

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Regular Session Minutes – May 10, 2022

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Vice Chair Catherine Giusti, George Abbott, Ryan Callahan, Donna Chambers, William Day, Gary Liguori, Craig Louzon, Linda McAllister, Karen Reynolds and endawnis Spears. Absent: Lisa Macaruso.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Assistant Director of Administration and Finance Gail Wilcox, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien, NEA ESP President Thomas Pirnie, NEA ESP Vice President Chris Caldarone, Members of the ESP Union and School Committee Clerk Donna Siczekiewicz.

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 6:30 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 (Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 12, 2022 - Superintendent's Evaluation); 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 (NEA ESP Negotiation Update); under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to litigation/legal update (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 12, 2022 - Superior Court CA No. WC-2020-0213 – Kelsey Zell v. Chariho Regional School District et al., 2. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 12, 2022 - C.A. No. PC-2019-10870 – Town of Barrington, et al. v. Barrington School Committee et al., and 3. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 12, 2022 - RGB) 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 April 12, 2022 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous.

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

The Committee returned to open session at 6:55 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 in memory of Brian Stanley, retired Director of Administration and Finance, who passed away on May 4th. Brian received a double-lung transplant at Cleveland Clinic and on April 21 and 22, 2020, he became the first patient at Cleveland Clinic to receive a double-organ transplant (liver and kidney) after receiving a double-lung transplant. Sincere condolences to Brian's family. After the silent meditation, Bill Day commented that he and Brian had twenty-one years together at Chariho but they go further back. Bill coached Brian, a very quiet, hard-working individual. He shared a story about Brian buying a BMW with a sunroof (he was very proud of his car). He was coming back to work from home and a bird came by and did what birds do which landed on Brian's head. Brian's comment was "It could have been worse. He could have been in Narragansett and it could have been a sea gull." He noted how much he and the community will miss Brian.

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 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.

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

Gary Liguori 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 reached. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears. Recused: Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 10 in favor with 1 recusal.

V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Catherine Giusti noted the first vote taken in executive session, approval of executive session minutes of April 12, 2022 – Superintendent’s evaluation, passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor and McAllister abstaining.

The second vote, approval of executive session minutes of April 12, 2022 – Home Instruction Requests, passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor and McAllister abstaining.

The third vote, approval of executive session minutes of April 12, 2022 – Superior Court CA No. WC-2020-0213 – Kelsey Zell v. Chariho Regional School District et al., passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall and Spears voting in favor, McAllister abstaining and Reynolds recusing.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of April 12, 2022 – C.A. No. PC-2019-10870 – Town of Barrington, et al. v. Barrington School Committee et al., passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor and McAllister abstaining.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of April 12, 2022 – RGB Update, passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor and McAllister abstaining.

The next vote, approval of Home Instruction Requests for tonight, passed with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The final vote, to return to open session, was approved with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, McAllister and Spears voting in favor.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated:

1. 2022 FBLA State Competition Winners: Kaitlin Wojcik (1st Place - Business Communication and Digital Video Production; 3rd Place - Advertising), Sara Berry (1st Place - Digital Video Production), Thatiana So (1st Place - Digital Video Production), Kaitlyn Burns (1st Place - Graphic Design; 5th Place - Journalism), Reagan Tremblay (1st Place - Job Interview; 4th Place – Organizational Leadership), Cooper Beck (2nd Place - Economics and Sports & Entertainment Management; 4th Place – Public Speaking), Elena DeAngelis (2nd Place - Health Care Administration; 3rd Place – Introduction to Business Presentation and Introduction to Financial Math), Chariho (2nd Place - Local Chapter Newsletter; 3rd Place – Local Chapter Scrapbook), Andrew Patt (2nd Place – Sports & Entertainment Management; 5th Place – Business Law), Beatrice Caryll Cuevas 3rd Place – Insurance & Risk

Management), Maicey MacLeod (3rd Place - Introduction to Business Presentation and Introduction to FBLA; 4th Place – Accounting I). A special thanks to FBLA Advisor Susie Scanapieco.

2. Judy and Kimon Dafoulas, owners of Town Pizza 2, for their generosity during the High School student vocational community trip organized by High School Intern Julia Potts for the staff and students in Cheryl Lightfritz', Brittini Ruggieri's and Keith Cronin's classes. Chef Mike demonstrated the art of pizza-making and students were allowed to create (and eat) their own pizzas. Town Pizza server Crystal was amazing with all students and Town Pizza provided all this at no cost to the District.

3. 74th Rhode Island FFA State Convention Winners: Arianna Collet (2nd Place – Extemporaneous Public Speaking), Amber Daniels (1st Place – Employment Skills; 2nd Place – Agriculture Skills Demonstration/Illustrated Talk), Chelsea Flynn (1st Place – Prepared Public Speaking – Eligible for National Competition), Lola Hernandez (3rd Place – Creed Speaking; 3rd Place – Agriculture Skills Demonstration/Illustrated Talk), Charlotte Kona (1st Place – Agriculture Skills Demonstration/Illustrated Talk).

4. CALA Students and Staff were recognized by the State for increasing student proficiency on the 2021 RICAS Assessment despite the challenges of the pandemic.

VII. Public Forum

Chair Lyall noted that, at this time, anyone wishing to speak on items not on the agenda, can come to the mic, introduce yourself, state your town of residence and please limit your comments so everyone will get a chance to speak. Ashley Marsh from Hopkinton noted she is a mother of four children who all go to Chariho. She is a preschool teacher assistant at Hope Valley School. She does this for the love and wishes her car could run on love but it runs on gas and she can't buy her gas with love. She noted all of her training in this field and feels she does not get paid for what she is worth. She gets the same pay as her daughter's boyfriend who works at Walmart stocking shelves. We are dealing with a mental health crisis with children. All the people wearing red tonight do their jobs for love. We are asking for attention and respect. We are coming to you because we are sad and feel undervalued. Many are working without a contract. We want a contract that makes us feel valued. Helen Sheehan, a Richmond resident, noted her full support of teachers; they work very hard and she appreciates all the School Committee members for their hard work. As a taxpayer, her thoughts are to look at where efficiencies can be made. Look at the middle people. Maybe contract services out. Chair Lyall asked if she could hold her comments as the budget is an item on tonight's agenda. She can speak on it at that time. Doreen Reilly stated she lives in Westerly but has worked for the District for 24 years. The ESP staff have been without a contract for some time now. We are showing our frustration and are not being heard. We want to go to the table. It is not OK – the lack of respect from adults on this Committee. Please come follow me for a whole day. I would appreciate the School Committee sitting down with us and talk. Tom Pirnie, proud taxpayer of Charlestown, graduate of Chariho, father in the District, BMA and NEA ESP President, commented that he appreciates what the Committee does. It is a thankless job but our members are tired of not being heard. This will continue until we are at the table. All we want is a seat at the table and some respect and he hopes that will happen very soon. Thank you. Chair Lyall thanked all speakers.

VIII. Policy

A. Public Forum Policy Revision – This item was requested by Bill Day as this policy was in conflict with the Committee's Rules of Conduct pertaining to the amount of time provided for speakers during Public Forum. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the revision to this policy which will avoid future conflicts should there be a change to the Rules of Conduct. Ryan made a motion, which was seconded by Catherine, to approve the revision to this policy. Bill stated that he fails to see where this will solve any problems. You took away the five minutes and are limiting it. The Rules of Conduct state we will have a sign-in sheet and a thirty-minute limit for Public Forum. Have them sign a sheet and if there are a lot of people wishing to speak, we will limit their time. If there is not a lot wishing to speak, they can have a little more time. He is very disappointed with the policy. Chair Lyall asked if Bill wanted to make a suggestion to which Bill replied that he is one voice and

no one listens to him. Ryan suggested they send this back and have it align with the Rules of Conduct. Ryan withdrew his motion and Catherine withdrew her second.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was VOTED: To send this policy back for revision and have it align with the Rules of Conduct. In favor: Unanimous.

IX. Business

A. Field Trip Request(s) –

1. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the request of SkillsUSA Advisor Lt. Robert Wild for 11 students and 3 chaperones to travel to the SkillsUSA National Championship in Atlanta, GA from June 19, 2022 to June 25, 2022 contingent upon compliance with policy. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan, to approve this request. Bill stated, while he is very much in favor of this trip as his daughter went to Kansas City for nursing, why hasn't the buffet (which helps pay for this trip) been advertised as it has in the past. It seems to be a big secret. They should be more diligent in raising funds. Gina noted that the buffet is next Friday and reminders have been sent to all administrators to update the District calendar. It was short notice to which Bill responded that we do have a lot of people who watch this meeting so it would be good to get the word out. Gina added that it is on the High School blog, the CTC blog and she will talk to Director Auth to publicize it more.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the request of SkillsUSA Advisor Lt. Robert Wild for 11 students and 3 chaperones to travel to the SkillsUSA National Championship in Atlanta, GA from June 19, 2022 to June 25, 2022 contingent upon compliance with policy. In favor: Unanimous.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the request of FBLA Advisor Susie Scanapieco for 10 students and 2 chaperones to travel to the FBLA National Competition in Chicago, IL from June 28, 2022 to July 2, 2022 contingent upon compliance with policy.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was VOTED: To approve the request of FBLA Advisor Susie Scanapieco for 10 students and 2 chaperones to travel to the FBLA National Competition in Chicago, IL from June 28, 2022 to July 2, 2022 contingent upon compliance with policy. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Technology Education Curriculum K-8 Revision – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Technology Education Curriculum K-8 revision. Dr. Comella and Susie Scanapieco are in attendance to review the changes. Craig made a motion, seconded by Ryan, to approve the Technology Education Curriculum K-8 revision. Susie thanked the team members who did the work. She brought attention to the new standards and explained the guiding principles. They started from scratch as Rhode Island created new standards in 2018. Participation and equity were brought in with every student in the District getting the same experience. They have tried to stick to programs that keep engagement high. There are building connections across discipline but they do have more work to do with this. They also will have professional development opportunities to provide support for teachers. They want it to be a team aspect – collaboration – with kids working side by side learning how to program. Teaching in the classroom what will be expected in the workforce. She believes the District was already ahead of the standards as in 2017 we implemented K-8 being done with integrity. Standards are grade-span specific and they wrote the curriculum documents to match. There will be repetition but that is how kids learn. Bill commented on the fact that he received sixty pages of basically all redacted language which has now been condensed down to ten pages or less. This was useless; a waste of paper. Susie noted that they do the crossing out for School Committee only so they can see what is being removed. The old standards no longer exist so it will be condensed. Printing, to her knowledge, is per request and she has never printed this document. She works online with it. Mike added that the printed copies were provided to those who requested them. The reason the entire document was presented was so the Committee would know what was

being removed/ revised. Gina noted that those who review packets online did not receive paper copies. They were only printed for those who requested them. Craig commented that the District made a financial investment years ago and we continue with it today. Susie added that the resource they use to follow the curriculum is free. George stated that he heard of a new program where you can verbally ask the computer to make a program to solve a problem. Susie explained that at younger levels, they are doing a drag and drop. She is not sure what George is talking about but a lot of times this does not include typing code; it is more problem-solving that is the focus. We are teaching them to build software; not to be the user but the teacher of it.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Technology Education Curriculum K-8 revision. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Resolution in Support of Full Funding of Categorical Transportation Aid as Outlined in RIGL § 16-7.2-6 – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Resolution in Support of Full Funding of Categorical Transportation Aid as Outlined in RIGL § 16-7.2-6.

Craig Louzon made a motion (with emphasis), seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Resolution in Support of Full Funding of Categorical Transportation Aid as Outlined in RIGL § 16-7.2-6. In favor: Unanimous.

