

UNOFFICIAL

CUMBERLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 25, 2007

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, October 25, 2007 at the Cumberland Administrative Office/Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, was called to order at 7:31 PM, by Chairman Frederic C. Crowley, with the following present:

Frederic C. Crowley, Chairman, Robert Thibodeau, Vice Chair, Karen MacBeth, Clerk, Lisa Beaulieu, Donald J. Costa, W. David Wagner, Earl T. Wood

Also Present: Donna A. Morelle, Ed.D., Superintendent; Susan C. Carney, Ph.D, Assistant Superintendent; Joseph A. Rotella, Esq., Director of Administration

I. Pledge of Allegiance - The Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Mr. Thibodeau.

II. Approval of Agenda - On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the agenda.

III. Chairperson's Report - The Chair reported receiving a letter from Joseph and Nicole Ginot regarding full time teacher aides and gave it to the Superintendent. He asked public speakers to sign in and keep to a five minute time limit.

IV. Comments from the Public

A. Public Comments - Lori Drew handed out a copy of a homework assignment, How to Kill A Boy Nobody Likes by Will Clark, that was given to her daughter at the high school as an English assignment. She was shocked by the profanity and explicit sex and spoke about contacting the school department and Susan Hogan at Channel 12.

She hoped this never happens again.

The Chair recognized Councilperson's Lemoi and Kirkpatrick.

Linda McMullen commented her daughter has the same teacher but wasn't given this assignment. She stated the title alone is offensive. She asked what the consequences are and who holds teachers accountable. Brian Kelly hoped each member looked beyond their personal agendas and desires and do what is necessary to move the committee forward. Jim McLaughlin spoke in support of the kindergarten kids. He commented that Mr. Crowley has done an excellent job and he also would like to look at the potential leadership of Ms. MacBeth. Kim Scholz spoke on behalf of kindergarten aides, pointing out her daughter's broken arm.

Cumberland School Committee

October 25, 2007/Minutes -2-

Kelly Connerton noted she admired the member's service and thanked Ms. Beaulieu, Ms. MacBeth, Mr. Costa, Mr. Wagner and Mr. Wood for attending the Town Council Finance committee meeting. She requested this be put on an agenda. Melinda Acosta commented the kindergarten classes are larger this year and this is the first year they have been without aides. She presented the committee with a petition with 305 signatures to bring back the aides. Anne Prosser said there are numerous reasons for the aides and one teacher for 25 children is impossible. She expressed concern for safety.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Property Committee - Mr. Wood reported the property subcommittee met on the 23rd to discuss the analysis of the BF Norton roof. It has three different styles of roof, PVC, a metal roof and a three-tab shingle roof. It was noted the PVC roof was pulling away from the wall and the snow and ice stoppers were broken. The ceilings were starting to show damage. They requested a bid for design architect services for the replacement of the roof with an add/alternate on the three tab shingle roof which came in at \$220,000 for the PCV roof, \$20,000 for the three tab shingle roof and \$6,000 for replacement of the snow and ice stoppers.

1. Award of Bid of Circulator Pumps - On a motion by Mr. Wood, and

a second by Mr. Wagner and Ms. Beaulieu, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE** the bid for circulator pumps not to exceed the amount of \$19,620.

Mr. Wood reported that 200 lockers have been repaired and/or replaced. Next week alarms in the other schools will be updated.

B. Personnel Committee - Ms. MacBeth reported they met on the job description for the Director of Special Education. They will be reviewing a document, similar to a SALT visit, and look at what has been done with those recommendations, taking into consideration what should be added from those reports. She will also take it to the Special Education Advisory for input.

C. Special Programs Committee - Mr. Thibodeau reported meeting on saving money with a joint effort in the town by recycling.

D. Finance Committee

1. **Payment of Bills - On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Ms. MacBeth, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE** payment of bills in the amount of
\$1,809,994.98.

Mr. Costa asked about closing out 2006-2007 and Mr. Prignano explained there were some straggling bills but thinks it is closed out.

The Chair recognized Councilman Albuquerque.

Cumberland School Committee

October 25, 2007/Minutes -3-

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Personnel Recommendations - None.

VII. Old Business

A. Building Committee Update - Mr. Wood reported the 3.5 Building Committee didn't meet last night because of a lack of a quorum, but will be meeting again on November 14th. The 2010 Committee will be meeting on Monday. They expect to turn over the renovations November 5th and will be taking over another section for renovations.

B. Recalls - On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Mr. Costa and Mr. Thibodeau, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE rescinding the action taken by the school committee on February 22, 2007 not to renew the employment of Jane Tonn for the 2007-2008 school, recalled to the position of .2 Media Specialist, System-wide, effective 10/25/2007.

C. Space Utilization Task Force - The Superintendent reported they have had a number of inquiries in response to the press release that was sent to the media. She is waiting for any other letters or requests and will be giving it to the Chairperson of the committee for consideration of an appointment to the Task Force.

VIII. New Business

A. Home School Instruction Requests 2007-08 School Year - The Assistant Superintendent reported there may be two more requests, but there are five requests for tonight. On a motion by Mr. Costa, and

a second by Ms. MacBeth and Mr. Thibodeau, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the requests.

B. Discussion of Shared Leadership - Ms. MacBeth handed out material she had worked on to pull the committee together and make them stronger, who could be chair and vice chair. She explained there are school committees that share leadership. She was hoping there would be input from other members for what it means for this committee, do they have a new chair, vice chair or all take a leadership roll, taking turns as chair or look at the role of a leader. The first thing they need to do is set a vision, for what they want for children and teachers and then look at the structure. Ms. MacBeth put together a self-evaluation form for each member to complete. She also felt they need to look at goals for the year and where are the school community responsibilities, the Superintendent's responsibilities and the communities responsibilities. The chair needs to look at the strengths of committee members and delegate according to those strengths. When Ms. MacBeth contacted the Department of Education they recommended "Turning Points", which is used at the middle schools. She also googled shared leadership and noted it is how they all work together, including with the Superintendent. Mr. Wagner commented he also did some research and stated they need to take control of their committee. He felt they wasted a year and now need to put the sign post in the sign and set their direction.

Cumberland School Committee

Ms. Beaulieu reported she also did her homework on shared leadership and went back to the Charter, which only dictates they have to elect a chair and vice chair. She worked on a rubric which helped her define leadership: the ability to balance the forces of stability and change in order to maximize human and collective organizational performance; knowing when and how to apply techniques, technologies and strategy that promote required or desired change using periods of equilibrium for the organization to engage in reflective periods and self-reflection. Some of the categories were exemplary, proficient, marginal and unacceptable. Ms. Beaulieu hoped they would continue with these discussions so they can express their expectations, concerns and a vision. Ms. MacBeth stated she voted to belong to RIASC and hoped they could ask RIASC to assist them with their vision, to have someone come out to work with them. The Chair noted Mr. Miller from RIASC had offered to do that.

C. Reconsideration of Vote or Resignation for Officer/Officers Elected on

November 30, 2006 - There was no motion to reconsider. Mr. Thibodeau reviewed some of their accomplishments with Dr. Morelle and her team, including negotiations on healthcare with a savings over \$800,000, telephone bill savings of \$22,000, in-house payroll system saving \$52,000, E-Rate savings of \$12,000, medicare vendors

savings of \$38,000, copy machines purchased for \$173,000, maintenance on the copiers with a savings of \$11,000, estimated interest savings of \$2,000, middle school lighting project savings of \$17,000, the school lunch contract, the master lease concept, bank arrangement for a savings of \$100, security fast tracked, modernizing phones in all schools for \$34,000, and money to complete renovations at Ashton and Cumberland Hill. He noted the audit comments that were taken out. He thanked the administration for their team work.

Mr. Thibodeau stated he would resign as Vice Chair in an effort of unity and to go in a new direction. The Chair declared the office of Vice Chair vacant.

D. If There is a Reconsideration of Vote or Resignation/Resignations, then:

1. Election of Officer/Officers of Reconsidered or Resigned Position/Positions - Ms. MacBeth nominated Mr. Costa as Vice Chair. Mr. Wagner provided a second. With no other nominations, the Chair declared nominations closed. On a roll call vote, it was VOTED 5-1-1 TO APPROVE the motion, with the following voting AYE: Mr. Wagner, Mr. Thibodeau, Ms. MacBeth, Ms. Beaulieu, Mr. Crowley; NAY: Mr. Wood; ABSTAIN: Mr. Costa.

2. Possible Re-organization of Standing Committees - No changes. The Chair asked the two committees that have meetings at 4:00 p.m. to please schedule meetings when everyone can attend.

IX. Superintendent's Report - None.

Cumberland School Committee

October 25, 2007/Minutes -5-

X. Comments from the Public - Kelly Connerton asked everyone who was present for kindergarten aides to stand and then kindergarten parents to sit. She suggested inviting each committee member to volunteer in the classroom as the parents do. She thought all school committee members should have attended the Town Council Finance Committee meeting. Jim McLaughlin requested kindergarten aides be put on the next agenda and will send his request in writing. Kathie Richard complimented everyone on the savings, and stated they have been working without a contract. Mr. Rotella stated Ms. Richard was out of order, but the Chair overruled, stating they have a meeting on November 1st. Mr. Rotella noted, they had a negotiating session Wednesday and they all set the next session of November 1st, with Ms. Richard present. Julie Butler stated they are still working at the high school without a guidance counselor and it is very frustrating. Cathy Knasas explained she is a teacher at Community at Step 6, but under the new contract would be a Step 5 and receiving the salary of a Step 4 teacher and asked the committee to adjust the salary steps. The Chair referred her to the union President and Vice President because the matter is before them in a grievance procedure.

XI. School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports) - Mr. Costa asked that he and another member of the committee with the Superintendent and Mr. Prignano review the budget to see if they can get the aides back in the classroom. He asked the Chair to put it on the agenda for the 8th, providing they get a finalized budget. Mr. Wagner volunteered to participate in that review. Ms. MacBeth commented there isn't anyone who knows the personnel and rooms and where people belong better than Mr. Costa and noted she had confidence in Mr. Wagner's ability as Finance Committee Chair. Ms. MacBeth also noted she has requested sports be on an agenda to address funding equity. The Chair said he would put it on a Finance Committee agenda. Ms. MacBeth also asked when the Superintendent's contract expires and to put that on an agenda. The Chair suggested that would be an Executive Session matter. Mr. Wood reported there would be a Halloween party Friday at JJM Cumberland Hill. Ms. MacBeth commented it takes a big man for Mr. Thibodeau to resign for the good of the committee. The Chair echoed her sentiments. Mr. Thibodeau reported the full committee would be meeting with ICSE at 6:00 p.m. Ms. MacBeth noted she would not be able to attend, she would be out of town at a conference.

XII. Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion and/or Action Items Referred to in GLRI 42-46-5

A. Personnel Matters - Exception (1)

1. CTA/ICSE

B. Negotiations/Litigation - exception (2)

- 1. CTA/ICSE**
- 2. Central Administrators' Contracts**
- 3. Non-Contractual Salaries**

Cumberland School Committee

October 25, 2007/Minutes -6-

4. Potential Litigation

Executive Session was not necessary.

XIII. Adjournment - On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Mr. Thibodeau, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE adjourning at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Harris

Recording Secretary

Subject to approval by the School Committee