

Chariho School Committee Meeting  
Regular Session Minutes – August 8, 2023

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

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, High School Principal Andrea Spas, Middle School Principal Greg Zenion, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien, Attorney for the School Committee Jon Anderson, Richmond Town Councilor Helen Sheehan and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

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

In the absence of the Chair and no Vice Chair elected yet, District Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz 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. Reorganization of the Committee – Election of Vice Chair

Larry Phelps made a motion, seconded by Polly Hopkins and it was

VOTED: To nominate Patricia Pouliot to the position of Vice Chair. In favor: Champlin, Hopkins, Phelps and Pouliot. Opposed: Chambers, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Purcell and Reynolds. The motion failed by a vote of 4 in favor with 6 opposed.

Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Donna, to nominate Karen Reynolds to the position of Vice Chair. Donna noted the reason why she seconded this is because Karen has served on the School Committee for a while now and she is an exemplary Committee member with a strong background in education.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Donna Chambers and it was

VOTED: To elect Karen Reynolds to the position of Vice Chair. In favor: Chambers, Champlin, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Purcell and Reynolds. Opposed: Hopkins, Phelps and Pouliot. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 3 opposed.

III. 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)(2) for the purpose of discussion pertaining to litigation/legal update (1. C.A. No. PC-2019-10870 – Town of Barrington, et al. v. Barrington School Committee et al. and 2. C.A. No. WC-2022-0349 - Scott Perrin, Individually and as Executor of the Estate of William Perrin v. Town of Richmond et al.); under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for the purpose of discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices (1. SRO Body Cameras and 2. Approval of Emergency Operations Plans) 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 July 11, 2023 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous.

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

Vice Chair Reynolds reconvened the meeting at 7:00 PM and asked all to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

V. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (C.A. No. PC-2019-10870 – Town of Barrington, et al. v. Barrington School Committee et al.) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was  
VOTED: That minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (C.A. No. PC-2019-10870 – Town of Barrington, et al. v. Barrington School Committee et al.) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

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

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

3. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes regarding the matter of security (SRO Body Cameras) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was  
VOTED: That minutes regarding the matter of security (SRO Body Cameras) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

4. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes regarding the matter of security (Approval of Emergency Operations Plans) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was  
VOTED: That minutes regarding the matter of security (Approval of Emergency Operations Plans) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

5. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining 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 pertaining to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

#### VI. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Reynolds reported the first vote, pertaining to litigation, passed by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention with Chambers, Champlin, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor and Hopkins abstaining.

The next vote, an amendment to the Emergency Operations Plans, passed by a vote of 8 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention with Chambers, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor, Pouliot opposed and Champlin abstained.

The next vote, approval of Emergency Operations Plans as amended, passed by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 opposed with Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor and Pouliot opposed.

The next vote, approval of home school requests, was unanimous with Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor.

The next vote, approval of another home school request, passed by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 recusal with Chambers, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor and Champlin recusing.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of July 11, 2023 – Home Instruction Requests, passed by a vote of 8 in favor with 2 abstentions with Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, Phelps, Pouliot and Reynolds voting in favor and McQuaide and Purcell abstaining.

The last vote, to return to open session, was approved by all with Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds voting in favor.

## VII. Recognition

Superintendent Picard asked all to join her in congratulating the following:

1. Matt Tiernan named ProJo's High School Boys' Volleyball Player of the Year.

## VIII. Public Forum

Vice Chair Reynolds stated that they have come to Public Forum which is an opportunity for the public to speak on items that are not on the agenda. She noted that Louise Dinsmore is first on the list. Louise stated her name and that she is from Richmond. She had a couple of questions for Mr. Draper. Last month she had asked about the Expense/Operating Status Report which showed the \$2/1 million holdover for FY ending June 30<sup>th</sup> and she asked if there were still expenses that had to be recognized towards that. So Mr. Draper, I was just wondering, you had mentioned there were still entries to be done against expenses that could include healthcare as one potential bucket of expenses to come in after June 30<sup>th</sup> and other expenses that have been incurred but not realized and I didn't see anything on attachments for this meeting that had a similar breakdown for FY23 so I was just wondering if there were any other expenses that you were aware of that have come in since last meeting. Ned responded transportation expenses and facility adjustments have come in but there are a few others. We have some capital that needs to be assigned that will show up in capital accounts; this wouldn't be in the general fund. There will be a few others that will come in over the course of the next week or two. Louise asked, so will there be another similar report in the attachments for the School Committee that the public can see for the closeout of this school year 23? Ned replied that what they do is provide to the Committee, usually mid-September, mid to late September, we will come to the Committee with a variety of commitments. So at that point we should know what's going on with healthcare and we'll ask for commitments from the prior year that need to be made. Louise thanked Ned. Another comment that is totally unrelated, she does not know who puts together the Annual Report but they did a stellar job. To get all that information, I mean Donna, amazing and Katie, I mean all those pictures, the volume of information, capturing all that. I can only imagine that takes hours and hours of effort so I tip my hat to Donna and Katie because it was an extraordinary, really really great outstanding job, you are amazing. Louise stated she wanted to mention that one of the pages in the Annual Report – at this point Vice Chair Reynolds asked that she hold her comments as the Annual Report is a Business Item and she needs to address it at that time. Scott Daigle from Richmond was the next speaker. He is the step-parent of a special needs student at Chariho High School. He is here this evening which comes from an issue stemming from February when a typically-developing student photographed his special needs stepson in the bathroom at Chariho High School and a second student posted that on the Chariho High School Welding Chatroom. Part of that issue, an extension to that issue, would be the second part of this which was a Chariho High School administrator in June, afternoon, violated a school transportation policy and ignored a school safety plan that was put in place for my son. The safety plan was ignored when a High School administrator placed a typically-developing student, who took a picture of my stepson, on his special ed bus. The predator had several discipline referrals from his bus driver and it was pertinent I guess to move that boy, who had taken a picture of my stepson, on another bus, his special needs bus. So you not only put my child in jeopardy, but also the children on that special needs bus. So moving forward to an update as to where we are today so far. Donna from the Superintendent's Office was to set up a meeting so she reached out to my wife and I to come up with dates to meet with the School Committee. I look forward to that meeting. Unfortunately, the complexity of coordinating each of the members' schedules on the Committee, the complexity of getting the administrators and the School Committee and, of course, our family as well during the summer months was challenging. So Sandra and I do look forward to when those schedules do come together so we can meet with you folks so we can get to the bottom of all this. Sandra and I were notified on August 19<sup>th</sup> by Donna that we would need to submit a list of the issues that we want to discuss. If the conversation during the meeting veered off the agenda, then the meeting would be immediately closed. A couple of things I need clarification on. I don't want to waste your time. I looked for information on

the school website that I could read about executive session; I couldn't find that information. Gina stated that she can tell him that it is not on the website because that part is law. The School Committee can only meet in executive session if it pertains to litigation or a legal issue. That is the purpose of executive session. Mr. Daigle replied, no, the purpose of the meeting if it ever comes to a fruitful, production discussion, is to come to a resolution of that issue and we know that there will be a plan in place to ensure that this never happens again to my son or family members who are here who have students with special needs. We are all concerned but through the efforts of the School Committee and I believe that this is some of your responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of the students and I would think we should all be on the same page. I never mentioned anything legal; I am not a lawyer. I am up here by myself. Polly stated that School Committee members were told it was a Special Meeting not executive session. Gina replied that Mrs. Parrillo actually asked Donna for an executive session meeting. District Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz explained that she asked for some idea of what the meeting would be about so she could post the agenda. I have to know what Rhode Island General Law I can use to close the meeting so I need to know what the discussion will be about so I will know whether the discussion needs to take place in executive or open session. Linda added that it might be helpful to know what laws Donna has to abide by. She is saying there are certain general laws that require us to close a meeting other than that, the meeting is open – am I saying it right. Clerk Donna responded that if you look at the published agenda for tonight, the first paragraph for executive session lists all the general laws that allowed the Committee to go into executive session. That has to be posted on the agenda by law and we have to adhere to only those items that are posted under that general law. I can send a copy of the laws that apply to the closing of a meeting to Mr. Daigle who replied that would be lovely. In a follow-up email, what was read to him was if we veer off during the meeting in any way, the meeting would be terminated. I didn't receive anything about the law. Clerk Donna clarified that the meeting would not be terminated; you would be asked to adhere to the general law. The School Committee cannot go off a topic or they are in violating general law. They would be violating the Open Meetings Act if they go off the topic that is posted on the agenda. They cannot veer off the agenda or they are violating the law. Mr. Daigle replied thank you. He could not find the language but now that he understands there is a format to that agenda. What happens if during this meeting, information is revealed by the parties present, for example School Committee, administration, parents, does that mean we can't discuss the items to which the Superintendent explained that if you want to discuss individual people or employees, that comes to me. The School Committee does not oversee an employee. Executive Session is typically for what laws they govern. The School Committee governs certain laws so if you want to meet with myself or Ms. Spas, that does not require anything specific but the School Committee is guided by law. They can't just have meetings with parents. That is not their role; that is our role. Their role is very specific. Mr. Daigle asked, so two or three words would suffice for an agenda. Gina replied that typically Mrs. Sieczkiewicz does the agenda. What we would want to know specifically - what are the legal or general laws you would like to discuss with the Committee in relation to your request. We can't just pull an executive session. Parents don't have open-ended meetings with School Committee members. That is outside their realm. Mr. Daigle stated that he didn't think they want to air the dirty laundry in public do we to which Gina responded that is why you need to tell us exactly what it is you are looking for the School Committee action to be. That will help us understand what you want for the agenda items. Mr. Daigle commented that his last two speeches weren't enough? Is that what we want on the agenda? I was pretty clear. I'll come up with an agenda; I certainly will. If it doesn't meet with your approval, you can send it back. Gina again noted that Mrs. Sieczkiewicz does the agenda. She will need to know the topics you want to address. For example, if you mention an employee's name, there are laws regarding personnel that we can't break. That person would be notified and that individual gets to decide if the discussion will take place in open session or executive session if you want to talk about that person. That would not be your decision; that is the employee's. Mr. Daigle stated that he is asking these questions today because he wants the meeting to be fruitful and productive and in that effort there may be the mention of certain members who are hired, who work for the schools. Some may be sitting right here today. Gina commented that discussion on any employee, other than herself, should come directly to her. The only employee the School Committee would be responsible for is her. Mr. Daigle asked, then I should name you specifically to which Gina replied, you should if that is what you are looking for. Mr. Daigle stated he is looking for answers about what happened not only in June but in February, but more specifically in June. Gina responded that it was an unauthorized decision made at the bus company. We have had that

conversation to which Mr. Daigle remarked, absolutely. Vice Chair Reynolds commented that she did not think they were making progress here so she was wondering if Mr. Daigle could wrap it up. Mr. Daigle noted that he asks these questions because he knows we want to do the right thing and he wants to be sure that we yield to an action plan and this never happens again and there is full disclosure of transparency as to what went wrong that day. It was wonderful to see that Ms. Pelchat got her job back after it was realized that it was not her fault. The Superintendent stated that actually Ms. Pelchat put it in writing that she made an error and she sent this to the bus drivers. Mr. Daigle added that they look forward to further correspondence with the Superintendent's office to answer the questions which he is forced to have to do here but they look forward mostly to a meeting in executive session, is that the correct term. Gina noted that it depends on what you are looking for. Mr. Daigle continued. So we do look forward to the meeting and hope that it is a fruitful discussion and that we can come to the final end of this – a resolution. I don't think we have. Vice Chair Reynolds thanked Mr. Daigle and called on Goldie Williams to speak. She wants to find out why the taxes for the school are \$5100 when the population is going down. What is being done at CALA and the Middle School about bullying?

#### IX. Policy

A. Standards for Student Behavior – High School/CTC Behavior Code (Revision) – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the High School/CTC Standards for Student Behavior which has been reviewed and approved by the Policy Subcommittee (minutes of their meeting were attached). Craig made a motion, seconded by Andrew, to approve the revised Standards for Student Behavior – High School/CTC Behavior Code. Polly stated, referencing page 16, using restorative practice in the High School. How long has this been implemented. Andrea Spas replied that she would have to look back at prior Behavior Codes but this is strongly encouraged. Polly asked if Andrea was certified to which she responded that she is a certified school psychologist. Gina noted that this is different than restorative practice. Polly commented that this was her question to which Gina replied that this is handled by school social workers or school psychologists. Andrea added that it depends on the issue who would handle it. Gina stated that the goal is to not have the same infraction happen again. Typically when restorative practice is put in place, the behavior changes. Greg Zenion noted that this was updated after a Summer Advance in which Mr. Ricci had them read a book about it and they then discussed this the whole week. That is when it was put into the handbooks. Jessica recommended that General Notations be moved before the chart as that would be helpful.

