

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order by Co-Chair, Mr. Steere, at 6:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL: Members present were: Mr. Steere, Mr. Cervasio, Ms. Bernard, Mr. Baker, Mr. Chretien, Mr. Skeffington, and Mrs. Michalik. Also in attendance were Dr. Barnes and Mr. Piccirilli.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Skeffington, that the actions of the school committee during a special meeting of November 18, 2008 (open and executive session) be approved as presented. Motion passed 7-0-0

Mr. Cervasio noted that some future agenda items had not been carried forward. Dr. Barnes responded that these items will be on the January agenda.

V. Approval of Bills

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Chretien, that the approval of bills as listed on the Monthly Expenditure Report be approved as presented. Motion passed 7-0-0

VI. Agenda Items

A. School Update - Dr. Barnes explained that this will be a standing agenda item. In the future, the principals, deans and faculty will provide information to the committee about accomplishments and activities at the schools. To view progress of the high school building project and better understand the need to purchase computers, Dr. Barnes led the committee on a tour the high school.

Mr. Cervasio requested that the principals inform the committee of who is volunteering in the schools and suggested that a luncheon be held to recognize these individuals. He also requested that school committee members receive invitations to special events in order to be connected with what is going on at the schools.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Personnel - Resignations/Leaves/Appointments

Motion by Mr. Chretien, supported by Mr. Chretien, that the recommendations made in the superintendent's report be approved.
Motion passed 7-0-0

C. Assistant Superintendent Report

Motion by Mr. Chretien, supported by Mr. Skeffington, to accept the report as presented. Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Wood informed the committee that the focus of the work this year will be on science, social studies, English language arts and mathematics. She has met with each team of teachers to begin to identify goals and objectives. The faculty will take the graduation expectations from the high school and develop "learning expectations" for the middle school.

D. Student Resource Officer

Motion by Mr. Skeffington, supported by Mr. Chretien, to accept the Student Officer Report as presented. Motion passed 7-0-0

Officer Hopton reported that he is familiarizing himself with school policies and procedures and was gradually getting to know the students. He has started a Criminal Justice Club that will be student driven. Mr. Cervasio asked how the presence of a School Resource Officer is being evaluated with facts, in order to justify the position to the citizens. Mr. Martinelli provided two instances where Officer Hopton's presence de-escalated two situations that could have erupted. Mr. Kafalas pointed out that it may be difficult to measure the impact of having a student resource office in the school because he's preventing incidents before that occur. Dr. Barnes stated that he's observed Officer Hopton interacting with students and thinks he's a very good fit with PHS. Dr. Barnes particularly liked that Officer Hopkins is working at building relationships; it's community policing at its best. Officer Hopton is working on a preventive model; not a punitive model.

Mr. Cervasio requested that alarms and cameras be installed on the doors.

E. Monthly Budget Update

Motion by Mr. Skeffington, supported by Mrs. Michalik, that the Monthly Budget Update be accepted as presented.

Motion passed 7-0-0

F. Building Committee Report

Motion by Mr. Skeffington, supported by Mr. Chretien, to accept the Building Committee report as presented. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Laramie reported on the status of the building project. The project is on schedule for completion in June 2009. The subcontractor is in receivership. The biomass boiler at the high school is complete and up and running. The auto body shop, as well as many other rooms, will be ready January 5th. Library is scheduled for completion in mid-February.

The work necessary to implement the fire code regulations has been a bigger project than anticipated due to the poor condition of the buildings. Most of the additional expenses (1.9 million) are in the mechanical, electrical, and ESCO related variance of the project, which has drawn down the contingency funds. All of the costs are not in yet and the committee is not sure what additional work will need to be done. At present, no additional work is being approved. If additional work is required, the committee is looking at who should be responsible for the cost. They are looking at ways to save costs including institutional donations and an early completion date in order to save administrative costs. They will bond the full amount of \$895,000 for the ESCO Project. The state will reimburse just under one million dollars for the project. The construction manager anticipates returning almost half of their project contingency to the project.

After discussion about the sump pump, Mr. Cervasio stated that it is the building committee's responsibility to fix it and work with the attorney to find out who's responsible.

Dr. Barnes distributed a letter from the from the Building Inspector that was hand delivered to the office along with a list of violations to be addressed.