D. School Improvement Team (SIT) Membership – Superintendent Picard stated that she has reviewed the list and has found that each school's membership adheres to the policy. She recommended approval of the School Improvement Team Membership for 2022-2023. Chair Lyall added that she thought this was well done with a lot of people/parents participating.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was VOTED: To approve the School Improvement Team Membership for 2022-2023. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Lyall, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears. Abstained: Liguori and Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 2 abstention.

E. Rhode Island Student Survey – Superintendent Picard recommended that the Committee authorize the administration of the Rhode Island Student Survey to students in grades 8 and 10 which is required per the contract with Rhode Island Student Assistance Services. Families will be required to opt-in to take the survey. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan to approve the Superintendent's recommendation. Catherine stated that she understands the importance of this and reiterated that a child will only take the survey if the parents fill out the form. Donna asked if the opt-in option was done in the past to which the Superintendent responded that it was an opt-out option but there are questions that some parents may have concerns with. Donna felt this was a good idea to be transparent but we will probably have less kids taking the survey which is too bad as this is good data. Bill noted that the dates were confusing to which the Superintendent replied that they did get clarification around the dates. There are three collective agencies working together and she agrees that it is very important to get this data. Bill agreed there were some questions that he is uncomfortable having kids answer; they are too invasive in his opinion. Heidi Driscoll, who is involved with the administration of the survey, stated that they did not have all these questions on the 2016 survey but many youth wanted them included. Ryan thanked Heidi for coming. After looking at the analysis, he noted that a lot of demographics is collected but none of it is incorporated in the responses. Heidi explained that is for anonymity reasons but this data can be used for grants. If they were to present data, they would not break it down that far. Ryan added that this gets into mental health for those considering self-harm; demographics would help us respond quicker to those in need but he is not seeing the need for all this demographic data. Donna thanked Heidi as well. The previous survey was a bit shocking to her but she feels it is beneficial for our children to be able to acknowledge their own identity; her fear is that by opting in we won't get this data. George was under the impression that personality development and choice of sexuality isn't developed until a person reaches adulthood. He asked Heidi how she felt about this to which Heidi responded that

she knows how critical data is. Schools usually do an opt-out, not an opt-in. This concerns her as parents are busy and may be too busy to complete the form. Gary questioned the informational sheet states that a 60% response is needed but we have only 57% listed. Heidi responded that she is not the data person but they probably felt that 57% was close enough. Gary noted that he was OK with the survey. In 2020 data was collected right before COVID; what will be done with this data. Heidi replied that when COVID hit, they did have some data collected which gave them indications of things normally. She can come back in late fall with results. We look at the data, go with evidence-based programming in high need areas. Some of our numbers went down because kids did not have access. Karen asked if they bring in programs or does the school district fund them. Heidi stated that they bring the programs in free of charge but could not do this because of COVID. Bill questioned the reason why they ask for zip codes because the zip codes do not always correspond to the school district a child attends. There are probably at least ten different zip codes in Charliho which would include Westerly, West Kingston, etc. This may not be as effective as you portray it to which Gary noted that he suspects each survey is coded per school. Donna noted she would like to discuss opting out versus opting in. She feels this would be a better way to track data. Jennifer Silvia from Hopkinton stated that from a parent's perspective, sometimes kids don't give their parents important papers. This survey makes her uncomfortable. She does not want it given to her children if she didn't know about it. She does not feel it should be administered at school. Parents should have the option to opt-in, not opt-out as these children are all minors. Donna felt they could miss the opportunity to opt-in to which Jennifer replied that she does not want children participating in something without their parents' knowledge. Linda McAllister asked if it could be electronic to parents to which Gina replied that it is a Google form that goes to parents. Ryan noted he preferred the option of opting-in; Chair Lyall agreed. Lindsay White from Charlestown felt that there are a lot of kids in district that are not allowed to be who they are at home and if this is left up to parents, we won't get accurate data. Mental health is a big problem. She thinks giving them the option of seeking help is a much safer option. Ryan thanked the parents for sharing. His position is that there is an awful lot of personal demographics being asked. He believes the opting-in option is the position they should take and if we don't get a good response, we can look at this next year. He would like to see the first ten questions removed to which Heidi replied that they can remove some questions; they are mainly looking for substance use. Catherine questioned if this was time sensitive. Gina replied that it has to be completed by June. Catherine stated that she is fine with the survey and if there is an opportunity to amend the survey, the School Committee may have an appetite to do that. Gary commented that he has spent a lot of his academic career doing this so from his perspective, getting rid of demographic information makes the information useless. This makes intervention too broad. We have to target this. He is opposed to opting-in but more opposed to getting rid of demographics. Bill felt they should give parents the opportunity to opt-in. This is where we should be going. Linda McAllister suggested they move forward with the way it is and assess data next year. Isabelle Sullivan-Rackliff offered a student's perspective. She feels the survey was fine. Students find it more of an annoyance. She agrees with the opt-out option. Opting-in will deter students from taking it. She does not see where the survey has harmed students. Catherine offered a final thought. Make it opt-in; leave the questions and give it a shot. Make it a stand-alone piece; do not include it in a blog or newsletter, with some advice on why we would like students to take it. Polly Hopkins from Hopkinton asked how long does the survey take to which Gary replied "thirty minutes or less."

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

VOTED: To authorize the administration of the Rhode Island Student Survey to students in grades 8 and 10 which is required per the contract with Rhode Island Student Assistance Services with families having the option to opt-in to take the survey. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears. Opposed: Liguori. The motion carried by a vote of 10 in favor and 1 opposed.

F. FY23 Budget Adjustments – Superintendent Picard stated that on May 5th the majority of voters let us know that they did not support our budget and that, in essence, our 0.96% increase was too high. We remain committed to providing each and every student in Charlestown, Richmond and

Hopkinton with a high-quality public education. At the same time, we continue to recognize our responsibility to taxpayers and we continue to think through ways to increase efficiencies and revenue without negatively impacting the quality of our programs. She noted that she would be remiss if she did not mention that we were able to keep our budget at a .96% increase because we had ESSER funding to purchase our professional development and curricular resources for both ELA and Mathematics which are required by State legislation and must be in place by 2023. As ESSER sunsets in September 2024, there will be items that are State-mandated such as Science curricular resources and ongoing curricular resource needs for English and Math K-12. Our team is working to ensure that we have a strong return on investment and we have seen strong student progress in Reading, writing and math during the school year. However, it will be important to keep the momentum. She has prepared a list of potential cuts for the Committee to review. The proposed cuts would move the budget to level funding. Several cuts have been made from all departments as it relates to supplies. While the last few budgets have not had typical spending patterns due to the pandemic, we used our best judgment with feedback from our team and members of the community to determine the cuts. We have also reviewed our current out-of-district Special Education tuition number based on enrollment as of today and this equates to an annual tuition of \$1,084,433.39 but we have had additional students enter through the course of the year after the budget was created. As for the vacant High School Science position created through a leave of absence, the High School administration team agrees that this position can be cut. The .5 High School/.5 Middle School Librarian position, which is currently vacant, can also be cut. The clerk/fiscal position that was recently vacated will be merging responsibilities with the District Registration Clerk. The Richmond grade three teacher cut will result in class sizes of 21 students in three rooms and 22 students in one room based on current enrollment. This number is aligned with our contract which allows for a maximum of 25 students. The Charlestown grade four proposed teacher cut would make class sizes in both rooms at 23. She recommends that if any adjustments are made, the Committee move for a recess so that Ned can calculate the final numbers. Craig asked how many elementary World Language teachers are there to which Gina replied "two full-time". Craig noted that he would prefer to see these cut before elementary teachers are cut. Gina explained that she was not here when the Strategic Plan was created. She cannot cut them because of this but the School Committee can. She cautioned all to think long and hard about this as once these positions are cut, it will be very hard to put this back. It is difficult finding World Language teachers. Ryan asked what the amount is to get to level funding to which Gina replied, "\$545,000." Ryan clarified that any other number would mean going back to the voters for another referendum. He does not think the budget will pass so he does not want to go back for another referendum. Gina clarified that the actual number to get to level funding is \$525,750. Ned noted that the items listed below the Committee's last cut on the hand-out are the ones Gina referred to. Craig asked if the State gives the District the full categorical funding we are supposed to get, will this change things to which Ned replied that without it, it will affect our ability to navigate COLA. There are no guarantees because of the timing of negotiations. Gina added that currently they have budgeted fuel at \$3.90 a gallon and we are already at \$5.00 a gallon along with having an additional four special education students that were not budgeted for. Bill noted that he fully understands the concerns of the elementary teachers but we are not violating a contract that they signed. We are under the maximum class size. The towns created Chariho; they can fix Chariho. Until the towns are prepared to make this more of a regional district, we will have problems with class size. He agrees with Ryan's comments about another referendum; he does not want one. We selected the Superintendent so we should listen to her. The Governor level-funded every school district regardless of whether they increased or decreased enrollment. This is an insult to Chariho as we have increased enrollment. Donna stated that when they put these wonderful things in our Strategic Plan and put in technology, we have seen improvement. Her fear is that we will start going backwards. She wishes voters would take the energy costs to the State House along with the mandates we are tied to. She hopes voters are ready to accept the consequences. She does not want to cut staff. Where do we find the money to give ESP what they deserve? Karen asked if we are seeing an increase in negative behavior in larger classes to which the Superintendent responded, "not so much as a result of larger classes." Karen questioned if cutting World Language will have an effect on the High School Biliteracy Seal? Gina replied that the

goal at the elementary level was twice a week and that was cut to one day a week so it is now more so just exposure to language not fluency. This is not built the way it was meant to be with fluency; it is hard with only one day per week. Ryan stated that the Committee knows the number they need to get to. He thanked Gina and Ned for doing a great job getting them to where they need to be. He will accept the list as presented with the exception of the elementary level and World Language teachers. He would propose a cut to the COLA lines (630/631). Chair Lyall noted the options: Option 1 – accept as presented; Option 2 – cut elementary World Language and keep the two elementary classroom teachers; Option 3 – keep the elementary and World Language teachers and cut COLA. Craig asked for clarification pertaining to the COLA line items to which Gary noted that a cut to COLA will significantly reduce what we have to offer for negotiations; options for cost of living adjustments. Craig added, so state it is a raise. How much time do our kids get in World Language? Gina replied it is a period a week or half an hour. Bill made a motion, which was seconded by Craig, to approve option 2 with the cuts recommended by the Superintendent with the exception of the two elementary teachers and replace these cuts with a cut to the elementary World Language program. Helen Sheehan from Richmond asked if the two positions that are being moved to ESSER will be added to taxpayers after ESSER is done. Gina explained that only one position should remain. Sara, a parent of two children in Charlestown, noted she understands the importance of smaller class size. We have seen nearly a 50% increase in class size. Charlestown supported the budget and we get a teacher cut. Three academic years have been affected by COVID. Fourth grade students need to get smaller class sizes because of the effect of the pandemic over the last three years. It is important to keep classes low. Lindsay White from Charlestown commented on the phenomenal team at Charlestown School. Her children have benefitted so much from the Charlestown experience. Cassie Charette delivered supplies to her when her daughter was home with COVID. All of the staff have been so supportive. She just wanted to say to those who cut the budget, you are going to hurt the kids. Craig asked that an explanation be provided if we exceed maximum class size of 25. Gina explained that if we exceed class size before October 1st, we have to hire another teacher. If it is after October 1st, we pay overages. Bill made a motion, which was seconded by Craig, to proceed with option two – all of the cuts proposed with the exception of the cut to the Richmond and Charlestown elementary teachers – but with a cut to the elementary World Language teachers. endawnis echoed previous concerns; it will be harder to recruit for World Language teachers. She feels this is a knee-jerk reaction and she wanted to stress this. Ryan added that if they cut World Language, it will be gone from the elementary level. Recovering it will be difficult. It has been a districtwide objective. If this happens and we want to reinstate it, it will be hard. Gina noted this is difficult. They will get lay-off letters and if we decide to reinstate it, it will be hard to get those teachers back. Jen Silvia from Hopkinton noted the value of World Language is very important as is the value of teachers. By voting “no” to the budget, they want spending looked at carefully. It has been difficult for everyone. She has seen this in her thirteen years as a physical therapist. She has never seen a raise and she would rather see staff forego raises than to cut two teachers. Take the money from that. Louise Dinsmore from Richmond questioned the budget surplus from last year. Ned again reiterated that the Unassigned Fund Balance of \$3.4 million has already been rolled into this budget. Louise questioned if there were students who came into the district who were not projected to which Gina replied that we had an increase in enrollment. Louise again questioned the surplus to which Gina explained that the surplus gets recycled into the budget; this money has already been added to this budget. Chariho does not have taxing authority. The school district has to set aside a certain amount in the fund balance for emergencies. Louise suggested the District sharpen the pencils and try to find the \$160,000 that is needed to level fund the budget. Michael Colasante from Richmond stated that if the District spearheaded the mandates, they would have a ton of people behind them. Go to the General Assembly. Donna noted that RIDE mandates some; it is not just law to which Mr. Colasante replied that they are taking local control away. When he was involved, he never advocated for cutting a position. Look at the line item where you budget for high step teachers when you are hiring; look at lowering this. He quoted Brian Stanley who told him “there is so much waste” and Brian was a straight shooter. There were three years in which Chariho did not get an increase and not one teacher was cut and not one thing lost. Create a tighter ship. Get together with those who have reviewed it; maybe you missed something. Through COVID, you don’t

want to cut anyone. Richmond parent Jeff Noble was in the military and is retiring. He wanted to talk about the consequences of the budget not passing. Inflation is near 8% so actually it is a cut to the school district – everything will be a cut of 8%. You are completely wrong to think that level funding would mean the same as it did last year. You are losing 8%. Who doesn't want to fund our kids? He would encourage people to come out and talk about it. It will only get worse as time goes on. We had a fire at Richmond School last night. This is an unexpected expense that the District will have to pay for. He supports the Committee 100% and thanked them. Tom Pirnie noted that was a tough act to follow. He thanked Mr. Louzon for bringing up COLA. You will have to replace 150 support staff as they will not continue to work here for what they are getting paid. You will not be able to open our schools in September. Melissa DeJoseph, a Richmond parent and BMA at CALA, stated this is conflicting to her as a parent, taxpayer and employee. They looked throughout the State when buying a home and the school district here is the #1 reason they moved here. She voted for the budget. We need all our staff; we actually need more. Craig noted that about nine months ago, people were complaining saying that the Committee does not let anyone speak. We have let everyone who wanted to speak do so this evening. He does not want to cut anyone off but agrees with Bill Day that they should move on with a vote. Bill asked how many positions are vacant to which Gina responded four custodial, four full-time special education teacher assistants and five part-time teacher assistants with a general aide leave of absence. Bill stated that they do not have time to go into the budget with Mr. Colasante, but they can look at the budget with him after this. This is the lesser of two evils; this limits our ability to have World Language Teachers.

William Day made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was
VOTED: To approve option two - the cuts recommended by the Superintendent with the exception of the two elementary classroom teachers and replace these cuts with a cut to the elementary World Language program. In favor: Abbott, Chambers, Day, Giusti, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister and Reynolds. Opposed: Callahan, Liguori and Spears. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor with 3 opposed.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was
VOTED: To recess to give Mr. Draper the opportunity to calculate the final figures. In favor: Unanimous.

Chair Lyall called the meeting back to order at 9:23 PM.

G. Adoption of FY23 Budget –Superintendent Picard recommended adoption of the FY23 Budget in the amount of \$68,385,944.00 (total budget including operating, capital, special revenue, enterprise and debt service expenditures, but does not include revenue of \$11,612,622) with the member towns' contribution to be \$54,704,347.29, an increase of 0%.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To adopt the FY23 Budget in the amount of \$68,385,944.00 (total budget including operating, capital, special revenue, enterprise and debt service expenditures, but does not include revenue of \$11,612,622) with the member towns' contribution to be \$54,704,347.29, an increase of 0%. In favor: Unanimous.

H. All-Day Budget Referendum Date – Superintendent Picard recommended this item be tabled indefinitely as the budget has been level-funded so there is no need for another Budget Referendum.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was
VOTED: To table this item indefinitely as the budget has been level-funded so there is no need to hold another All-Day Budget Referendum. In favor: Unanimous.

IX. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Lyall asked if there were any items to be pulled. Craig pulled A-1 and A-2; Bill pulled B. Craig acknowledged the donations and thanked the donors.

- C. Bill Review – Accepted.
- D. Budget Summary – None at this time.
- E. Balance Sheet – None at this time.
- F. Personnel Actions
- G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – Approved issuance of the following:
 - 1. Brownell Boat Stands Bid
- H. Permission to Award Contracts – Approved the extension of the following:
 - 1. Clinical Services (Initiative #1) and Consulting Services (Initiative #3) Bid to CSSS (Community and School Support Services) to provide services to the Chariho Regional School District including the Chariho Alternative Learning Academy for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 as outlined in the attached proposal.
 - 2. Clinical and Consultative Services to Developmentally Disabled (DD) and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Programs (Initiative #2) to Patricia Meinhold, Ph.D. to provide services to the Chariho Regional School District for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 as outlined in the attached proposal.
- I. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.
- J. Grants – None at this time.
- K. Donations – Accepted the following:
 - 1. Donation from Mr. Ryan Saunders (Chorus of Westerly) of the George Kent Performance Hall in Westerly for the Chariho High School Chorus Benefit Concert.
 - 2. Donation from Sarah Marcotte, Little Kids Inc. Office Administrator, of 3,416 hand sanitizers 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 April 12, 2022 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes March 22, 2022 (minutes not sealed). In favor: Unanimous.

A-2. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Regular Session Minutes of April 12, 2022. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Transfers – Craig made a motion, seconded by Ryan, to approve the Transfers. Bill stated he was opposed to the paving of the lower bowl parking area and now we have over-expended what was budgeted. Ned explained that they anticipated getting \$3,000 from the High School; we did not get this amount. Bill then asked if parking spots would be marked as he noticed there are some people parking in the entrance. The Superintendent replied that those parking there should have parking passes and she will see that it is monitored. Bill added that parking passes should go to kids we hold to a higher standard.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Transfers. In favor: Unanimous.

XI. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Health & Wellness Subcommittee met today at 4:00 PM. Included in the packet was a draft copy of their meeting on March 8, 2022.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Junior Prom was outstanding. They were overwhelmed by staff telling them how wonderful and well-behaved our students were. We received great praise.

2. Kindergarten Registration Update – The Superintendent provided an update with Ashaway having 9; Charlestown 19; Hope Valley 20 and Richmond 33.

3. First-Ever AP Commitment Celebration – We are being celebrated at the State House next Wednesday as one of five districts committed to AP course offerings. Students will be attending with us.

C. Coming Events were highlighted. The Superintendent noted that the Hello Dolly production by the High School Drama Program was outstanding with costumes being custom-made. She reminded all that the Peach Blossom Buffet Dinner is on Friday, May 20th with three seatings at 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30. Tickets are \$25 for Adults and \$10 for children; those under ten are free.

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

Bill noted that a few months ago they discussed SAF. He asked if a study was done on that to see if we are bringing it into better treatment of all students – equity. He would like an update. His other request is that the District should have a meeting with the bus contractor about putting outside cameras on a few buses. He is an aide on a bus that uses Rt 1 and Rt 2 and there are a number of cars passing the buses when their red lights are on. Charlestown is doing a good job as they did have one driver who had to go to court and he was fined but it is scary out there. He is concerned about this. The bus drivers can tell them which buses may need some back-up.

XII. Adjournment

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To adjourn at 9:36 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna Sieczkiewicz, District Clerk