

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Executive Session Minutes – June 14, 2022
NEA Certified Negotiations - Minutes to remain sealed until an agreement is reached.
Minutes unsealed May 9, 2023

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Vice Chair Catherine Giusti, George Abbott, Ryan Callahan, Donna Chambers, Gary Liguori, Lisa Macaruso, Linda McAllister, Karen Reynolds and endawnis Spears. Recused: William Day and Craig Louzon. Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Attorney Jon Anderson and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

II-11. NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update

Chair Lyall noted that they are moving closer to the teachers; their ask is 2%, 2.5%, 3%; we came back with 2%, 1.5%, 1.5%. They countered with 2%, 2%, 2% but they wanted to talk about something creative with insurance. They pay a 20% co-pay each year. They requested we freeze this every year. This would only be considered for the term of the contract. Ryan noted that the subcommittee came up with some good options such as 2.0%, 1.75%, 1.75% with a freeze on the insurance co-pay for the term of the contract. The freeze would be on any increase; they would still pick up what they are covering. What the teachers really focused on was morale, not salary. When we look around the state, our teachers are very well compensated. If they get what they want, they could end up being one of the highest paid, if not the highest paid in the state. The only offerings are for top step only which increases the gap between steps. Linda informed Vin that throwing money at a morale issue won't fix it. The subcommittee would like to spread the wealth by smoothing out the gaps between steps as the difference between the top two steps is between \$9,000 and \$11,000. We want to avoid having the highest paid teachers and a \$12,000 gap between the steps. This is the reason the subcommittee is looking at other options with insurance. At the end of the contract, their co-share would return to 20% of whatever their share is. George noted that the economy is teetering which will play into negotiations. Chair Lyall replied that they have brought this up. The Union also knows the challenges of new people coming on board. Jon stated that they need to remember that the vast majority of teachers are on top step so they have to have something that will be approved by their membership. This Union recognizes that we only have 2% in the budget to work with. Ryan and Linda have come up with creative options. You need to have confidence in them to have the flexibility as any agreement has to come back to the full Committee. People in the community feel that no raises should be given and that negotiations should be put on hold until November. We would prefer to get both of them settled as soon as possible. His ask of the Committee – are you satisfied with what the subcommittee is doing. Catherine stated that she is in full agreement; she has confidence in the subcommittee. She realizes there is burnout with the teachers as we have asked them to do far more than we have asked most of the ESP workers to do during COVID. Is there anything else they want to which Chair Lyall responded that they would like a shorter work day. Karen commented that she too has full confidence in the subcommittee. She asked for the number of planned retirements. Gina replied that the problem with retirements now is that the Board is giving odd dates so we do not get much notice when a teacher plans to retire. Karen asked how the District was doing with applicants to which Gina responded that we are doing great at the elementary level but Math and Physics vacancies are difficult to fill. Donna added that she fully supports the subcommittee but does not want teachers to pay for the budget not passing. Gina noted that the fact that we are near the top in salary will attract more people but we need to understand how the community feels about this. Ryan stated that we will probably end up in the top five in the state.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Donna Chambers and it was
VOTED: To close executive session and return to open session at 7:03 PM. In favor:
Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk