

Chariho School Committee Virtual Meeting
Regular Session Minutes – February 9, 2021

Committee Members Virtual Attendance: Vice Chair Catherine Giusti, George Abbott, Ryan Callahan, Donna Chambers, William Day, Gary Liguori (joined at 6:34 PM), Craig Louzon, Lisa Macaruso (joined at 6:42 PM), Linda McAllister and David Stall. Absent: Chair Linda Lyall and Sheila Grover.

Administrators and Others Virtual Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Jane Daly, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Retired Director of Administration and Finance Susan Rogers, Technology Director Shawn Cole, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien, High School Principal Craig MacKenzie, High School Assistant Principal Andrea Spas, Charlestown School Principal Jennifer Poore, NEA President Vin Levcowich, NEA ESP President Tom Pirnie, NEA ESP Vice President Chris Caldarone, Hopkinton Town Council President Steve Moffitt, Ocean State Transit Representatives Tony Murgo, Lillian Benoit and Michelle Pelchat, Friends of Chariho Representative Robin Woodmansee, Westerly Sun Reporter Cynthia Drummond, Attorney for the School Committee Jon Anderson (joined at 6:34 PM), School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz and other community members.

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

Vice Chair Giusti called the virtual meeting of the Chariho School Committee to order at 6:30 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 Ryan Callahan 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)(1) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to an individual's job performance or character (Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts); 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 January 12, 2021 – NEA ESP Negotiation Update and 2. NEA ESP Negotiation Update; 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 Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of January 12, 2021 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified.

The Committee returned to open session at 7:04 PM and Vice Chair Giusti reconvened the meeting at 7:07 PM.

III. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to an individual's job performance or character (Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: That minutes pertaining to an individual's job performance or character (Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

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

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: That minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been made. In favor: Unanimous.

3. 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 Ryan Callahan 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.

IV. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Ryan Callahan reported there were 8 votes taken in executive session. The first four votes, non-renewal of a teacher contract, were all the same with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall voting in favor.

The fifth vote, approval of executive session minutes of January 12, 2021 – NEA ESP Negotiation Update, passed with 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions and 0 recusals with Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, McAllister and Stall voting in favor and Abbott and Macaruso abstaining.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of January 12, 2021 – Home Instruction Requests, passed with 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, McAllister and Stall voting in favor and Macaruso abstaining.

The next vote, approval of Home Instruction Requests, was unanimous with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall voting in favor.

The eighth vote, to return to open session, was unanimous with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall voting in favor.

V. Recognition

The following were congratulated:

1. High School Senior Spencer Shiels named to Girls' Soccer 2nd Team All-State by the *Providence Journal* last week.
2. High School Senior Megan Dickerman earned Tennis 1st Team All- Division II Honors.
3. High School Gymnasts Randi Swenson (Beam) and Isabella Santos (Vault and Floor) qualified for the State Championships.
4. High School's Margaret Weeden (High Jump), Julia Fortune (3,000) and Brooke Kanaczet (600) each won events during a Bayha Division Girls' Indoor Track Meet at the Providence Career & Technical Academy.

VI. Public Forum

Vice Chair Giusti noted that this was the part of the meeting where the public can speak on items that are not on the agenda. Please hit the raise hand button if you wish to speak and she will call on you. Bill Day noted that he is speaking as a private citizen. He has no children or grandchildren at Chariho that this would impact. He feels the District should challenge the Interscholastic League's ruling that no spectators be in attendance at basketball games. He believes that two individuals should be permitted to view their son/daughter or grandson/granddaughter. RIIL is allowing a large number of people into ice hockey rinks to offset the fees of the rinks. We should be able to allow a parent or grandparent in, especially for those athletes who are seniors. This is the wrong message to send to our students. He feels the RIIL is overstepping its boundaries. Maybe the Superintendent of Athletic Director can check with the State. He thanked the Vice Chair for allowing him to speak. Superintendent Picard clarified that Dr. Alexander Scott alluded to some spectators but she is not the doctor who represents RIIL. Superintendents and RIIL have been having conversations on this. Not all teams have home courts and some gyms are small. Allowing spectators would mean

additional cleaning of gyms and bathrooms. Spectators are allowed on Senior Night. Outdoor activities are easier to manage.

Lisa noted that this morning she received wonderful news. The Diversity Club, run by Nicole Weeks, Cheryl Lightfritz and Rebecca Peabody, was notified by Dan Fitzgerald of the Chariho Youth Task Force that the Task Force was giving them a \$450 grant to purchase issues of anti-racism books. Lisa also acknowledged that XQ+RI (Principal MacKenzie) will be providing some funds for a guest author. Lisa stated she felt refreshed; it is raining support. On the next agenda, she would like to recognize the Chariho Youth Task Force and Craig MacKenzie and staff. Donna suggested they make this information public as she would like to know what books the Diversity Club is reading. This should be put on a future agenda to get the information out to the community. Craig MacKenzie replied that this information can be found on the High School web page.

VII. Policy

A. Written Information Security Program (Adoption) – Superintendent Picard recommended adoption of this policy which was drafted by The Trust, approved by the Audit Subcommittee and reviewed by legal counsel. She noted that the policy was tabled at the last meeting because of a question as to why Connecticut was not included. The answer to this is that Connecticut does not require this. Jon added that the policy is based on a law that exists in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and not Connecticut. This policy was drafted by the Rhode Island Interlocal Trust, the District's insurance company, to better safeguard the District's cyber information. When an insurance company says to do something, you do it.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To adopt the Written Information Security Program (WISP) policy. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Personnel Management System (Revision) – Superintendent Picard noted that after surveying surrounding communities on rate of pay for substitute teachers, she is recommending approval of the revision to this policy (page 5 of 6) which will result in an increase to the daily substitute teacher rate of pay pre-COVID (this is a decrease to their current daily rate of pay during the pandemic). There is no change for the remainder of this year. This policy will become effective July 1st. Increasing the rate during the pandemic has resulted in an increase in our pool of available subs. She thanked Kristen Merritt for working tirelessly on this. They reviewed what the District could do without impacting the budget. A motion was made by Donna and seconded by Ryan to approve the revised policy. Craig wondered if the retirement policy that was waived by the Governor had any impact to which Gina responded that we did have retirees who let their certificates lapse but they were able to work day to day. David questioned if we were paying \$85 and are raising it to \$120 per day, how is this not affecting the budget. Gina explained that we have not had to pay overages to teachers as we have been able to fill positions so we have money available. Donna wondered if the District still had building subs to which Gina replied that this was a struggle at the beginning of the year but we have them now. Craig MacKenzie added that, in addition to Kristen's work, the teachers have taken on coverages to allow schools to open.

Donna Chambers made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve the revision, effective July 1, 2021, to the Personnel Management System Policy pertaining to substitute teacher pay. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Responsible Use of Technology Policy (Revision) – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the revised policy (Revision on page 3 of 5 – noted in red). The High School hit a few bumps so in order to get through the next few months, we need to add this one exception to make sure teachers and students are interacting. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Donna, to approve the revision on page 3 of 5 related to the need to have cameras and microphones on when distance learning. Gina explained that during exams, which all students were required to do via distance learning, it was not clear if the student logging in to take the exam was actually the

