

Chariho School Committee Meeting  
Regular Session Minutes – October 25, 2022

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Vice Chair Catherine Giusti (arrived 6:02 PM), Donna Chambers, William Day, Gary Liguori, Craig Louzon, Lisa Macaruso, Andrew McQuaide and Karen Reynolds. Absent: George Abbott, Ryan Callahan and endawnis Spears.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, High School Assistant Principal Jean Bradanini, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien, Richmond Town Council Vice President Jim Palmisciano and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

I. Meeting Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

Chair Lyall called the meeting of the Chariho School Committee, held in the Chariho High School Library, to order at 6:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silent meditation.

II. Motion/Vote to go into Executive Session

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: That the School Committee go into executive session and close the meeting to the public under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to collective bargaining (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2022 - NEA ESP Staff Negotiation Update; 2. NEA ESP Negotiation Update; 3. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2022 – NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update and 4) NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update); under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussion pertaining to litigation/legal update (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2022 - The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474; 2. Update on The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474 and 3. Update on Scott Perrin, Individually and as Executor of the Estate of William Perrin v. Town of Richmond et al. – C.A. No. WC-2022-0349) and under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(8) for the purpose of reviewing and/or approving matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2022 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous (Giusti was not in attendance for the vote).

III. Reconvene Open Session/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

The Committee returned to open session at 6:41 PM and Chair Lyall reconvened the meeting at 7:00 PM. She asked all to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent meditation.

IV. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes relating to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: That minutes relating to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was  
VOTED: That minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

3. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (Scott Perrin, Individually and as Executor of the Estate of William Perrin v. Town of Richmond et al. – C.A. No. WC-2022-0349) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was  
VOTED: That minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (Scott Perrin, Individually and as Executor of the Estate of William Perrin v. Town of Richmond et al. – C.A. No. WC-2022-0349) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

4. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached.

Catherine Giusti made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was  
VOTED: That minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached. In favor: Chambers, Day Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds. Abstained: McQuaide. Recused: Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 1 abstention and 1 recusal.

5. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached.

Catherine Giusti made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was  
VOTED: That minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached. In favor: Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds. Abstained: McQuaide. Recused: Day and Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 6 in favor with 1 abstention and 2 recusals.

#### V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Giusti reported the first vote, approval of executive session minutes of October 11, 2022, Approval of Home Instruction Requests, was approved by Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of home instruction requests for tonight, was approved by Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of October 11, 2022 – RGB Update, was approved by Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of October 11, 2022 – NEA ESP Negotiation Update, was approved by Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds with Day abstaining and Louzon and McQuaide recusing.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of October 11, 2022, NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update, was approved by Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds with Day, Louzon and McQuaide recusing.

The last vote, to return to open session, was approved by Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds with Day, Louzon and McQuaide recusing.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated/thanked:

1. High School Special Educator Michael Kelly was honored by NBC10, RIDE and Ocean State Credit Union with a Golden Apple for changing the lives of the students he works with. He was nominated by the Allamby family.
2. Richmond School Reading Specialist Franca Bartkiewicz received the Decoding Dyslexia of Rhode Island Educator Ally Award at a ceremony at the State House on Friday, October 14, 2022. This award is presented to exemplary Rhode Island Educators who have shown a commitment to support students with language-based learning differences.
3. Erin von Housen won all four of her dual meets this season as well as the Injury Fund Meet and the Manhattan College Invitational Varsity A Race.
4. Chariho Boys' Cross Country Team finished first in the East Bay Challenge.
5. High School Girls' Soccer Junior Goalkeeper Reid DosSantos was named The Westerly Sun's Athlete of the Week for the week ending September 10<sup>th</sup>.
6. High School Football Senior Collin Fitts was named The Westerly Sun's Athlete of the Week for the week ending October 1<sup>st</sup>.
7. Middle School athletes Zoe Liguori-Bills and Meriden Alge both qualified for the Middle School State Cross Country Championship being held this Sunday.
8. Katie Kirakosian, Dana Hall and Rebecca Burns for all their work in securing the Champlin Grant for the High School Amphitheater and their coordination of the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony.

VII. Public Forum

Chair Lyall noted that this is the time if anyone would like to speak on items that are not on this evening's agenda. There was no one wishing to speak.

VIII. Business

A. Approval of High School Course Proposals

1. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the AP Psychology High School course proposal. Jean is here if you have any questions. Donna noted that she was surprised as she thinks of psychology as a Science and it is under Social Studies. Jean replied that it is considered a social science. Donna asked if this was an elective to which Jean responded it is.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To approve the AP Psychology High School course proposal. In favor: Unanimous.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Rhode Island History High School course proposal. Craig emphatically asked that Gina repeat the course name to which Gina stated it is Rhode Island History. Lisa asked who the teacher would be that is teaching this course to which Jean replied it was proposed by Mark Gardner but we write the course for all teachers to teach. Lisa noted her thanks to Mr. Gardner. She is proud of the inclusivity and that the course is designed to instill respect for the cultural, ethnic and racial diversity of this state. She commented under "Other Remarks" about the presentation by the Tomaquag Museum on Integrating Indigenous Culture into Education. There are no courses that provide this. As this may be her last meeting, she noted how proud she was to see the inclusion of this in our curriculum. It sounds like it was written in partnership with all community members. Gina noted that there will be professional development for faculty to make sure they get the tools they need. Jean added that the person giving this course will have professional development time to work on this on Early Release Days and other times when PD is available. She will ask this individual to reach out to community members to build a partnership. Lisa wondered in what ways this would be done as it probably will not be an indigenous teacher to which Gina responded that we have brought in the Tomaquag Museum staff and URI is reaching out as well. RIDE has new mandates coming through that we will have to embed in our curriculum. She will be working with other Superintendents to help each other. Donna echoed Lisa comments. This is fabulous. She would like to take the course.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To approve the Rhode Island History High School course proposal. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Review of Student Activity Fund (SAF) as it Relates to Student Parking – Superintendent Picard stated this item was requested by Bill Day and Andrew McQuaide. Included in the packet were a memo from Ned, Student Activities Fund Policy, Parking on the Chariho Campus Policy and Student Parking Authorization Request. If the Committee decides that changes are to be made to either policy, these documents will be placed on a future agenda for revision. Andrew thanked Ned for sharing the documents. As merit to Bill's concerns, he wanted to make sure that the policies were being followed. Three policies are overlaid; he wants to make sure we are crossing all t's and dotting all i's. He found it a little awkward that this account was in SAF but he is happy that they have these policies. He does not feel there is a need to revise them at this time. Bill noted that he shared the same concerns as Andrew. This was an "outlaw" so to speak. We still have over \$4,000 in this account to which Ned explained that the report was as of August. That will change when they do the transfer. Bill commented that this doesn't make sense to him to have it in SAF but some things don't make sense. Gina noted that this is a way to safeguard that student money coming in for parking goes to student parking lots. There were no concerns noted from the auditors. Craig asked when they seal the senior parking lot, do they budget for this or does it just come out of this account to which Ned replied that they have not used this account very much since COVID as the parking lots did not get much use so the money accumulated. We would typically take care of minor things from a capital allocation fund but as there was a large amount of money in this account, this was used to seal the senior parking lot and pave the lower bowl. Gary questioned how many parking spots are there to which Gina replied there are 122 in the top lot; about 40 in the lower bowl and some additional spots by CALA.

C. Agreement Between the Town of Richmond, RI and the Chariho Regional School District for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Agreement between the Town of Richmond, RI and the Chariho Regional School District for American Rescue Plan Act Funding. Richmond Town Council Vice President Jim Palmisciano was thanked for attending and the Superintendent noted that he was instrumental in getting this ARPA money for Richmond School. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Gary, to approve the Agreement Between the Town of Richmond, RI and the Chariho Regional School District for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. Jim was asked if there was anything he wanted to say. He stated that all of us remember the events that occurred in late May in Texas. We were all saying what can we do to make our schools safer. There are things we can do to make Richmond School the safest building in Richmond so he approached his fellow Council members with a request that a portion of the ARPA funds that the Town of Richmond was to receive be used to enhance safety at Richmond School. He thanked Bill Day for working with him to determine the needs of the building. Thirty-three percent of the funding will go to police response. He thanked the other four Town Councilors for approving this. Now it is up to the School Committee to approve it. Bill commented, while he is not getting political, Richmond stepped up and Charlestown stepped up. Two out of three is not bad to improve building safety in the District. Vice President Palmisiciano was thanked.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To approve the Agreement Between the Town of Richmond, RI and the Chariho Regional School District for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. In favor: Unanimous.

#### IX. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Lyall asked if there were any items to be pulled. Bill pulled Item E. Craig acknowledged the donation and thanked the donor.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was

VOTED: To move the remainder of the Consent Agenda Items. In favor: Unanimous.

A. Minutes – Approved the following:

1. Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2022 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 (minutes not sealed).
2. Regular Session Minutes of October 11, 2022.

B. Transfers – Approved.

- C. Bill Review – Accepted.
- D. Revenue/Expenditure Account Status Report - As per enclosed.
- F. Personnel Actions – None at this time.
- G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – Approved issuance of the following:
  1. Chariho Alternative Learning Academy (CALA) Aquaponics System (grant funds)
  2. Chariho School Resource Officer (SRO) and Richmond Police Department Protective Devices (ARPA funds)
- H. Permission to Award Contracts – None at this time.
- I. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.
- J. Grants – None at this time.
- K. Donations – Accepted the following:
  1. Donation from the Charlestown Police Department (Town of Charlestown) of items that will enhance the security system at Charlestown Elementary School.

E. Student Activity Fund Balance – Bill stated that he is looking at the SAF report and he is a little confused. About three-quarters of the page down he sees accounts that are four or five times more than others. He thought this was going away – the different team accounts at the Middle School. Thought they were doing away with this for equity. How can these kids be assured the same experience/program that those teams with more money get? How can it be equitable if one team has \$24 and another has over \$4,000? Gina explained that Ned will be talking with the auditor about this. While not all the money has been pooled, the kids will be sharing the money. Ned noted that the balances are what was left in the accounts in August. He won't have the other update until they close last year. Gary commented that at a Middle School SIT meeting, Mr. Zenion stated that he is dealing with this issue and the issue that some teams take field trips and others do not. Gina stated that all field trips are based on the curriculum. Andrew asked if they should not expect much of a change in the next month or so to which Ned responded that they should see a change around the December timeframe. The higher numbers will diminish and there should be a balance. Andrew asked, if there is general consensus, what do they have to do to make these all grade level accounts? Ned replied that there is language in there that if funds are dormant, we can move money. Once Mr. Zenion goes through this, we will know what can be moved. Andrew asked if Ned could put a timeline to that. The general consensus is that we know where we want to be; we want to put finality to this issue so that it does not continue to be raised. Ned stated that he would want to coordinate this with the Superintendent and Principal Zenion. In December we should have a better idea, before budget deliberations begin. Andrew suggested that they put this on as an update in December with a clear, outlined plan; what we have done - the steps to bring finality. Gary felt Andrew's suggestions were good. If there are inequities based on this he would think his daughter would have mentioned it; he knows she would have and she has not mentioned any inequities. Craig stated that he had four kids go through the Middle School. Some classes did have a lot more as they worked to raise revenue so he hopes kids are motivated to share the equity. Bill noted two concerns. The first is they used to get reports monthly. The next report will be in December. He does not agree with this. The second is they get down to one account for 5<sup>th</sup> grade; does this money follow them? Gina responded that the money is supposed to be spent down by the end of the year. Because of COVID, we could not do anything. Bill asked, "Shouldn't that money go with them to the freshman class? When you are in High School, you raise money for your class. Shouldn't the money follow the kids? Ned replied, in fairness to how this was handled, this was for field trips but the last three years we didn't do a lot. Gina commented that they could make the money go to an account for the Class of (the year of their graduation) so the money follows them. Bill stated that Ronald Reagan said "Trust but verify" so he will verify. Catherine commented that if this will be an agenda item, she will save her questions rather than asking them under Consent Agenda. Andrew stated he is curious to see how other districts handle this; what is best practice. Tyler Champlin from Hopkinton noted that he graduated 19 years ago and his class has \$5,000+ in their account. Where does this go? Gina responded that Andrea Spas usually reaches out to classes. Some buy class gifts to leave to the school and some of the class money is saved for future reunions. Gary stated that he thinks Bill's idea of the money following the kids is a great idea but it does not address the equity issue.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was  
VOTED: To accept item E – Student Activity Fund Balance. In favor: Unanimous.

#### X. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports - None at this time.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Opening of New AMPHitheater funded by a Champlin Grant – Gina reported that they had the ribbon-cutting for the new High School AMPHitheater a couple Thursdays ago. This was possible due to a generous grant from the Champlin Foundation. There were several short performances from present students and alumni. It was an enjoyable event.

2. Virtual Learning Plan Update – Gina noted that she received a call from RIDE on Friday. Due to the early submission of our Virtual Learning Plan, the Commissioner can approve it; it does not need to go before the Board of Regents.

3. Flu Clinic: Charlestown School – Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup> from 4-7 PM.

C. Coming Events. The Superintendent encouraged all to attend the Benefit Concert on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the George Kent Chorus Hall in Westerly. She highlighted the upcoming events. Bill noted a concern he had about professional development being offered on Election Day; will there be enough parking? Gina stated they have already coordinated this and we should be all set.

#### XI. School Committee Requests for Future Agenda Items or Legal Opinions

Craig commented that if the taxpayers and voters deem him a worthy candidate, he would like to know the funding sources for Davies Vo-Tech. How is the State involved?

Andrew requested that Student Activities Fund (SAF) be a future agenda item.

#### XII. Adjournment

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To adjourn at 7:44 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Chair Lyall thanked all for a great meeting.

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Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk