

**Portsmouth School Board
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Minutes of the July 17, 2001 Meeting

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, July 17, 2001 in the Board Room at Little Harbour School.

Attendance

PRESENT: Mr. Kent LaPage (Chair), Mr. John Lyons (Vice-Chair), Mr. Raimond Bowles, Mrs. Nancy Novelline-Clayburgh, Mrs. Nansi Craig, Mr. John Dowd, Mr. Clay Hayward, Mr. Kenneth Muske, Mr. Carvel Tefft

PARTICIPATING: Dr. Lyonel B. Tracy, Ed.D. (Superintendent of Schools); Dr. Robert J. Lister (Assistant Superintendent); Mr. W. Peter Torrey (Business Administrator); Mrs. Ann Walker (Employee Representative); Mrs. Ann Mayer (SAU 50 Representative)

Non-Public Session

Prior to the regular meeting, the School Board met in a non-public session at 6:03 p.m. to discuss the hiring of personnel. The non-public session was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chair LaPage called the regular meeting of the Portsmouth School Board to order at 7:12 p.m. A moment of silent reflection was held before the Pledge of Allegiance.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

There was no report at this meeting.

RECOGNITION OF GROUPS OR INDIVIDUAL VISITORS

Comments to School Board

Mr. Edward Lawrence commended the School Board for allowing the public to speak at its meetings regardless of the subject matter. He also commended Board members for speaking up for what they believe in, even when they disagree with their fellow Board members and with the administration. Mr. Lawrence said the more minds that are allowed to discuss a problem results in a more common-sense consensus and better answers. He thanked the Board for their serious interest in hearing from the citizens and allowing them to

participate in the democratic process.

***School Department
Web-Page***

Mr. Peter Bresciano, President of the Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, applauded the School Department for deciding that its web-page would be handled through the City's webmaster. He apologized in that he has not yet looked at the web-page, but said he has heard it is a great site. Mr. Bresciano said he believes the School Board and School Department will be pleased with what happens with the School Department being incorporated in with the City's web-site. Mr. Bresciano said that if it doesn't work, he will be the first one to stand up and say it did not work and the schools would need to go on their own. Mr. Bresciano said it is very important that the minutes of Board meetings be posted on the web-site to allow citizens to access the information.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF/STUDENTS

***Young Women's
Health and
Leadership Program***

Dr. Lister presented information on the Young Women's Health and Leadership Program. The information describes the services available as well as information about the program. Dr. Lister said the program costs approximately \$30,000, with about \$20,000 of that going to fund the program coordinator. The rest of the money is for annual conferences, publications, materials, etc.

Dr. Lister said that he and Mr. Lyons continue to work together in trying to secure funds for the program. At this time they still need to raise \$23,000. Mr. Lyons said the Clipper Health Center Board is actively working to secure funding resources. Mrs. Craig said this is a unique program. She asked if there would be a problem with Title IX in that there is no program for boys. Mrs. Clayburgh said her daughter has participated in this program, and found it to be fascinating. Mrs. Walker said it sounds like a fabulous program. She stated that Middle School is the time when girls are not feeling really good about themselves. Chair LaPage agreed it is a valuable program; he has seen the results first-hand in that his niece has been extremely involved in the program.

PERSONNEL

***Professional
Nominations***

Dr. Tracy presented the following professional nominations: Anne Swainbank (grade 7 mathematics); Phyllis Ellis (Middle School, resource room); Marguerite Ferrer (PHS, Latin – semester one); Barsha Cooke (PHS, French); and Wayne Ford (PASS, English/history). Dr. Tracy stated that, at this time of the year, he asks each candidate if he/she is under contract with another school district. If the answer is yes, he contacts that superintendent of

***Professional
Nominations
(continued)***

schools and asks permission to present the nomination of that person to the School Board. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mr. Tefft, the nominations be approved as submitted. Mr. Dowd expressed concern that teachers for the PASS program are being hired at higher salaries. He asked if the criteria for hiring in PASS is set high, therefore resulting in higher salaries for the PASS staff. Mr. Dowd said he believes that too much money is being spent on the PASS Program. Mr. Bowles disagreed, and said he did not know anything about PASS before coming on the School Board. He said he is very proud of the program and supports it. There was discussion of the hiring process. Following this discussion, the motion to approve the nominations was unanimously approved.

***Nomination of
Dondero School
Principal***

Dr. Tracy presented the nomination of Jill Krueger LeMay to the position of Principal of the Mary C. Dondero Elementary School. Dr. Tracy said Mrs. LeMay went through a very complex hiring process and was interviewed by a committee of parents and staff; a committee of administrators; and a committee of fourth and fifth graders. She also had an extensive interview with the Superintendent of Schools and Assistant Superintendent, in addition to comprehensive reference checks. Dr. Tracy said Mrs. LeMay is looking forward to starting her new job in Portsmouth on Monday. Mr. Bowles moved the Board approve the nomination of Jill Krueger LeMay to the position of Principal at Dondero School. Mr. Muske seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Professional
Resignation***

Dr. Tracy announced that William Burtis has resigned his 40% position as media and television production teacher at Portsmouth High School.

NEW BUSINESS

***Work Session to
Discuss Goals***

The Board scheduled a work session with the Superintendent of Schools to set goals for the 2001-02 school year for Monday, August 13 at 6:30 p.m. The work session will be held in the Board Room.

Early Release Days

The administration presented its plan for early release days for the 2001-02 school year. Dr. Tracy said they would like to submit an application to the State Department of Education for four early release days for the 2001-02 school year. Dr. Tracy said the six early release days for this past school year were very productive; however, they felt it was time to back off that number of days just for the sake of making sure our students have the two additional teacher-contact days. Mr. Lyons moved the Board authorize the Superintendent to apply for early release days for the 2001-02 school year. Mr. Tefft seconded the motion. There was discussion to the motion, with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent answering questions

Early Release Days (continued) from the Board. They reviewed the schedule of proposed activities for the early release days as well as answered questions about this past year's activities. The motion to approve the proposal for four early release days for the 2001-02 school year was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy Committee Mrs. Craig asked Board members to review pages six through ten of the budget section (section one) of the policy book. She said the Policy Committee will be reviewing these policies and bringing back any suggested changes/revisions at the August meeting. Mr. Tefft asked if there is a target date for a complete review of the policy book. Mrs. Craig said the Policy Committee is in the process of reviewing the book.

Athletic Committee Mr. Dowd said he has not had a chance to speak with Ms. Ogden, athletic director, about this, but there is still a need to establish some process and procedures for a "wall of honor." Dr. Tracy said the administration's recommendation would be that the Athletic Committee and the Athletic Director lead the charge so that it would be coordinated through the athletic department. Dr. Tracy said he has talked with Ms. Ogden briefly about this, and she has some good ideas. Mr. Muske stated that athletics should not be considered a prerequisite to receive this award. He mentioned two staff members who he believes are excellent educators, yet they do not have a connection with an organized sport. Mrs. Craig suggested there could be a nomination form that is completed and submitted to a committee that will review the nominations.

"SchoolMatch" Report Chair LaPage stated a committee to review the "SchoolMatch" report will be established. He asked Board members to let them know if they are interested in serving on this committee. Board members Dowd and Hayward volunteered to serve on this committee. Dr. Tracy said his responsibility is to comprise a committee whose duties will include developing a response plan to address the "SchoolMatch" recommendations.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Rules Suspended Mr. Bowles requested the Board suspend the rules and take up agenda item VIII. B. "School Department Web Page." The Board was agreeable to this request.

School Department Web Page Chair LaPage said the School Department is trying to coordinate its web page with the City of Portsmouth. Dr. Tracy and Mr. Stokel

School Department Web Page (continued) have met over the last three or four weeks regarding the set up and the process for the web page. Mr. Muske moved the Board move forward and direct the Technology Director and Superintendent to continue to coordinate and collaborate with the City and City Webmaster to produce the optimum web product possible for the school in the City and its people. Mr. Bowles seconded the motion. There was discussion to the motion. Mr. Muske moved the question. The motion was unanimously approved.

Recess The Chair declared a recess at 8:11 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 8:19 p.m.

Revised Plans for High School Renovation Mr. Wes Bonney and Mr. Jim Delisle, representatives from Team Design, Inc. presented a revised plan for the high school construction. They reviewed this plan with the Board and answered questions. The plan will be presented to the Joint Building Committee tomorrow morning. Mr. Tefft moved the plan presented by Team Design, which looks to be sensible in meeting the academic and physical plan objectives as well as in meeting the costs, be moved forward to the Joint Building Committee for further development. Mrs. Craig seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Franklin School Renovations Mr. Torrey provided an update on the status of plans for New Franklin School. He said that Mr. Bonney has met with City and school officials to review the building. The Fire Department will make recommendations concerning sprinklers and the water flow into the building. Mr. Torrey reported it appears the boiler room has the capacity to add another heating boiler, and the electrical system will probably have to be upgraded. Other issues will be discussed and reviewed. They are still looking at the work being completed for the fall of 2002.

Wentworth School, Exchange City Program Dr. Tracy told the Board he is pleased to report that he signed an agreement authorized by the School Board for the Cody Foundation to lease the Wentworth School for five years to build an Exchange City. He commended City Attorney Robert Sullivan for the work he did with negotiating the lease agreement and for moving the process along. Sometime this summer the Cody Foundation will begin renovations of the building for the Exchange City Program. Dr. Tracy said he believes this program will be a real plus for the City of Portsmouth and the school district.

FINANCIAL

Preliminary 00-01 Budget Report Mr. Torrey reviewed preliminary 2000-01 general fund financial information. It is projected the School Department will be able to return \$311,801 to the City's fund balance. Mr. Torrey said these

Preliminary 00-01 Budget Report (continued) figures should be considered preliminary until the full financial report is complete. Mr. Bowles said this is a fine example of good, sound, financial planning and good financial management by the Business Administrator under the management of the Superintendent. Mr. Lyons also commended Mr. Torrey.

Computer Purchase The Board reviewed a memo from the Business Administrator regarding the purchase of computers from Dell. Mr. Torrey said that Mr. Stokel, Computer Director, has received price quotes via telephone with other vendors and has determined there would be no price advantage with the other competing vendors. The school district would realize significant price savings of \$13,000 by purchasing the Dell computers if it acts on or before July 23, 2001. Mr. Torrey said this purchase would be in compliance with the City's purchase policy, and the school district always retains the right to accept bids to their advantage and in its best interests. The Board was agreeable to the administration moving forward with this purchase.

NEXT AGENDA

Items from Work Session The Chair stated that any items coming out of the August 13, 2001 work session would be placed on the agenda for the August 21 meeting for formal approval.

Policy Book Revisions Revisions to pages six through ten of the budget section of the Board's policy book will be presented at the August meeting. Mr. Tefft suggested the policy book be reviewed to be sure it is in compliance with the model produced by the New Hampshire School Boards Association. Mr. Torrey stated the school district belongs to that service provided by NHSBA.

Summer School Report Dr. Lister will report on the summer school program at the next meeting.

School Starting Times to Be Retreat Agenda Item There was discussion of school starting times. Mr. Dowd said he recalls the SAU 50 representative stating they could not make the change in their bus schedules in time for the school year. The Superintendent suggested the subject of school starting times be placed on the agenda for the annual Board retreat. This was acceptable to the Board.

Board Agendas The Chair stated there is a need to schedule topics coming before the Board so that an agenda is not loaded with items. He said he would use the Chair's prerogative in scheduling items to come before the Board, keeping in mind to respect the wishes of individual Board members.

Ice Skating Rink Mrs. Clayburgh reported there has been a small committee in the City working towards raising funds to build an ice skating rink. This group plans to report to the Board in late September. She said the City is well overdue for an ice skating rink, and this committee is extremely active and has a great vision. Mrs. Clayburgh said the athletic director serves on this committee, and the Mayor has been asked to appoint a City Councilor to serve as a committee member.

PEP 2000 Run Mrs. Clayburgh reported that PEP 2000 will again sponsor a run/walk to raise money for the enrichment programs at the three elementary schools. This event is scheduled for Sunday, August 19, 2001 on the cross-country course at Portsmouth High School.

Prescott Park The Chair reminded Board members they are collecting donations at Prescott Park on Friday, August 27.

***Bowl-A-Thon for
Community
Diversion Program*** Dr. Tracy informed the Board that the Community Diversion Program will hold a bowl-a-thon on Saturday, August 25, 2001 at the Bowl-O-Rama. He encouraged people to pledge towards this event.

Adjournment There was no further business to come before the Board. The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. This motion was made by Mr. Lyons, seconded by Mrs. Craig, and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyonel B. Tracy, Ed.D.
Executive Secretary