student registered for the class. Also, there was no way for a teacher to know, with the camera off, if the student was cheating by using other means to find answers. We have senior portfolios coming up, which will also be DL. We want cameras on during instruction time. Catherine noted that she was uncomfortable with this; the District can remote in at any time. Craig MacKenzie explained that it is more about accountability and engagement. We have to think of ways to support management. We need to get it right to make sure DL students are an active part of the class. David agreed with Mr. MacKenzie but questioned if the language being added was adequate enough to require a student to turn on his/her camera. Attorney Anderson noted that he believes it covers this during DL. David questioned if it was clear enough that the District would not access a camera or mic without first asking the student to which Shawn Cole responded that the technology department cannot turn on a camera for a student. Jon reiterated that the Committee needs to decide whether or not a student can say "no" to turning on his/her camera. Is there any recourse? Mr. MacKenzie replied that a student's refusal would be insubordination and there is recourse. There is a great frustration on the part of teachers and administrators that there is a lack of levers in the classroom as we are the people who are required to provide a quality education. Vin wanted all to understand this from a teaching perspective. Every student took mid-terms at home and they were not required to keep their cameras turned on. There is no way to see if a student was cheating. A teacher needs to make sure accurate grades reflect what a student has earned as exams count for a lot. Principal MacKenzie added that they want exams to be reflective of what students know. Linda McAllister clarified that cameras cannot be turned on by the District and if the expectation is that a student has his/her camera on for DL and exams and the student refuses to do this, there are consequences to which Principal MacKenzie responded that there is no written policy yet but if this is approved, Linda is correct. Discussion ensued on what is equitable for all. Lisa noted that she would trust that administration would be aware of any family circumstances that might prevent a student from following this policy. Principal MacKenzie stated that the school's counselors should be aware of any issues and concessions will be made. Both he and Greg Zenion have purchased Cox Internet packages for families who could not afford this. A great deal of discussion ensued to which Ryan cautioned all that this item is about revising the policy. The first Business item will address the need for a Task Force to revisit the policy. George wondered what would happen if a parent refused. Jon explained that the parent has the right to go to the Superintendent if Mr. MacKenzie falls on his face and does not do what he says he will do. There is an Appeals Policy the parent can follow. Several parents expressed their views on the issue to which Bill reminded all of what Ryan noted. This gives kids an equal chance to score on a test. He is beyond frustrated with how long this conversation has been going on. Vin commented that it is also frustrating from a teacher's perspective. They do understand what kids are going through and it is not a question of a student having his/her camera on the entire block. It is fair to say that we need to see if the student is the one doing the work. We need a unified message to all students; a clear message from the District. Donna agreed with Vin. It is about fairness and equity of an assessment. We are not talking about spying on someone. If a student doesn't have his/her camera on, she does not want them to be able to take the exam. Give teachers the right to assess a student correctly.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Donna Chambers and it was VOTED: To approve the revision on page 3 of 5 related to the need to have cameras and microphones on when distance learning. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall. Abstained: Giusti. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

VIII. Business

A. Creation of Responsible Use of Technology Policy Revision Task Force – The Task Force will take on the dialogue the Committee just had. The Superintendent requested that a School Committee member volunteer as a representative on this Task Force. Vice Chair Giusti questioned if she would like one volunteer or one from each town to which the Superintendent responded that the last Task Force that was formed has just one volunteer but it does not matter the number who want to volunteer. Donna Chambers, Gary Liguori and Linda McAllister all volunteered.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Donna Chambers and it was VOTED: To create a Responsible Use of Technology Policy Revision Task Force and appoint Donna Chambers, Gary Liguori and Linda McAllister to serve on this Task Force. In favor: Unanimous.

Vice Chair Giusti thanked them for volunteering.

B. Discussion on Commissioner's Ruling – B.R. and K.R. vs. North Kingstown School Department. This item was requested by Craig Louzon. Jon was in attendance for the discussion. Craig stated that his concern is that the District has a policy to address this but people find a way to get around a policy and he feels this could happen here. If our country took COVID more seriously, we might not be in the position we are in. He wondered how this might affect our District. Jon provided some background. There were two children who did not follow protocol in North Kingstown and came to school sick. They infected 22 kids at the high school, 22 kids at the middle school and who knows how many others outside of school were affected. The High School principal suspended the students (as the District took this very seriously) and the Commissioner took exception to this and ordered the kids to return to school immediately. Here at Chariho, if we have parents who refuse to do the attestation form, the student goes on DL. Those at RIDE are all working remotely and don't work in a school building with children. Jon noted that this did not surprise him that RIDE took this action. George added that the death rate increased by 17% because of COVID. Jon felt it was unfortunate of the Commissioner to say that only 22 kids at the middle school and 22 kids at the high school were affected as we really don't know how many others got ill because of these two students. Donna wondered how close Chariho is to North Kingstown in this situation to which Gina replied that when we submitted our Plan to RIDE over the summer, they said it was unacceptable because they wanted a daily self-attestation form completed. If parents struggled, we educated them. All staff have worked to ensure families can do this. All students have a device so the family has access to the form and principals have reached out to families if they are not completing the form to let them know the child would be going on distance learning. Some parents called her and she told them the same thing. One parent asked if they could hand write a note and that was fine. Some have pushed back but have not appealed. Donna stated that she appreciated the fact that the District is sticking to this. Craig asked Jon if the school district would have worded it differently, does he think RIDE would have ruled differently to which Jon responded that RIDE gets in its mind what they want to do. He has been doing this for thirty years and has found not to assume anything RIDE would do. Bill asked Jon to review the process. Jon explained if a parent is unhappy, they should first go to the school principal, still unhappy – go to Superintendent, then to School Committee, then to Commissioner. If it is an emergency, they can bypass the others and go straight to the Commissioner (i.e. a student failed English and cannot graduate – the Commissioner would immediately assign a hearing officer). Hearing Officer Cottone handled North Kingstown's case. He submits his decision to the Commissioner and she either signs or she doesn't. Chariho does a lot of the heavy work so you don't go to RIDE for hearings. After the Commissioner, it goes to Board of Regents, then to Supreme Court. He spoke with the North Kingstown attorney and they were fed up and decided not to fight it. Bill questioned where the hearing officers come from to which Jon replied, "Hearing officers are employees of RIDE."