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

VOTED: To approve the revised Standards for Student Behavior – High School/CTC Behavior Code. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Standards for Student Behavior – Middle School Behavior Code (Revision) – Superintendent Picard recommend approval of the Middle School Standards for Student Behavior which has been reviewed and approved by the Policy Subcommittee (minutes of their meeting were attached). Craig made a motion, seconded by Andrew, to approve the revised Standards for Student Behavior – Middle School Behavior Code. Jessica had the same recommendation to move the General Notations before the chart.

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

VOTED: To approve the revised Standards for Student Behavior – Middle School Behavior Code. In favor: Unanimous.

#### X. Business

A. District 2022-2023 Annual Report – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the District 2022-2023 Annual Report. Once approved, a copy will be placed on the website for public viewing. She thanked Katie and Donna for all their work and Louise for bringing this up. Tyler made a motion, seconded by Polly to approve the District 2022-2023 Annual Report. Andrew questioned dissemination of the Report as he would like to maximize this. He sees the value in distributing this to the community as we used to do. Gina noted that we do share it with RIDE, the three town halls and a link will be given to them to share it. Tyler suggested that we reach out to the member towns and ask that they put it on their websites. Gina stated that Katie is preparing a Press Release but we can't force the press to print

it. Andrew commented that he would be in favor of the District researching what the cost would be to distribute it to the community. At a future meeting, they could discuss whether or not it would be financially viable to disseminate it. Donna agreed they should make it more public.

Tyler Champlin made a motion, seconded by Polly Hopkins and it was  
VOTED: To approve the District 2022-2023 Annual Report. In favor: Unanimous.

B. 2023-2024 School Calendar Revision – The Superintendent informed all that due to a change in the date for the 2024 Presidential Primary (from April 23 to April 2), notification that the District must observe Veteran's day on the same day as the State and not the Federal calendar and the addition of a State holiday on June 19<sup>th</sup>, she is recommending approval of the revised 2023-2024 School Calendar pending State approval. She added that Jon Anderson has stated that our calendar follows State Law so there should not be any issues getting State approval. Craig made a motion, seconded by Tyler, to approve the revised 2023-2024 School Calendar. Tyler questioned how many make-up days did we have to which Gina responded there were two last year. We can look at virtual learning if we go too far into June.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Tyler Champlin and it was  
VOTED: To approve the revised 2023-2024 School Calendar pending State approval. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Assignments to Subcommittees/School Safety Teams – Superintendent Picard noted that vacancies are indicated in red. Changes can be made to any subcommittees, School Safety Teams or School Improvement Teams. A concern was raised as to whether or not the Committee should just discuss vacant seats or all of the subcommittees as Kathryn and Catherine are both absent. Andrew stated that minimally they should give the new member the opportunity to participate in whatever subcommittee she has an interest in. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Pat, that the Committee consider tabling this item until Kathryn and Catherine are in attendance. Jessica stated that she has no problem waiting on this item and shared that her interests are the following subcommittees: Policy, Budget and Health and Wellness. Andrew stated that he will vote against the motion to table as he feels Jessica should have the opportunity to attend the Budget Subcommittee meeting next month.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Patricia Pouliot and it was  
VOTED: To table this item. In favor: Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Phelps, Pouliot and Purcell. Opposed: Lyall, McQuaide and Reynolds. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 3 opposed.

D. Home School Communication to Parents and Data Review – This item was requested by Tyler Champlin, Kathryn Colasante and Craig Louzon. Dr. Comella thanked Nancy Pirnie who monitors Home Instruction. He then reviewed the data and discussed the impact COVID had on Home Instruction. The District had an additional 90 student enter Home Instruction at that time. Vice Chair Reynolds questioned where Kindergarten students fall to which Gina replied that if they enter our schools for K and then go to Home Instruction, they are enrolled. If they do not attend K and go right into Home Instruction we consider these students new to Chariho. Students new to Chariho have never enrolled here. Tyler asked about the 67 students that were baked into the 210; 44 of the 67 were previously enrolled here and then moved to Home Instruction? Dr. Comella replied "yes". He then reviewed the 2021-22 data of those students who were home instructed and left this for a reason (i.e. completed the program, may have moved out of district, entered private school, etc.). Those who have had home instruction approval rescinded was a result of the family not complying with two requirements of the State; attendance and grades must be submitted. Tyler then asked, in the five year summary, 31 returned in 21-22 and this came out of the 214 to which Dr. Comella noted this was correct. Per policy we offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to meet with him and of the 67 new ones in 21-22, 57 declined a meeting and 10 did meet. He believes they decline to meet because Nancy answers all their questions. Dr. Comella then reviewed the timeline for notification of compliance requirements. If a family does not comply, it goes to the School Committee to be rescinded. Donna questioned if a family is non-compliant and we rescind the approval, if the student doesn't return to school, are they

