

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Regular Session – March 26, 2024

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Catherine Giusti, Vice Chair Karen Reynolds, Donna Chambers, Kathryn Colasante, Polly Hopkins (arrived at 6:05 PM), Craig Louzon, Linda Lyall, Andrew McQuaide, Larry Phelps and Jessica Purcell. Absent: Tyler Champlin and Patricia Pouliot.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

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

Chair Catherine Giusti called the meeting of the Chariho School Committee, held in the Chariho High School Library, to order at 6:00 PM. She asked all to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

II. Motion/Vote to go into Executive Session

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide 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 (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of March 12, 2024 - Review of Superintendent's 2023-2024 Goals; and 2. Review of Superintendent's Contract); 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 (Memorandum of Agreement with NEA ESP) 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 March 12, 2024 - Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous (Hopkins was not in attendance for the vote).

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

Chair Giusti reconvened the meeting at 7:00 PM and asked all to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in memory of Charlestown Moderator Charlie Beck who passed away on March 19, 2024.

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 Andrew McQuaide 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.

V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Reynolds reported there were five votes taken in executive session. The first vote, approval of executive session minutes of March 12, 2024 – Home Instruction Requests, passed with Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor.

The second vote, approval of home instruction requests, passed with Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor and Hopkins abstaining.

The third vote, approval of executive session minutes of March 12, 2024 – Review of Superintendent’s 2023-2024 Goals – passed with Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds all voting in favor.

The fourth vote, to table an MOA, passed with Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Hopkins, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor and Louzon abstaining.

The last vote, to return to open session, passed with Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated:

1. 2024 Rhode Island Art Anchor Award Winners: Jordan (Finn) Almagno-Gillooley (Anchor Award for photograph - *Dreams of an Unknown*); Ayden Selvidio (Anchor Award and Best in Category for photograph - *The Mill*); Victoria St. Onge (Anchor Award for drawing - *Skyla*); and Katie Wood (Wave Award Best in Experimental/Abstract for sculpture - *Repairs*).
2. (in attendance) Esports Mario Kart won the RIIL State Championship – Team Members: Lennon Rodgers, Alexander Sensenig, Geena Kenyon, Parker Bruso, Bobby Brown and Josh Ballesteros. Head Coach David Landi.
3. (in attendance) CTC Construction and Electrical Technology Students and Instructors, in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity, have constructed one new home in Hopkinton and are working on several others in the same area.

Construction Technology: Tyler Catalan, Caleb Caswell, Noah Dinucci, Noah Blanchard, Brendan Byers, Colin Cooley and Instructors Dave Bannister and Bonny Pride.

Electrical Technology: Christian Antinucci, Keegan Beck, Jesse Brunelle, Logan Gardiner, Philip Gingerella, Logan LoBianco, Jonathan Manning, Nathan Marcotte, Travis Plante-Mullen, Jordan Robinson, Lennon Rodgers (this is Lennon’s second award this evening), Dominic Santospirito, Alexander Sensenig (this is Alex’ second award this evening), Jake Tedeschi, Elijah Henley and Instructor Ryan Northup.

Those in attendance from the three groups received letters of appreciation and pictures were taken.

Donna stated that she went to the dedication of the Hopkinton home as did a lot of people from the community. She has never been more proud of Chariho and she has been involved with the School Committee for about ten years. She recommended that everyone who gets the chance should go to one of the home dedications. They were all congratulated.

VII. Public Forum

Richmond resident William Day stated that he has had extra time on his hands so he began studying “no cell phones in schools”. He wondered if the School Committee has thought of implementing this. Central Falls has. He quoted from articles he has read that “there is a higher rate of depression and anxiety related to cell phones” and that “it is an addiction for a lot of these kids.” Maybe start in the Middle School and work your way up. It was also noted in one of the articles that a school district saw a 6.4% increase in studying when implementing this. The Committee could maybe do a policy over the summer and have it in effect next school year. His other concern is school safety. He would like to address the School Committee in executive session if they would consider inviting him to an upcoming executive session meeting. There are tweaks that should be made. Diane Tefft from Hopkinton had signed up to speak but noted she was not going to speak at this time.

VIII. Business

A. Middle School STEM Curriculum Presentation/Approval – Susie Scanapieco was in attendance to answer any questions. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Middle School STEM Curriculum. Andrew made a motion, which was seconded by Karen, to

approve the Middle School STEM Curriculum. Karen stated that her only comment is that STEM is her 6th grade son's favorite class. Donna particularly liked how the committee pointed out what changes were made and she thanked them for this. Andrew thanked them for the presentation that was included in their packet and all the work that goes into this. Jessica related this to Artessy and the STEM classrooms that were set up. These are teamwork activities. She asked why there is not a grade 9-12 curriculum to which Susie explained that in the Middle School STEM includes pre-engineering and computer science classes. They brought electives in at the Middle School level to give the kids exposure to them but at the High School, this becomes more granular. It is a broad spectrum of classes. Donna commented on the excellent job they did and Susie acknowledged that Artessy was her favorite "day job".

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Karen Reynolds and it was
VOTED: To approve the Middle School STEM Curriculum. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Superintendent's Contract – Chair Giusti recommended approval of Superintendent Gina Picard's contract.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was
VOTED: To approve Superintendent Gina Picard's contract. In favor: Chambers, Colasante, Giusti, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Purcell and Reynolds. Opposed: Hopkins. Abstained: Phelps. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor with 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

C. Student Liaison on the School Committee – This item was requested by Jessica Purcell. Jessica stated that she would like to see a student, not a senior but maybe a junior, have a non-voting role on the School Committee to bring student voice to the table. We should honor and respect their pathways. We make decisions that impact their future. She reached out to Westerly and Barrington and received positive feedback. It has improved communication. Andrew asked Jessica if she had a preference on direction as he feels the Policy Subcommittee should review this. He made a motion, which was seconded by Jessica, to request that the Policy Subcommittee review the student representative and liaison proposal. Karen noted that she likes the idea of considering a junior as seniors are way too busy. Polly felt that Andrew's motion was "putting the cart before the horse". Chair Giusti agreed with Andrew's motion as she would like to see the Policy Subcommittee flush it out. She would like to see a policy before we decide. Linda agreed. She feels the policy will outline roles and responsibilities. Polly stated that she spoke to others who have student liaisons and it was split down the middle of those who were in favor and those who were not. They could get a student who is opposite to their political beliefs and the following year it could be a different student with a different outlook. In some cases, School Committee members were taken to task. She was told there was a lot of conflict with one. This stunted the work of the School Committee and made meetings longer. She is right down the middle. Westerly has a Student Council and a student government and the student government elects the liaison. She has looked at this from different angles; how to decide what student and could they pull from the Student Council. Jessica responded, having different points of view – they see that happening now. The engagement changes dependent on who you have. Could the Policy Subcommittee flush out the process? Kathryn felt they haven't had too many of these issues. If something was politically decisive, they only have one side to the situation. This is a lot of weight to put on a student. She can see this as a problem if issues are brought forth. We would need to treat this person more delicately. It is a lot on a student in a public arena. Site-based management has been around a long time where students are represented. The High School has a Student Advisory Panel and School Improvement Team. Gina added that she has a panel – Student Education Advisory Panel – that includes Middle School and Grade 4 students as well. Kathryn noted that she does have concerns about this position. Donna stated that every person who spoke is on the Policy Subcommittee so it will be appropriate to bring this to that Committee; there could be alternatives. Chair Giusti stated that it was important to have this discussion. She understands the points; we have to be careful as we are the adults in the room. We have to police ourselves to not treat a student poorly. She loves the idea but agrees that it will be a lot for a

student. She feels they should have more student voice and is excited to see what the Policy Subcommittee has to say. Jessica commented on the push back about fear of political position. Look at our agenda – it is not about politics. The politics come from Public Forum. Polly replied that there is a reality to it. The examples she was given; it could happen. Craig added, or it could not happen. Chair Giusti hoped that administration is looped in. Usually students with a strong voice want to do it but you may want someone different who may not always get a chance to use their voice. Chris from Richmond felt it was a great idea to involve the students. Bring students into the Policy Subcommittee meeting to see what their view is. Diane Tefft from Hopkinton offered a suggestion. Putting a student in this environment – don't they have this at Student Council? They have an avenue to bring something forward to the School Committee or they can bring it to their Committees so it can be brought to the School Committee instead of having a student sit here. This would give every student the opportunity to voice their concerns.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Jessica Purcell and it was VOTED: To request that the Policy Subcommittee review the student representative and liaison proposal. In favor: Unanimous

D. Budget Transfers – Superintendent Picard asked Committee members to refer to the Memo from Ned Draper dated March 21, 2024 which explains the need/reason for the \$10,000 transfer from Custodial Services to prepare for moving services for summer deep cleaning projects. She recommended approval of the Transfers for March 26, 2024 to include the additional transfers on the Transfer Sheet provided this evening. Ned was thanked for his memo.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To approve all the transfers for March 26, 2024. In favor: Unanimous.

IX. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Giusti requested items to be pulled; there were none.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Linda Lyall and Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To approve the entire Consent Agenda. In favor: Unanimous.

A. Minutes – Approved the following:

1. Regular Session Minutes of March 5, 2024 - District Annual Public Budget Meeting (please approve with the name change on page 1 – attached).
2. Executive Session Minutes of March 12, 2024 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of February 15, 2024 (minutes not sealed).
3. Regular Session Minutes of March 12, 2024.

B. Bill Review – Accepted

C. Personnel Actions – None at this time.

D. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – None at this time.

E. Permission to Award Contracts – Approved the following:

1. Learning Inside Out Outdoor Classroom Grant collaboration with Maisey's Tree Farm, Hopkinton, RI for construction of outdoor classroom items and spaces as noted in the memo from Katie Kirakosian and Ned Draper dated March 18, 2024. Total cost anticipated not to exceed \$9,956 with a work completion date no later than August 1, 2024. This project will be entirely funded by the Learning Inside Out Grant through RIDE and the School Building Authority with Maisey's Tree Farm offering considerable in-kind support.

2. Architectural Services for the CTC Roof Replacement Project to SLAM Architects in the amount of \$99,620.

F. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.

G. Grants – None at this time.

H. Donations – None at this time.

X. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports – There were no Subcommittee Reports.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Artessy Update – Superintendent Picard reported that Artessy began on Friday Night with the High School Chorus and ran from 9 AM to 2 PM Saturday at the Middle School. Attendance was amazing and it was a wonderful event. She thanked Kristen Merritt, Dana Hall, Susie Scanapieco, CTC Teachers & Director Auth, Music and Art teachers – this event would not be possibly without our amazing staff.

2. Chariho Building Committee Update – Gina noted they held their first meeting to appoint the Clerk, which will be Kathy Koziol, and legal counsel, Jackson Parmenter of KSP Law. Attorney Parmenter provided background information prior to being appointed. Although Charlestown has not yet appointed its members, they were aware that this meeting would be needed so the Committee can move forward. The next meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2024 at 5:30 PM.

C. Coming Events – Superintendent Picard asked all to please check the District calendar for upcoming events. Polly asked if the cleaning of Dow Field was grade specific for High School students. Gina was not sure but stated she would check on this.

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

Andrew wanted to follow-up on Bill Day's request. Gina stated she will defer to the Chair about his request to meet in executive session or another venue regarding his concerns.

Craig noted that he was going to ask for the same about Mr. Day's cell phone use concern but would like to wait until after the Policy Subcommittee meets to discuss this as if a student comes on board, he would like the student involved.

Kathryn stated she brought this out before. If the bond should pass, she would like to know – a clear explanation on precisely how the five-year timeline is enforced. Gina clarified that she would like to discuss timelines to which Kathryn replied "no". She wants something in writing from RIDE, say one school is not complete by the timeline we have to adhere to. Gina asked that Kathryn email her concern and she will work on getting an answer for her.

XII. Adjournment

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was

VOTED: To adjourn at 7:49 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk