliary officer for the Newport Police Department, coordinated the program for DARE, and retired as a police officer from Northeastern Technical College.

- **Frederick A. Peirce, Jr. M.D.**, of Newport, passed away recently, at the age of 91. Dr. Peirce was a pediatrician for many years at Aquidneck Medical Center, served on the staff at Newport Hospital, and was a former member of the Newport School Committee in the late 1960's to the early 1970's.

**2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT.** Dudley Avenue resident Jennifer Jackson updated the committee on the ongoing flooding on her property and that it still has not been resolved. Her position is that the flooding is a result of the construction of the Pell School.

**3.0 RESOLUTIONS/CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT.**

**3.1 Rogers High School—2014 Girls Basketball Team.** Rogers High School—2014 Girls Basketball Team was honored with a resolution as Division II State Champions. Discussion followed. Mrs. Gaines made a motion that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the official records of the Newport School Committee. Ms. Bolan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**4.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.**

**4.1 Student Council Update—Allison Thompson.** Rogers High School Student Council President and School Committee Representative Allison Thompson highlighted activities at Rogers High School: Girls Basketball Division II Champions, national history contest, freshman student trip to Japan, senior class fundraiser, sailing team, and girls' softball team.

**5.0 CONSENT AGENDA.**

**5.1. Approval of Minutes.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the meeting minutes of Tuesday, March 11, 2014, 7 p.m. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.2 Personnel Actions.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the resignations of: James Psaras, Head Boys Basketball Coach, Rogers High School, effective March 31, 2014; Marlina Williams, Elementary Teacher, Pell Elementary School effective March 26, 2014; and Pam Wawrzyniak, Girls Volleyball Coach, Rogers High School, effective March 6, 2014. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

- 5.3 Requests for Home Instruction.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the two(s) requests for home instruction. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**6.0 ACTION ITEMS.**

- 6.1 Newport Public Schools—Calendar 2014-2015.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adopt the Newport Public Schools' Calendar 2014-2015, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Leary suggested the committee tentatively adopt the calendar to provide time for teacher input regarding the reduction of parent/teacher conferences from three to two times per school year and holding them on a school day rather than a non-school day. The motion (to adopt) carried (6-1). Voting against the motion was: Robert J. Leary.

- 6.2 Resolution—Contract Continuation—In Opposition to 2014 H 7465 and S2411.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to pass "Newport School Committee Contract Continuation Resolution (attached) in opposition to 2014 H 7465 and S 2411. Mr. Leary seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The motion carried (6-1). Voting against the motion was: Dr. Robert B. Power.

- 6.3 American Red Cross—Request to Approve Pell Elementary School Shelter Agreement.** Ms. Bolan made a motion to request approval of the Pell Elementary School Shelter Agreement. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**6.4 Shared Services/Middletown.**

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the pilot plan for shared facilities services management—cooperative agreement between Middletown Public Schools and Newport Public Schools, as presented. Review and discussion followed regarding the details of the pilot plan, as follows:

- The current Facilities Director of Middletown Public Schools would be directed to assume responsibility for both school districts consistent with his current job description;
- The arrangement would commence on April 20, 2014 and continue until December 20, 2014. On or by December 20, 2014, Newport Public Schools would review the services rendered to date and decide if the pilot plan should continue until April 20, 2015; and
- The arrangement would be reviewed during the first nine months to determine the efficacy of this service model for the benefit of both

districts and if successful, would continue until April 20, 2015 and then could be extended for a multi-year period.

Mr. Phelan stated that he could not support this request, as he maintained his position that the district should have partnered with the city. The motion carried (6-1). Voting against the motion was: Thomas S. Phelan.

- 6.5 Request to Establish Newport School Committee Pre-K Subcommittee.** Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker spoke to his request for establishing the Newport School Committee Pre-K Subcommittee. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to establish the Newport School Committee—Pre-K Subcommittee. Dr. Power seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The motion carried (6-1). Voting against the motion was: Thomas S. Phelan. Discussion resumed. Mr. Leary requested that Newport School Committee Policy No. 1530 be reviewed.

## **7.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS.**

- 7.1 Districtwide Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) Education Initiative—Update.** At the request of school committee member Dr. Flowers, Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Dr. Jennifer Booth provided an update regarding initiatives to offer more science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics options in all grade levels of the Newport Public Schools. She then spoke to funding streams and community partners committing to assist in these initiatives. Public input was received from: Martin Cohen, resident of Newport. He stressed the importance of reinforcing the studies of mathematics and science in the education of all students.

- 7.2 Early Learning Center—Update.** Superintendent Jermain spoke to activities to date regarding the formation of an Early Learning Center to be shared with both Newport and Middletown. She stated that a cost analysis and comparison would be developed for the committee's review and that the John F. Kennedy School in Middletown was being considered for the proposed Early Learning Center. Once the Early Learning Center Feasibility Study is released, she stated that the committee would have a better sense of the viability to share services with Middletown Public Schools and Newport Public Schools and some of our community organizations.

## **8.0 REPORTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF.**

- 8.1 Expenditure and Revenue Reports.** Director of Administrative Services Joan Tracey reviewed the March ending, 2014 expenditure and revenue reports. Discussion followed as to fiscal year severance and

unemployment payouts. Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker requested administration to report back to the committee with clarification as to what budget year (this year or next year) payouts could be applied to. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the expenditure and revenue reports, as presented. Mr. Leary seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**8.2 Enrollment Reports.** The enrollment and enrollment census were reviewed regarding the reduction in student enrollment and tracking. Mr. Leary stated that it is the district's responsibility to track the students who leave the district. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the enrollment reports, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion. Public input was received from: Martin Cohen, resident of Newport, who stressed that the district needs a global and accurate model for tracking students. Superintendent Jermain spoke to the enrollment projections provided to the district by Whitehall Associates, New England School Development Council (NESDEC), and the Newport Housing Authority. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**8.3 Damage Reports.** No damage reports were presented.

**8.4 Superintendent's Update.** Superintendent Jermain provided a brief update on activities at Pell School—Champion Child Care After-School Program, the walking school bus program, and family service coordinators. Additional activities included the district's receipt of the worksite health award, the Rogers High School scheduling program, and the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission lease for the ongoing utilization of space at the former site of the central office administrative offices. Earlier in the meeting, Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker briefed the committee on the workshops he attended at the annual National School Boards Association's Conference. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

## **9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS.**

**9.1 Meeting and Agenda Requests.** The Committee reviewed meeting and agenda requests, as follows: Wednesday, April 16, 2014, Newport School Committee/Newport City Council meeting regarding the district's 2013-2014 budget and request for additional funding.

**10.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

At 9:00 p.m., Ms. Bolan 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. Vice Chairperson Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**SEALED MINUTES—CONFIDENTIAL**

**OPEN SESSION**

At 9:13 p.m., Vice Chairperson Mrs. Gaines made a motion to reconvene the meeting in open session. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**11.0 ADJOURNMENT.**

At 9:15 p.m., Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Bolan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

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**Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.**  
Chairperson

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**Colleen B. Jermain**  
Clerk

**NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND**  
**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS:** The Rogers High School Girls Basketball Team distinguished itself by recently winning the Rhode Island Division II State Championship on March 22, 2014, at the University of Rhode Island's Ryan Center; and

**WHEREAS:** Coach Frank Brow and members of the team, by achieving this honor, proved to the citizens of Newport and the State of Rhode Island the quality of their training and practice; and

**WHEREAS:** The achievement of the "perfect season", **26-0**, is further evidence of the fine traditions of Rogers High School; and

**WHEREAS:** The faculty, student body, parents, and citizens of Newport actively supported the efforts of the team; therefore be it

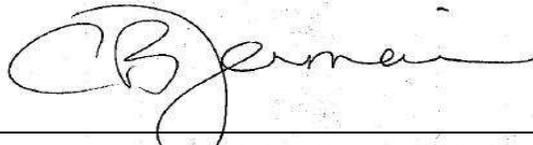
**RESOLVED:** That the Newport School Committee formally extends to Coach Brow and members of the Rogers High School Girls Basketball Team its congratulations on winning the Rhode Island Division II State Championship for the 2013-2014 School Year and offers to the staff and team members a unanimous "well done" on receipt of this great honor; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the official records of the Newport School Committee and the original be presented to Coach Frank Brow and the Rogers High School Girls Basketball Team as an expression of our sincere appreciation and acknowledgement of their service to the school and our community.

**WHERETO:** The following bear witness:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson on behalf of the Newport School Committee



\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent on behalf of the Newport Public Schools

## **Newport School Committee Resolution** (Contract Continuation—In Opposition)

WHEREAS: Current state law does not provide for mandatory continuation of an existing teacher collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS: Whereas a Superior Court justice recently ruled that state statute, defining when a contract ends, obviates any clause, agreed to, allowing for a continuation of a public employee contract and;

WHEREAS: School districts and cities and towns have seen a calamitous reduction of state aid and;

WHEREAS: There is a \$149 million dollar revenue/expenditure gap predicted for the FY 2015 budget and cities and towns, have lost, since FY 2008 over \$185 million general revenue sharing and auto excise reimbursements and;

WHEREAS: Taxpayers are already burdened by some of the highest property taxes nationally and;

WHEREAS: School districts and cities & towns must comply with RIGL §44-5-2, that caps the property tax levy, for FY 2013 at 4%, and;

WHEREAS: According to § 16-2-9 (d) “The school committee of each school district shall be responsible for maintaining a school budget which does not result in a debt.” and;

WHEREAS: School committees are required to adhere to the Rhode Island Department of Education’s Basic Education Plan, teacher evaluation regulations and other RIDE rules and regulations and;

WHEREAS: Contract continuation would serve as a disincentive for unions to bargain in good faith and allow existing employee wages and benefits to continue unchanged indefinitely forcing districts to possibly violate state mandated property tax caps and RIDE’s rules and regulations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Newport School Committee respectfully requests the Rhode Island General Assembly to oppose 2014 – H 7465 & 2014 – S 2411 and any and all legislative proposal that would, mandate expired teacher contracts must continue at the existing terms and conditions; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this Resolution by forwarded to every Rhode Island Municipality, School Committee, State Senator, State Representative and the Governor.

WHERETO: The following bear witness:



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Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.  
Chairperson, Newport School Committee



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Colleen B. Jermain  
Superintendent , Newport Public Schools

Introduced by: Jo Eva Gaines, Vice Chairperson  
Newport School Committee

Passed: April 8, 2014