G. Field Trip Request

Motion by Mr. Cervasio supported by Mr. Chretien to approve the French Club's trip to Quebec on March 12 & 13, 2009.

Motion passes 7-0-0

H. Foreign Language

Mrs. Craig advocated for including French IV in the curriculum at PHS. The committee and Dr. Barnes agreed that languages are an important part of the curriculum and they would like to see more offerings at both PMS and PHS, however the budget will determine what academic courses the school is able to offer.

I. Computer Purchase

Motion by Mr. Baker, supported by Mr. Cervasio, to allocate \$100,000 from the fund balance to purchase computer equipment for Ponaganset Middle School. Motion passes 7-0-0

The computers in the district are 6 - 8 years old and tremendously slow and many of them not functioning. Dr. Barnes requested to use the fund balance to purchase 150 computers to outfit one lab at the middle school and one lab at the high school. Local money was used to purchase computers in 1994 for the middle school.

Mr. Cervasio stated that he would like to see equipment leased on 3-4 year cycles so that, as the cycles run out, money in a line item can be reapplied to a new lease.

J. Non Resident Tuition Policy

Motion by supported by, Mr. Chretien, supported by Mr. Cervasio to accept the Non-Resident Tuition Policy as a second reading. Motion passed 7-0-0

K. Revised Background Check Policy

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Skeffington, to accept the Revised Background Check Policy as a second reading. Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Barnes reported that the policy had been revised to reflect that background checks be conducted annually as suggested by the committee. In addition, the policy includes a broader definition of offenses to include disorderly conduct.

L. RIDE Mandate Exemption(s)/Variance

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Baker, to approach other school districts to seek collaboratively, if possible, but individually if necessary, a variance/waiver from identified RIDE mandates through court action, if necessary. Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Barnes informed the committee that he has been exploring with other superintendents opportunities to jointly seek relief from

some of RIDE's mandates. According to Deputy Commissioner Abbott, if it's state law, the commissioner does not have the right to waive it. A variance, however, honors the intent, but in a different way. For instance, it's not that the district does not want to provide career and tech education to our students, it's that we want to do it locally.

M. Use of Building Policy

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by, Mr. Steere, to accept recommendation as made, to change the flow of the request form to go from the principal directly to Mr. McGovern.

Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Barnes is looking to bring this policy up to date and make slight changes. Dr. Barnes informed the committee that he would like to change the order of what happens procedurally. He would like for the Request for Use of Building Form to go from the Building Principal directly to Joe McGovern so that Mr. McGovern can submit his views on the requests to the Superintendent.

N. Regionalization/Services Costs

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Chretien, to have a subcommittee meet to identify those services that could be regionalized and to determine the most appropriate way to share the cost of those services. Motion passed 7-0-0

Dr. Barnes reported on previous time studies completed on how to distribute costs among the three towns and asked the committee if they want to cost share and, if so, what is an acceptable formula? Dr. Barnes suggested that a committee be formed to work on this. Mr. Cervasio stated that Foster would be interested in sending some services to the Region, but would want to know the cost; Mr. Cervasio volunteered to serve on that committee.

O. Workshops/Subcommittees/Retreat

This motion was tabled until the January meeting so that the discussion would include the newly appointed members of the school committee.

VIII. Communications

IX. Future Agenda Items

X. Public Comment

XI. Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-46-5(a)(2) Certified Negotiations; Potential Litigation (1) Administrative Contract Negotiation

XI. Move to Executive Session per RI General Laws (42-46) Open Meeting Law

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Skeffington, that the Committee recess into Executive Session at 10:00 to consider (2) Certified Negotiations; Potential Litigation (1) Administrative Contract Negotiation, said actions being taken in accordance with the Open Meeting Act. Sections 42-46, 4 and 5.

Motion passed 7-0-0

Motion by Mr. Baker, supported by Mrs. Michalik, that the Committee reconvene to Open Session at 10:35.

Motion passed 7-0-0

Motion by Mr. Baker, supported by Mr. Steere, to seal the minutes of Executive Session.

Motion passed 7-0-0

XI. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

- a. General Disclosure of Executive Session Procedures
- b. Disclosure of any votes taken

Mr. Steere reported to the public that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Cervasio, supported by Mr. Chretien, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Motion passed 7-0-0

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