C. 2021-2022 School Calendar – Superintendent Picard stated that she has provided four different options for consideration. Option 1 does not include the two optional holidays listed on the State calendar (they were not included as holidays on this calendar) and has students attending school on December 23 (the State calendar has this as an additional day off but is added on as an additional day in June). Option 2 includes the two optional holidays and has students attending school on December 23. Option 3 does not include the two optional holidays and no school on December 23. Option 4 includes optional holidays and no school on December 23. Option 1 is they typical calendar Chariho has had for years. It mirrors the State calendar with the exception of the day off on December 23. Vice Chair Giusti asked which calendar she would prefer and the Superintendent responded that she preferred Option 1 as the additional days pushes the calendar out closer to July and we are not allowed to go to school in July. With Option 1, students would be done on June 17th.

The reason she followed the State calendar in regards to holidays is because Jon has stated that we need to consider whether or not we can staff schools on optional holidays. If we deviated from the State plan and chose to come to school on what has traditionally been a holiday, staff may not report. She also included Early Release Days, a tradition in Chariho, as the District will be rolling out new ELA and Math curricula. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan and Bill, to adopt Option 1 as the 2021-2022 school calendar. Lisa commented that the Vice Chair spent a considerable amount of time to get South County to do a school calendar. We wanted the State to do a calendar as we want a unified calendar. We should adopt the State calendar inclusive of all holidays as the Clark family noted that even though students/staff can take a day that is not on the calendar, we should include these holidays. Gina clarified that the State calendar does not include the optional holidays but did include December 23rd as a day off. We have never taken these holidays. Jon added that this should not be based on which religious groups we like and which we don't. Greek Orthodox Easter is not recognized on the State calendar. He really would encourage the Committee to focus on the question, "Do you have enough staff to operate the schools should you open on December 25th or Good Friday, as examples?" One district did try to do away with Good Friday and did not get enough staff to come in so they ended up closing. Gina noted that Option 3 would be the calendar as presented by the State. Donna suggested they stay as close to the State calendar as they can so she would go with Option 3 but why the full week off in February? Jon noted that certain teachers' unions in the northern part of the State like February vacation. George commented that the State calendar does list individual holidays; Chariho does not. He believes the District should reconcile that. Gina replied that parents just want to know when there is school and when there is no school so that is why we have listed it that way. Craig stated that he was on the Subcommittee with Catherine and Barry and they tried to get a unified calendar from sending districts but only about half of the districts agreed to meet so we never got one. He feels Option 1 is best for Chariho. Parent Michael Waterman thanked the Superintendent for the hour delay and not a full cancellation for snow. DL days can be an easy fall back. He noted his concern with the fact that the State is only expecting kids to be in school 178 days. Adding this to the ten early release days and that will add about another 5 days off so kids will only be attending for 173 days. He feels the budget surplus should be used to compensate teachers extra for PD and put kids back in school. He requested that Early Release Days not happen next year. Vin noted a concern that when the Superintendent showed him the calendar, there was some confusion with the State calendar. Gina explained that during the RISSA meeting today, Ana Riley clarified the concerns raised by the Superintendents. She does not want to table this item as the High School needs to create course schedules. She apologized to Vin but she just received clarification this afternoon. Vin asked if the ERD would be what they are accustomed to now or what is contractual. Gina replied that with the ELA roll-out and shifts in curriculum, they will need that time for PD. Parent Erin Liese agreed that ERD are a logistical nightmare for working parents. Gina responded that this practice was in place prior to her coming to Chariho and this year they were needed due to concurrent learning. The District will need PD time for the new curricula that are required by the State. David stated that he is in support of Option 1 and asked about the two State PD Days prior to Labor Day. Gina noted that the State did this last year. They built them in and counted them as student days. Right now they are providing the calendar as an option but there is no executive order yet. The State PD days do count toward student days but the District PD days do not. Mr. Waterman again questioned early release time and going back to 90 minutes to which the Superintendent responded that they can change the time to release students later. This is not set in stone.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and William Day and it was VOTED: To adopt Option 1 as the 2021-2022 school calendar. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall. Abstained: Abbott (because holidays are not identified). The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

D. Necessity for School Construction Update and Decision – Ryan Callahan, Chair of the Necessity for School Construction Committee, reported that they met with the three Town Councils; all were very gracious and accommodating. He reviewed the three options the Committee has narrowed it

down to: Option A would combine all four elementary schools into one brand new building; Option B would result in the closing of Hope Valley School and expanding the other three elementary schools; and Option C would be to maintain the existing brick and mortar. They received great feedback. Charlestown's questions centered on the Chariho Act while Hopkinton had concerns about how the bond would be created, the cost to the towns and bussing distance of students. Hopkinton likes the community feel and proximity to schools. The Superintendent shared the survey results. She received 720 responses with 46% wanting to keep all four schools; 29.2% move to one school; and 30.3% to close Hope Valley. She noted the top three concerns were the community feel (close knit), travel and one building being way too large. Ned reiterated Ryan's remarks on comments from the towns and added that Richmond stressed heavily the cost. Ryan asked which direction did the School Committee want them to go. Once they decide on an option, they can determine the process and pricing. Lisa thanked all for their work and noted that over 50% wanted some change. She would like to know what the Necessity for School Construction Committee recommends. She also asked Ned how administration/staffing could offset the bond to which Ned responded that this is not something he would want to put out publicly right now as the design could influence that. He did note, however, that with consolidation they could make classrooms closer to capacity and the bond could be offset by operational savings. There is wiggle room with Option A but not the other two. Ryan commented on the age of the four buildings with some of them being almost at capacity. If the towns have an influx, this could put a couple of them over capacity. He understands how parents feel about a community school but 10-20 years from now they will have to do a major capital project and the financial incentive probably won't be available. Right now, the District stands to get at least 80% reimbursement. He would encourage all to think hard about consolidation. He prefers Option A for these reasons. David agreed with Ryan as did Donna. Option A is the most logical but it will take a lot of selling. Donna noted that she is not pitching this as an opportunity to save on administration costs and keeping our elementary principals is important to maintain the quality of education our students are getting. Jon was asked if Options A or B would require modifications to the Chariho Act to which Jon replied that he hasn't thought about it but he does know there is a provision in the Act that affords every child the opportunity to attend an elementary school in their community so you would need to change this for two of the three towns for Option A. Bill appreciated the time spent on this but felt they would have a difficult time selling Option A. Charlestown is concerned about opening the Chariho Act; Hopkinton wants to maintain their two schools because they feel they are two separate villages. He is not in favor of Option A as he feels that parents will have an issue with it. Linda McAllister stated that, if they are truly looking forward, Option A is the best option for Chariho. The sell will be how they are challenged. George asked when would a Building Committee have to be formed to be in compliance with the Chariho Act. Jon responded that he spoke with Gina, Ned and Donna and they worked on a timeline. If the plan is submitted in fall of 2021, you would be looking at a voter referendum in November 2022. Gina added that if they put an extension through, this would be on the agenda for the March 2022 public meeting. Jon added that you will need enabling legislation to change the Chariho Act which would mean you need to have this done in January to be ready by April but, in reality, it will be more like November 2022. Craig noted that the mindset in the three towns is very territorial and as much as he believes that Option A is the most logical choice, he thinks the only one that will fly is Option B. If A is chosen, he will hop on board and give all the passion he can. Community members Robin Woodmansee and Chip Heil shared their views on what they felt would be the best choice with the timeline being a great concern. Gina stated that the District will have a high level, specific timeline once they know the direction of the Committee. Lisa noted that there was no motion on the floor and she would support one for Option A. Vice Chair Giusti asked Ryan if he wanted a motion or consensus. George questioned if it was the responsibility of the Building Committee to hire the architectural firm to which Ryan responded it is but there is work that needs to be done before they get to that. Michael Waterman questioned the State money that was available as he thought this was just for emergencies. Jon explained that the State was reimbursing everything in 2008-2009 and got in way over its head so they put the brakes on this and only reimbursed for health/safety emergencies. They did this for ten years until the debt was paid off and they are now back to doing projects. Mr. Waterman felt they should maximize the efficiencies going from four schools to one