truant? Dr. Comella explained that once a home instruction approval has been rescinded, we re-enroll the student. If they do not come to school, they are truant. He noted that we do allow home instructed students to take a course to which Craig asked what course would they take at the elementary level. Dr. Comella replied that we have had some request PE, math, science. Andrew asked how the District supports families so they make informed decisions in choosing courses; is a course listing available? Dr. Comella responded, for those who ask, we refer them to the High School or Middle School Handbook. Students can also join clubs. Pat questioned CTC classes to which Dr. Comella replied that is what the majority of High School students want. They want to remain at CTC. We encourage administrators to be more proactive; to actively share course listings available and include clubs. Goldie asked about what is accepted to which Dr. Comella replied that they do not recommend programs to families. The families can select any program they might want to use. We just need attendance and grades. Goldie wanted to know if a student misses a few days of school, can they do learning at home. Tyler explained to Goldie that those are two different things; you are talking about virtual learning. Louise thanked Dr. Comella for putting the data together. What might be helpful is a narrative on the bottom of the slide. Dr. Comella asked, like a key, to which Louise replied 'yes' as that would be helpful to a lay person. She questioned, in FY23, 223 students chose to unenroll to which Gina explained that is the next discussion. Ned stated that a hundred students is 3% of our population. Home School is spread across all grades/all levels. The expense is spread across the District. When we make our budget, it is based on the October 1<sup>st</sup> enrollment. It is a snapshot in time. The Governor and Chariho worked on the same timetable while legislators worked on spring enrollment. Ninety-nine families moved from Richmond. The State had more issues with those going to Charter or private schools. Ours is more of those families choosing to home school. Gina added that there is lot of discussion at the State House about the funding formula. We are required by the Chariho Act to have a process completed. The formula is dependent on enrollment. They are definitely trying to figure this out. They want the success rate to go up. We don't have the information we need when preparing our budget. There is a definite flux back and forth. Dr. Comella added that when a home schooled student chooses to take a course, we receive funding from the State. Louise asked when we come to a budget decrease in number of students, some come and go for home school, this has to be an impact to the budget if 100 students leave; if there is a net loss of 100 kids. This should be evaluated from a taxpayers' prospective. How many students need to leave the District for an impact? Gina explained that while students are leaving, other students are coming in or moving to foster care. Tyler stated that his head went the same place Louise's did. If you look at the data presented tonight, the numbers are spread across four different schools so if 2 kids leave a K class in Ashaway, you can't remove a teacher. The level per grade is not enough to remove a class. There is a little more analysis to it. Andrew concurred with Tyler. It is a District issue because of the distribution of students across the District and buildings. The Budget Subcommittee will do an analysis. Ned noted, to the budget piece, questions we ask at the community level – what are some of the things that bring kids to home school. We are an attractive District and we are not seeing a lot of movement with Charter or private schools. Tyler stated the second piece to this is communication. Mrs. Pirnie is a very good resource. The stuff that is sent home is pretty good but some of the language is more compulsory. His students are homeschooled. He does not need to submit a curriculum outline according to what the State requires. They just need to submit a statement of what courses will be taught. They don't need a home instruction plan. This is going a bit too far especially for new families. They only have to do what is outlined in RIGL. Andrew asked what Tyler was proposing to which Tyler replied "strike it – take it off." Andrew asked where this would be submitted and Tyler replied in the letter the parent submits, following RIGL. Tyler made a motion to amend the Home Instruction Plan to remove the curriculum outline language and install Rhode Island General Law language. Andrew seconded the motion. Craig asked if the administration was in favor of this. Gina commented that they want to streamline it to which Tyler commented that this is what he hears from families who home school. Craig noted that some families have done an awesome job while others aren't. You are asking him to vote on something but he wants to make it clear for those who may not be doing a good job. Gina stated they should look at the policy first to which Tyler agreed. He rescinded his motion and Andrew was not going to rescind his second. He asked if there was language in the policy that is inconsistent to which Gina replied 'yes'. Andrew rescinded his second to the motion. Linda recommended that this policy be brought to the Policy Subcommittee.

E. SRO Body Cameras – Tyler Champlin made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was VOTED: To table this item. In favor: Unanimous.

F. Appointment of District Treasurer – Superintendent Picard recommended the appointment of Ned Draper to the position of Acting Treasurer on an interim basis until a permanent appointee becomes available. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Andrew to approve the Superintendent's recommendation. Linda questioned how this would work to which Gina responded that the only difference is that Ned would be a voting member of this team while they look for a District Treasurer. Tyler asked what the role was of the Treasurer. Ned explained that it is noted in the Chariho Act. The Treasurer is part of his team. We have revised the position since COVID. This person keeps an eye on bank accounts, authorizes money to move into lunch funds, certifies budgets, confirms billing to respective towns. The duties are done in conjunction with his team. The person participates in bond certification as well. We have a job description with the duties listed. They are responsible for IRS filings, both State and Federal. Gina commented that at the Budget Subcommittee meeting they can discuss what this looks like. Tyler felt that this was a significant weakness in internal controls. If an auditor looks at that, it would be a significant weakness. Ned replied that he thought about that internally. The Assistant Director has a lot of experience and the Treasurer is subordinate to that person. Signature cards require two signatures so we do have two individuals responsible for what goes out the door. He will bring this to the attention of the new auditors. Gina stated that she has spoken with other districts and this position exists within their business department. Tyler noted that he would like to hear what the auditor says. Is the Treasurer able to disburse funds? Ned responded that he can approve it but a second signature is required to disburse funds. Andrew stated that they need to respond to the position they are in. If they choose not to act on this, will there be any adverse effect on the running of the District? Effectively, if we choose not to select a District Treasurer, will it have an impact on District operations? Gina replied that there is nothing she can foresee to which Ned added that he foresees that if they don't have one designated, he does these duties anyway. From a legal standpoint, they may need a 4<sup>th</sup> signature from the Treasurer. Gina spoke with Jon and he said we did not need to make this position an interim one. Andrew noted that he was comfortable with gathering more information and hold on this until next month when they get a ruling from the auditor. He would like to table it so long as it does not adversely affect operations. He removed his second and Craig removed his motion.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Patricia Pouliot and it was VOTED: To table this item until they receive additional information. In favor: Champlin, Hopkins, Lyall, McQuaide, Phelps, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds. Abstained: Chambers and Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor and 2 abstentions.

G. Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant – Modifications to Agreement with Effective Schools Solutions, LLC ("ESS") – Superintendent Picard stated that at the May 23, 2023 Meeting, you approved submission of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant for up to \$500,000 over three years (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026). We were notified by RIDE that we will receive \$424,995.75 (15% lower than what was requested for year). She recommends approval of the modifications to the Agreement with Effective Schools Solutions LLC ("ESS") and the Chariho Regional School District. This still allows us to have elementary clinicians. She noted that RIDE will be doing a Press Release and The Westerly Sun called her yesterday. Polly asked what was removed to which Gina noted that Advisory Committee.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To approve the modifications to the agreement with Effective Schools Solutions, LLC ("ESS") and the Chariho Regional School District. In favor: Unanimous.

H. Agreement with Rhode Island Student Assistant Services (RISAS) – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the agreement with RISAS for the Student Assistance Program (Project SUCCESS - Substance Abuse Prevention) from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. This is already in the budget. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Andrew, to approve the agreement with RISAS for the Student Assistance Program (Project SUCCESS – Substance Abuse Prevention) from

July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Tyler asked if this is working to which Gina replied that prior to her arrival, this was a budget concern so she had them submit data to us. We are getting a definite return on our investment. This cost is less to us as the rest is grant funded. We have great support. Tyler asked if they could get monthly reports to which Gina responded that if he makes this a motion, she will ask Jon. Tyler noted that he understands there is confidential information. Andrew stated that there were times in the past that a representative has come to provide a presentation. We can have them do that. There is value in us understanding the efficacy of their work; the scope of their work. Gina noted that they have added supports and services. Vice Chair Reynolds commented that she would like to see more preventative measures at the Middle School level to which Gina replied they are doing that now.

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

VOTED: To approve the agreement with RISAS for the Student Assistance Program (Project SUCCESS – Substance Abuse Prevention) from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. In favor: Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, McQuaide, Pouliot, Purcell and Reynolds. Abstained Phelps. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

I. Rhode Island Department of Education Memorandum of Agreement for the Learning Inside Out Initiative – Superintendent Picard noted that approval to submit a grant request to the Rhode Island Department of Education School Building Authority for up to \$100,000 for creation of outdoor classrooms and pollinator gardens across all the schools was acted on at the School Committee meeting on March 28, 2023; we have been approved to receive \$99,634. Thanks to Katie for her work in securing this. She recommend approval of the Rhode Island Department of Education Memorandum of Agreement between the Chariho Public School Committee and the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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

VOTED: To approve the Rhode Island Department of Education Memorandum of Agreement between the Chariho Public School Committee and the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In favor: Unanimous.

#### XI. Consent Agenda Items

Louise Dinsmore stated that she had questions about the Bills. Andrew noted that he would need to abstain from voting on the minutes so he pulled Items A-1, A-2 and C. Craig Louzon recognized the donation and thanked the donor.

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

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

B. Transfers – Approved.

D. Revenue/Expenditure Account Status Report – None at this time.

E. Student Activity Fund Balance – None at this time.

F. Personnel Actions – Rescinded the contract of the following:

| First Name | Last Name | FTE as of 9/1/22 |
|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Meghan     | Recupero  | 1.0              |

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

H. Permission to Award Contracts – Awarded the following:

1. Custodial Services (School Opening) to Clean Care of New England, Inc. to provide crew-based cleaning services, not to exceed \$25,000, so all schools will be properly cleaned by the first day per the memo dated August 7, 2023 from Ned Draper.

I. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.

J. Grants – None at this time.

K. Donations – Accepted the following:

1. Donation from the Ashaway Free Library (Director Heather Field) of \$500 to the Ashaway School Library.

A-1. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of July 11, 2023 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of June 13, 2023 (minutes not sealed). In favor: Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, Phelps, Pouliot and Reynolds. Abstained (due to absence): McQuaide and Purcell. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor with 2 abstentions.

A-2. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Tyler Champlin and it was VOTED: To approve the Regular Session Minutes of July 11, 2023. In favor: Chambers, Champlin, Hopkins, Louzon, Lyall, Phelps, Pouliot and Reynolds. Abstained (due to absence): McQuaide and Purcell. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor with 2 abstentions.

C. Bill Review – Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Andrew, to accept the bills. Louise questioned 16 invoices dated July 12<sup>th</sup> from MTG Disposal (out of Seekonk, MA). Was it necessary for 16 different pickups, close to \$5,000 from July 12-27, and why a vendor out of Seekonk? Ned explained the District went out to bid for this service and they were the prevailing bidder. The District is still doing clean-up after school closes plus we have ESY running. Louise commented on SBA Furniture – High School/Middle School – one entry is over \$20,000; another is over \$29,000. Gina replied that this furniture was funded by a grant from RIDE; the grant specified that it had to be used for STEM-related furniture for the high and middle schools. Louise then moved to two expenditures on July 13 for Virtual High School. Gina explained that we have students at the High School who are taking summer credit recovery classes to which Mike added that this expense was for a full-year license. Louise's last concern was AP reimbursement. The Superintendent responded that the School Committee has a policy that if a student scores a "3" or above on AP testing, the family/ student will be reimbursed for the cost of the test.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To accept the bills. In favor: Unanimous.

## XII. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports – None at this time.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Back to School Updates – Gina reported that fall sports begin next week and students return on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

2. District Safety Team – A meeting was held in July and Gina noted her appreciation for all the support. She thanked the team.

3. K Registration – Enrollment numbers are Ashaway – 39; Charlestown – 50; Hope Valley – 34; and Richmond – 62. The new K special education class has 8 students currently enrolled.

4. Flu Clinics – Dates for the school flu clinics are as follows: Hope Valley – October 2; Richmond October 12; Middle School – October 17; Charlestown School – October 25; Ashaway School – October 26; High School/CALA/CTC – November 1 (Staff and Students only).

C. Coming Events were highlighted.

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

Craig Louzon encouraged all to try to attend Convocation as it is well worth going to. He asked if the presentation on the Appeals Process could be on an agenda asap.

Tyler Champlin stated that he has requested, a number of times, discussion on a budget freeze for FY24. He will follow-up with an email to Chair Giusti.

## XIV. Adjournment

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Polly Hopkins and it was

VOTED: To adjourn at 8:50 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

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Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk