

**Regular Meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee**

**Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 6:00 PM**

**Jenks/JMW Complex for the Performing and Visual Arts Media Center**

**350 Division Street, Pawtucket RI 02860**

**Minutes**

**(with three attachments A, B and C)**

**I Meeting will come to order**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM.**

**a Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-here; Ms. Cano-here; Mr. Coughlin-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here; Mr. Araujo-here**

**Also in attendance were Ms. Patricia DiCenso, Secondary School Performance Officer, Ms. Kathleen Suriani, Elementary School Performance Officer, Ms. Melissa Devine, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Hersh Cristino, Chief Information and Innovations Officer and Mr. Stephen M. Robinson and Ms. Vicki Bejma, Legal Counsel for the School Committee.**

**b Pledge of Allegiance**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.**

## **II Celebration /Recognition**

**None**

## **III Special Reports of Student Representatives**

**Charles E. Shea High School**

**None**

**William E. Tolman High School**

**The Tolman representative reported that their high school graduation rate is now at 71% and that 65% of the seniors took the NECAP tests and passed. The senior supper was very successful and the blood drive held on January 31st was the most successful to date.**

**Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts**

**Tyler B. reported that the travel club is leaving this Saturday to Europe for a week. There will be a creative career day in March to discuss career opportunities. There is also a family career day. The theater class will be spending a full day at Trinity Repertory Theatre**

and the fashion show is on March 7, 2014.

#### **IV Public Participation**

Comments from the public are invited at this time. Citizens wishing to speak should sign in with the Committee Chair before speaking. The Committee is precluded from discussing or acting on items raised by Public Comment, which are not already on the agenda. Public comment will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Mr. John Gagnon read the following statement: “I am here to discuss the ruling that was passed down from Tom Mezzanotte and the Rhode Island Interscholastic League regarding an incident that occurred on the Pariseau football field in November, 2013. For those of you who are not familiar with the incident, in November, Tolman was playing Hope High School and Tolman was winning the game. With about a minute to go, there was a skirmish at midfield. The skirmish involved just a few player from each team. The coaches and some players ran onto the field and were separating the players who were pushing each other. Not all of the players left the sideline. Order was restored and none of the players were ejected from the game. I was at the game. I saw the incident. It was unfortunate but the entire episode probably lasted approximately ten seconds. It was short and it was over.

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League looked into the incident and

when the ruling came down, Tolman was put on probation for the 2014 season, ordered to pay a \$200 fine and banned from the post season playoffs for the 2014 season. There has never been a ruling this harsh for similar incidents that have taken place on the football field in Rhode Island. I do believe that had this incident involved two suburban schools, this would not be the ruling. I do believe the rights of the Tolman football team are being violated. I also believe that they are trying to use Tolman and Hope as an example without regard to past practice.

I am here to request that the lawyer for the Pawtucket School Committee look into this unfair ruling and decide if the rights of the Tolman football players have been violated. If the lawyer agrees they were, I would ask the School Committee to move forward with some kind of legal action to block this unfortunate decision.”

**Mr. Ronald Beaupre, President of the Pawtucket Teachers Alliance:**  
Good evening, Chairman, Araujo, Members of the Committee. I'm not sure you are aware you passed a unanimous decision to approve a hiring freeze at your last meeting, but on Friday, the Pawtucket School Department advertised a third assistant special education director to replace the unfortunate passing of Jacqueline Murphy at \$4,000 more than her salary. You have a qualified director, Bob Wall and are still paying for an interim, Susanne Williams and I don't know if you are aware this new position has been advertised nationally and internally.

**Ms. Amy Zolt: Hello, I miss you all. I never thought I'd be here again. I want to thank the Pawtucket School Department for the last twenty two years for educating my children. My oldest son is doing very well in Georgia. My other son is studying at Johnson and Wales, one is working and my youngest son you just met and will be graduating from JMW. I led the charge with Mr. Spooner and Ms. Nordquist for this wonderful arts school and I just want to thank you.**

## **V Executive Session**

**Mr. Araujo commented that the Committee will possibly recess to executive session in accordance with provisions under Title 42, Chapter 46, Subsection 5 (a) (2) (legal advice and litigation/collective bargaining) of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island for the purpose of discussing and/or acting upon the following:**

- 1. Legal advice on Personnel Contract Interpretation**
- 2. Discussion of Interim Superintendent**
- 3. Seal Executive Session Minutes**

**Mr. Tenreiro moved to recess to executive session. Ms. Nordquist seconded.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes;  
Mr. Spooner-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motions carries unanimously.**

**The Committee recessed to executive session from 6:29 PM to 7:22 PM.**

**VI Reconvene to open session**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, reconvened the open session at 7:31 PM.**

**a. Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-here; Ms. Cano-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here; Mr. Araujo-here**

**Mr. Coughlin left during executive session at 7:08 PM.**

**VII Report out vote(s) of executive session of 2/11/14, if applicable**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, asked the Clerk if there were any votes to report out of executive session.**

**The Clerk reported that the Committee unanimously voted to allow Attorney Richard Ackerman in the executive session.**

**The Committee voted to seal the executive minutes and to adjourn the executive session, six in favor. (Mr. Coughlin had left and did not vote on these two items.)**

## **VIII Approval of previous meeting minutes**

**Ms. Bonollo moved to accept and approve the previous meeting minutes of November 12, 2013 and January 14, 2014.**

**Voice vote carried six in favor.**

## **IX Action Items**

### **1. Approval of Superintendent Transition Plan**

**Mr. Araujo read a letter submitted from Mrs. Deborah Cylke. (See Addendum A)**

**Ms. Bonollo moved to approve and accept Superintendent Cylke's transition plan as outlined in Superintendent Cylke's letter.**

**Mr. Spooner seconded.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: I think based on various reasons to ensure continuity and consistency is to have her remain in her role.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;  
Mr. Tenreiro-no; Mr. Araujo-yes (Amended 3/11/14)**

**Motion carries five in favor; one opposed-Mr. Tenreiro.**

**Mr. Araujo: As Chair of the School Committee, I wish to inform the School Department and community of an upcoming change in leadership. As you know, Superintendent of Schools, Deborah Cylke, recently informed the School Committee of her intention to retire at the end of her contract term of June 30, 2014. By mutual agreement, the parties have entered into a transition plan that will ensure continuity and consistency of academic initiatives and business and operational functions of the Pawtucket School Department. Pursuant to this plan, the School Committee will appoint an interim Superintendent. Mrs. Cylke will then work with the Interim Superintendent in a consultant capacity through the period of June 30, 2014. This transition plan will be advantageous to the School Department in that it will allow it to move forward, even as it prepares for its second change in leadership in four years.**

**Ms. Bonollo: Debbie asked me to read this for her. Ms. Bonollo read a letter from Mrs. Deborah Cylke. (See Addendum B)**

**2 Approval of Appointment of Interim Superintendent**

**Ms. Bonollo moved to approve, ask and appoint Ms. Patricia DiCenso as Interim Superintendent. Mr. Spooner seconded.**

**The Committee asked Mrs. Patricia DiCenso, Secondary School Performance Officer and Transformation Officer if she would accept this position.**

**Mrs. DiCenso accepted the position of Interim Superintendent.**

**Ms. Nordquist: It should be noted that we had no choice, we cannot leave the Superintendent position vacant. We will still conduct an extensive and proper search. It's not a transition from interim to superintendent. We are still going to actively continue with our Search.**

**Ms. Cano: There will be no additional impact financially on our district.**

**Mr. Spooner: I have full faith in Patti to move this district forward.**

**Mr. Araujo: I too, have faith in Ms. DiCenso.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;**

**Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries six in favor.**

### **3 Approval of Pawtucket Graduation Waiver Policy, 1st Reading**

**Ms. DiCenso: Good evening. At the last meeting I presented a waiver policy as guided by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). We took recommendations from Mr. Tenreiro and we are presenting it tonight as a first reading.**

**Mr. Spooner moved to approve the first reading of the Pawtucket Graduation Waiver Policy. Ms. Cano seconded.**

**Ms. DiCenso: We are hoping to have this in place for the seniors by April or at the end of the third quarter.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;  
Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries six in favor.**

#### **4 Approval of Coaching Appointments**

**Ms. DiCenso:** Tonight we are asking for your approval of coaching appointments. Assistant Swim Coach-Shea High School, Angela Yang,

**Mr. Tenreiro** moved to approve the coaching appointment at Shea High School. **Ms. Nordquist** seconded.

**Voice vote** carried six in favor.

#### **5 Approval of Truck Lease**

**Ms. Devine:** Maintenance and I recommend to lease to purchase two Ford F-350 trucks with plows. The City recently went out to bid and we are able to piggy back on that bid. The districts only truck was taken out of service recently and a second truck was taken out of service earlier this year. The need to replace these vehicles will help keep the cost of vendor plowing services down.

The cost to lease the two 2014 Ford F350's with plow and commercial cap is \$68,667.00 at a rate of 5.54% for 60 monthly payments of \$1,304.12 per month or \$15,649.44 annually. At the end of the lease term the district can purchase the vehicles for \$1.00.

**You have to pay a vendor to come in and plow and do the sanding. The purchase of these vehicles helps to save the district money and save on the older vehicles that are being repaired. You have two men in one vehicle.**

**Our recommendation would be to purchase these trucks.**

**Mr. Tenreiro moved to approve the lease to purchase the two Ford F-350's with plow and commercial truck cab as recommended.**

**Ms. Bonollo seconded.**

**Mr. Rebelo: When we've had to use outside vendors, it costs \$5,000.00 - \$7,000.00. We had to wait until 7:00 PM at night. We can get out sooner with our own men.**

**Ms. Devine: We were fortunate to get in with the City. They did all of the work for us so it helped us out. They actually have five of them.**

**Mr. Rebelo: The list price is \$40,000.00 and we got them for \$30,000.00 with the cap and plow.**

**Ms. Cano: I think that sounds great. Also, we had \$30,000.00 for the purchase of vehicles?**

**Ms. Bonollo: The interest rate is high, but it balances out.**

**Ms. Devine: Over the five years. We could put money down, but we want to keep money going out to a minimum.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: Is snowplowing part of the chargebacks with the City?**

**Mr. Rebelo: We pay the vendor directly.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: Would there be a reduction?**

**Ms. Devine: The chargebacks only occur when the City actually does the work. We're not paying double.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: If we're getting charged \$30,000.00, that should come out and go toward the payment of the trucks.**

**Mr. Spooner: Dennis, do we still have snow blowers at the schools?**

**Mr. Rebelo: Yes and we try to replace them every couple of years. Every school has their own.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;  
Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries six in favor.**

## **6 Approval of RIDE Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant**

**Mr. Cristino: We are requesting your approval of the RIDE Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant. This grant award will provide Pawtucket schools with the necessary wireless infrastructure in preparation of the PARCC assessment.**

**We are hoping to bring this back at the next meeting after it's been vetted.**

**Mr. Tenreiro moved to approve the Rhode Island Department of Education Wireless Classroom Initiative Grant as recommended. Ms. Bonollo seconded.**

**Voice vote carried six in favor.**

## **7 Approval of RFP for Legal Services**

**Mr. Spooner moved to table the RFP for legal services until the March 11, 2014 meeting. Mr. Tenreiro seconded.**

**Roll call**

**Ms. Bonollo-yes; Ms. Cano-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes;  
Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Araujo-yes**

**Motion carries six in favor.**

## **X Presentation/Discussion Items**

### **1 Monthly Financial Report**

**Ms. Devine: You have the monthly report in front of you and it was sent to the auditor general. For the month of December, we are reporting \$41M in expenditures or 40.40% and 48.15% in revenues.**

### **2 Monthly Vendor Expense Report**

**Ms. Devine: The vendor report shows that we have paid out a total of \$2,224,297.68.**

**Mr. Spooner left the meeting at 8:02 PM.**

### **3 Latino Task Force**

**Ms. DiCenso: We met to discuss a task force with three cities; Pawtucket, Central Falls and Providence to improve equity and**

**access for all students. Mayor Grebien hosted a meeting for City and school staff in which Ms. Cano, Ms. Nordquist, Ms. Suriani, me and Anna Cano-Morales attended. Dylan from Mayor Grebien's Office is leading the charge. Tonight, we handed you a timeline. We have Dr. Ash who volunteered to join the task force. This morning, we got volunteer, Matt Bergeron, who has been a long time member at the Boys & Girls Club. Our goals are to come up with things in spring and we'll be on our way.**

#### **4 NECAP Update – 12th Graders**

**Ms. DiCenso: Pawtucket is making significant strengths and these particular re-takes we've seen large gains with the Latino and African American students. We've seen closing gaps with poverty. IEP gaps are still significant.**

**I want to congratulate the leadership teams for their hard work at Tolman, Shea and JMW for teaching and re-teaching even though it significantly reduced the numbers, we still have students in shaded areas and still have to meet this area.**

**Mr. Miller, Shea High School Principal, has two students on this paper who were accepted to college today.**

#### **5 FY14 Budget Update**

**Ms. Devine: In your packet you received a document that showed a deficit mode of \$943,858.00. The deficit is not zero, but it is improving. The items that have changed are:**

- 2 open certified staff (Dec-Feb)  
(\$52,442.00)**
- Open HR Director (.66FTE) (Dec-Feb)  
(\$42,730.00)**
- Open Operations Director (Dec-Feb)  
(\$64,743.00)**
- Open Receptionist (Oct-Feb)  
(\$15,187.00)**
- Open Administrative Asst. to Superintendent (Feb-June)  
(\$27,690.00)**
- Retirements, LOA, Unpaid Salaries, ER Pension, ER Taxes  
(\$142,758.00)**
- Additional Tuition Revenue  
(\$100,000.00)**
- Unemployment Savings  
(\$90,000.00)**
- Savings of Computer Hardware for Interventions  
(\$110,000.00)**
- Savings of Computer Hardware due to better pricing than  
Anticipated when budgeted  
(\$90,000.00)**

**Net effect of changes in budget  
(\$351,550.00)**

**Revised projected deficit – February 11, 2014  
\$592,308.00**

**Open positions already experienced taken partial year did not include medical benefits. I calculate \$200,000.00 in savings for positions open from November to February.**

**Additional tuition revenue for out of district students to attend JMW  
\$100,000.00.**

**Ms. Bonollo: Is that paid out of district?**

**Ms. Devine: We now have a process in place. My Assistant Business Administrator sends out the invoices. The parents were not notifying there sending districts.**

**The computer hardware for \$110,000.00, we will not purchase now. These are hardcore savings. With those numbers the new projected deficit is about \$590,000.00.**

**I did not get January's medical yet, but I am still closely watching them.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: I notice you say projections.**

**Ms. Devine: I am pretty confident that we will have \$100,000.00. If the students move here, we can't collect it.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: Are these conservative projections?**

**Ms. Devine: Always.**

## **6 FY15 Budget Timeline**

**Ms. Devine: We've been having some meetings and discussions when we want meetings to occur. The City Charter accepts budget for a later date in my previous district. I'm used to taking the budget and reading it line by line. I am looking for guidance from you for possibly having two workshop meetings and to take a vote at the second workshop.**

**In May and June information regarding insurance policies are all estimates. I tend to change them in my document and take them back to my Committee and want to present to the City Council and give the Committee the opportunity to revise and bring it to the City Council. In October I make final adjustments. It doesn't usually go to City Council at that point everything else is handled through budget**

**transfers. I will also send the document well in advance.**

**Mr. Araujo: I like the idea of having a couple of meetings.**

**Ms. Bonollo: Can Dianna and Melissa pick some dates and get back to us?**

**Ms. Devine: I'm thinking mid-March for the first draft and send in April.**

## **7 Strategic Plan Update and School Committee Input**

**Ms. DiCenso: We are in the planning stages of putting this together to include community and stakeholders to meet the demands of RIDE and we'll be inviting the goals of the School Committee.**

## **XI Superintendent's Report**

**Ms. DiCenso: I just want to thank you for your confidence to serve the students, teachers, and support staff.**

## **XII Special Report of School Committee Members**

**Ms. Bonollo: I have a report. As you know most of you have been hearing about the Backpackers and we were down to \$3,000.00. What was anticipated to last to the end of the school year will not. Dianna called me at work to share this news. Arden Engineering sent this letter along with a \$2,000.00 donation. (See Addendum C)**

**I thought that was very nice that a surrounding community supports our kids.**

**Our Power Of One Fundraiser continues through Friday, remember the school that raises the most money wins a dance. BJ's in Attleboro is also collecting food.**

**Ms. Cano: Have a good night.**

**Ms. Nordquist: Have a good night.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: Pass**

**Mr. Araujo: I'd like to wish Ms. DiCenso good luck and thank Mrs. Cylke for her service.**

## **XIII Adjournment**

**Mr. Tenreiro moved to adjourn. Ms. Bonollo seconded.**

**Voice vote carried five in favor.**

**The Chairman, Mr. Araujo, adjourned the regular meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 8:29 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Clerk**

**Approved 3/11/14 with amendment under IX Action Item no. 1 roll call vote—Mr. Araujo voted yes on this item.**