where community member Virginia Stracuzzi stated that the reason they moved from Providence to Chariho was for the smaller schools. Ryan noted that they will need to do two motions; one to extend the meeting past 10:00 PM and the other for the Option they should move forward with.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was
VOTED: To extend the meeting past 10:00 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, which was seconded by Catherine Giusti, to authorize the Necessity for School Construction Committee to pursue Option A. Community member Erin Liese noted she is a lifelong resident of Richmond. She would like to see projections over ten years of what the cost might be to maintain what they have versus a new building. Stephanie Goodwin thanked all who worked on this and felt that Option A was being shoved down their throats. She did not feel that a lot of information was provided for Option B. They don't even know where the building will be. She voted for Hope Valley to be closed but would not vote for Option A. Gary stated that he enjoyed listening to the comments and he is relatively new here. People relate charm to living in small communities but charm doesn't bring progress. They have a new world class engineering building at URI. Prior to this, enrollment was down but now enrollment is up because everyone is excited about it. Go into a learning environment that is truly first class. Our current buildings are in need of repair; they are broken down with numerous toxins. He likes the new High School library. Charm is wonderful but we have the opportunity to give students what they deserve. David echoed Gary's sentiments. He has 5 children who would be very excited for the change. Several other comments were shared then Vice Chair Giusti noted that they would move to the motion.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was
VOTED: To authorize the Necessity for School Construction Committee to pursue Option A. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall. Opposed: Abbott, Day and Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 3 opposed.

Superintendent Picard recommended the Committee seek approval for an extension from RIDE for submission of the Stage II application.

Lisa Macaruso made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To seek approval for an extension from RIDE for submission of the Stage II application. In favor: Unanimous.

E. FY22 Budget

1. Adjustments to FY22 Budget – Superintendent Picard noted that this is an opportunity for adjustments to be made prior to approval at which time it then becomes the Committee's budget. Fund balance (to 2.25%) it is at \$1,216,690.67 remaining. This is not the last time the Committee can lower the budget. If adjustments are made, she requested that the Committee take a short recess so Ned can recalculate figures. Vice Chair Giusti asked if anyone had an adjustments they wanted to make to which Bill stated he was a little confused because he thought there would be a follow-up regarding capital expenditures. He will not be voting for the budget unless he gets this information. Gina noted there will be a reduction to the cost of the eye wash stations but they don't know the exact numbers because they have just started with Colliers. Ned added that the tally on the eye wash stations is \$20,000; he thinks it will be in the \$6,000 to \$8,000 range but we won't know until they get into the walls. The fire alarm system at Hope Valley is being addressed over February break with this year's money. Bill commented that RGB did not do a sufficient enough job and this could be a waste of the District's money and their time to which Gina replied that tonight's approval is to make this the School Committee's budget. Adjustments can still be made. Bill noted that he has been doing this over twenty years and as presented, he will not support the budget.

2. Approval of FY22 Budget – The Superintendent stated that as there are no adjustments, Ned has reported that the total amount of reductions (including additional revenue) to date is \$707,745 which

leaves the budget at \$54,704,347; an increase of 2.23%. Impact to each town is as follows: Charlestown – an increase of 1.41%; Richmond – an increase of 2.66%; and Hopkinton – an increase of 2.33%. She recommended the Committee approve the FY22 budget in the amount of \$54,704,347; an overall increase of 2.23%.

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

VOTED: To approve the FY22 budget in the amount of \$54,704,347; an overall increase of 2.23%.

In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall.
Opposed: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 opposed.

IX. Consent Agenda Items

Vice Chair Giusti requested items to be pulled. Craig pulled A-1, A-2, A-3; Bill stated that he needs to abstain from voting on A-4 and recuse from H-1. He feels that people need to know how much this contract will cost the District. It is a good contract – probably one of the best – but to not put the cost out there is wrong. This should not have been a Consent Agenda Item. Craig acknowledged the donations and thanked the donors.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

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

A. Minutes – Approved the following:

5. Special Meeting (Budget Workshop) Minutes of January 19, 2021.

6. Special Meeting (Budget Workshop) Minutes of January 21, 2021.

B. Transfers – Approved.

C. Bill Review – Accepted

D. Budget Summary – As per enclosed.

E. Balance Sheet – As per enclosed.

F. Personnel Actions (Staff Updates listed in FYI)

G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – 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 Anthony Rotelli, Englewood FL, of a Boston Whaler valued at \$475, Boat electronics valued at \$400, Johnson Outboard valued at \$450, Trailer valued at \$300 and miscellaneous hardware and rigging valued at \$400 to the CTC Marine Technology Program.

2. Donation from the Chariho Rotary Club of 3,000 Masks to the District.

A-1. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 12, 2021 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of December 15, 2020 (minutes not sealed). In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, McAllister and Stall. Abstained (due to absence): Macaruso. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

A-2. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 12, 2021 – Memorandum of Agreement Between the Chariho Regional School District Committee and NEA Chariho Pertaining to Graduation Portfolio (minutes unsealed). In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, McAllister and Stall. Abstained (due to absence): Macaruso. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

A-3. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 12, 2021. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, McAllister and Stall. Abstained (due to absence): Macaruso. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

A-4. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Omnibus Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2021. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon and McAllister. Abstained (due to absence): Day, Macaruso and Stall. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 3 abstentions.

H-1. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve award of the Transportation Contract, per the attached memo from Ned Draper dated 2-1-21, for FY22-FY24 (with two optional one-year extensions) to Ocean State Transit (pricing sheet included with memo).

X. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Anti-Racism Task Force met on February 3rd. Included in the packet were the approved minutes of their meeting on January 6. The Superintendent reported that meetings have been well attended and they continue to add students. She will provide updates from the subcommittees.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Review Concurrent Learning Plan and Updates – Gina noted that the District has had 124 positive cases from all students and staff (in person and distance learning) which is less than a 1% positivity rate. This is the trend across the State in schools.

2. Binax Testing Update – Superintendent Picard stated that all schools have a team in place for Binax testing. Testing will be held in all elementary schools, the Middle School and the High School on Wednesdays.

C. Coming Events – The Superintendent reported that she plans to return to in-person learning on February 22 (after winter break). She reviews COVID data daily and if we have to move to DL, she will first look at a class, a team or a school before moving the entire District. Those wishing to return to in-person learning can do so at the elementary level beginning March 22. The secondary schools will begin this process the beginning of March. This involves more work for transitioning due to accommodations needed for bussing and social distancing in classrooms. They will do their best to ensure that students can do what they select. She reviewed Travel guidelines and will be reminding all families. This definitely relies on the honor system. Kindergarten registration will be e-registrations this year but paper packets will still be available. Secretaries will be trained on February 24th. Dorothy is working with Rene. The SEAP committee is looking to bring in student voice and is running a 'spreading smiles' campaign with the theme being "We Love Chariho". The Public Budget Hearing will be a virtual meeting this year and we are requesting that all pre-register for this.

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

George requested a report from the bus company as to how they are responding to employees getting COVID or a communicable disease.

Donna asked that information be brought to the next meeting regarding the Diversity Book Club.

XII. Adjournment

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Donna Chambers and it was VOTED: To adjourn at 10:38 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk