

(Approved by the Portsmouth School Board on October 9, 2007.)

**Portsmouth School Board  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

**Minutes of the August 14, 2007 Meeting**

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, August 14, 2007 in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers, City Hall, Portsmouth, New Hampshire

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**Attendance**                    **PRESENT:** Mr. Kent LaPage (Chair), Mrs. Nancy Novelline Clayburgh, (Vice Chair), Ms. Sheri Ham Garrity, Mr. Clay Hayward, Mr. John Lyons, Jr., Mr. Brendan Ristaino, Mr. Mitchell Shuldman, Mr. Carson Smith and Ms. Ann Walker.

**PARTICIPATING:** Dr. Robert J. Lister (Superintendent of Schools), Mr. Stephen Zdravec (Assistant Superintendent), Mr. Stephen Bartlett (Business Administrator), Ms. Abigail Rockefeller (Student Representative) and Ms. Ann Mayer (SAU 50 Representatives)

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**Call To Order**                    At 7:00 p.m. Mr. LaPage, Chair, called the meeting to order. The Chair thanked everyone for coming.

**Remembrance:**                    The Chair called a moment of silent reflection and asked the Board to remember Patty Wojnar who is recovering from surgery, Jean Frisbee, Steve Zdravec's secretary, as she and her family are with her sister Dee Regan who is quite ill, Chris Wood, teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, who lost her son a few weeks ago, and Paulette Hoeflich who's mother-in-law just passed. Abigail Rockefeller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Moment of Silent Reflection**

**Approval of Minutes** A motion was made by Ms. Novelline Clayburgh and seconded by Ms. Walker to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2007 meeting and were approved unanimously with one change. Ms. Ham Garrity made one correction on page 6. She is quoted as stating that the Student Behavior Contract "has not been discussed". It should read that it "has been discussed" as she said it has been brought up in the past.

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**Correspondence:** A thank you note was received by Linda Berry thanking the board for honoring the retirees.

A letter from Judith Moyer, University of New Hampshire, about a Grant award. Dr. Lister stated that he and Mr. Zdravec worked on this grant with the University of Southern Maine. This is an American History Grant for instruction for students and staff development for teachers totaling \$989,035.

Ms. Walker made a motion to put the letters on file. This was seconded by Ms. Ham Garrity and approved unanimously.

Sandi Van Scoyoc, President of the HNH Foundation, sent in a letter stating that funds were being awarded to promote healthy eating and physical activity in children.

Ms. Walker made the motion to place this letter on file and Ms. Ham Garrity seconded, with the board approving unanimously.

A letter was received from Amy Bringer, Chairperson, Library Board of Trustees, asking to be kept informed of the Portsmouth Middle School building renovations. This letter was not in the original packet since it was received after the packet was sent to the board members.

Mr. Lyons made the motion to place this letter on file and was seconded by Ms. Novelline Clayburgh and approved unanimously by the board.

**Agenda Approval:** Additions to the Agenda under committee reports include;  
Dr. Lister – RFQ for the Middle School and Playing Fields reports  
Ms. Novelline Clayburgh – Student Behavior Contract  
Mr. Clay Hayward – Walk/bike routes materials  
Mr. LaPage – New Snack Shack information

**Public Comment:** There was no one to speak during the public comment session

**Items for Discussion:** School Supply Donations  
Mr. Ristaino presented the board with a memo requesting the School Board Members help the City of Portsmouth's Welfare Department by donating school supplies to assist residents who cannot afford these items. He encourages others to participate as well.

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Personnel – Leave of Absence

*Nicole Smith* – Approximate dates August 2007 – January 2, 2008.

Moved to approve by Mr. Lyons seconded by Ms. Novelline Clayburgh.

*Elizabeth Needham* – Approximate dates November 26, 2007 – March 2008. Moved to approve by Ms. Walker seconded by Ms. Ham Garrity.

*Cynthia Fitzgerald* – 2007 – 2008. Moved to approve by Mr. Hayward seconded by Ms. Walker.

Mr. Lyons stated that these requests were discussed in executive session prior to being presented for a vote.

Personnel – Resignation

*Gabriela Frentzel* – Motion made by Mr. Hayward to approve and seconded by Ms. Walker.

Personnel – Nominations

*Karen Jacoby* – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, New Franklin Elementary. Motion made to approve by Mr. Lyons and seconded by Ms. Walker.

*Brendan Harrington* – Reading Specialist, Portsmouth High School.

Motion made to approve by Mr. Lyons and seconded by Mr. Ristaino.

*Monica Walker* – Title I Literacy Teacher, Dondero Elementary. Motion made by Mr. Lyons to approve and seconded by Ms. Walker.

*Crystal Speck-Tritter* – Visual Arts Teacher, 33%, Portsmouth High School. Motion made by Ms. Ham Garrity to approve and seconded by Ms. Walker.

Dr. Lister stated that he is impressed with the caliber of applicants from which to interview and the experience they bring with them. He commended the many staff members for their work on interviews. New staff members will be introduced at the second board meeting in September.

Mr. Zdravec notified the Board that there are three positions still to be filled; Elementary Reading, High School Spanish and High School Science.

Early Release Day 2007-2008 Schedule

Mr. Zdravec presented a calendar and the report listing the Early Release days. The report is a breakdown of what will be the schedule of professional development for those Wednesdays as well as the two In Service Days. This report was developed from an Administrative Retreat held on July 23 and 24, 2007.

Mr. LaPage was pleased that the early release days will be shared with others.

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***Committee Reports:*** Request for Qualifications

Dr. Lister discussed the Request for Qualifications for the Middle School packet handed out. This was completed with the assistance of Mr. Bohenko and his staff. Packets are available on-line and all qualified architectural firms are welcome to apply. Applicants are asked to include; keeping 6, 7, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades together, parking, bus entry, sufficient fields, and following the Educational Narrative that has been developed.

The process will be

- 1) review of all applications
- 2) make a short list of acceptable applicants
- 3) interview those on the short list with Mr. Stokel, Dr. Lister and city engineers.
- 4) Reduce to 3 – 5 architectural firms who will submit a proposal.
- 5) Joint Building Committee formed which would include 3 School Board Members, 3 City Council Members and possibly member(s) at large.

All of this work will be based on the Parrott Avenue site.

Mr. Lyons thanked Dr. Lister for getting this information to the School Board Members in plenty of time for them to review before this evening's meeting. He made the motion to approve the RFQ. Ms. Walker seconded the motion. Mr. Lyons felt a motion was needed due to concerns of the public of the previous Architectural firm that completed preliminary work.

Ms. Ham Garrity questioned the process of advertising and it was explained by Dr. Lister.

Mr. LaPage stated the web site will have the entire packet and newspapers will advertise and give information on obtaining a packet.

Mr. Shuldman is very excited this is moving forward. The purpose of the RFQ is to find those who are really interested and qualified to do the work for the Portsmouth Middle School. The RFP will be developed when the list is narrowed down to 3 - 5 Architects who will present their complete plan.

The deadline to respond with the RFQ will be September 27, 2007. The hope is that the applicants will be narrowed down to approximately 3 - 5 architects sometime in November.

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Ms. Novelline Clayburgh is looking for RFQ's from architects who have prior experience with renovating historical buildings, building a healthy and energy efficient building, and a firm who will follow the criteria of the Educational Narrative.

She also stated there may be at least two public hearings to comment on the final project.

Mr. Lyons stated that the board wants everyone to know that the RFQ is a public document and anyone can get a copy or get it on line in the City website.

Dr. Lister expressed his desire to keep the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders together during the building/renovating process.

The motion was unanimously approved.

#### City Ballfields Condition/Use Report

Dr. Lister presented the City Ballfields Condition/Use Report. City Council members Chris Dwyer and Harold Whitehouse requested this report from Athletic Director Rus Wilson. Mr. Ristaino also met with the city manager about this. This report was completed by Rus Wilson and is a comparison with other cities.

Mr. Lyons stated that there has been significant misinformation. This report shows that the City of Portsmouth is limited in its athletic fields and those existing are currently overused. Again, it was stated that this is a public document.

Mr. LaPage was a member of the Recreation Board and knows Mr. Wilson and his teamwork constantly with coordinating the use of the fields.

Dr. Lister would like to encourage looking at artificial turf for multi purpose fields with others in the community.

Mr. Ristaino thanked Dr. Lister for the report and encourages fields to be developed right the first time, looking at artificial turf to cut maintenance. This report shows what the city does not have and needs for fields to accommodate the many athletic teams and events.

Ms. Novelline Clayburgh mentioned how some sports are now 12 months long. Many are no longer season sports. She also stated that a waiver for fields for Middle School cannot be applied for.

Ms. Walker stated that while on the JBC for the High School, artificial turf was discussed and found to be too expensive for this project but was encouraged to be looked into for future projects.

Mr. LaPage mentioned that Portsmouth is also without an ice skating rink.

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### Safe Routes to School Program

Mr. Hayward presented a report on the Safe Routes to School. There have been 5 - 6 meetings and the committee is now ready to start the grant writing process. Their packet includes application guideline information from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

The CIP project will include new bike racks, crosswalks and signage, around the city. These sidewalk improvements are not part of the grant because it is already in the capital budget.

Mr. Hayward would like permission to distribute surveys to schools to send to parents.

Mr. Lyons wanted to know what the Safe Routes to School Committee will do to promote this program so parents won't continue to drive their kids to school. Past information indicates very few students walk or ride bikes to school now. How will they educate and encourage students to walk or bike to school?

Mr. Hayward is hoping that committees already in existence such as PTA, PTO, Portsmouth Walking Association and Neighborhood Associations can help promote this and work with Law Enforcement to make this a safe city. There will be a Kick Off the week of Wednesday, October 3rd which is National Walk to School Day. All principals are on board with the program according to Mr. Hayward.

The next meeting on this will be September 10, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. in Conference Room A, City Hall. All are welcome. Copies of the grant form are available.

Dr. Lister recognized Mr. Hayward for his enthusiasm and involvement on this committee. He recommends the involvement of the SROs, Principals, and the School Nurses to help promote Health and Wellness, reduce obesity and encourage riding bikes to school. It is also important to educate the parents and encourage them to model healthy habits for our children.

Ms. Walker stated kids need to know it is "cool" to walk to school. The staff needs to encourage this as well.

Mr. LaPage would like to see a night meeting scheduled to present this to the public, to discuss and educate on the importance of this program. He would like to have the principals, SRO's and nurses speak on this program and the importance of healthy habits.

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### Student Behavior Policy

Ms. Novelline Clayburgh stated the committee is talking about a policy for all students like the athletic contract. There is a committee to be formed which will include Mr. Collins, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Purrington, faculty members, students, and possibly a local psychologist. The sub committee would bring back a report to the Policy Committee and eventually to the School Board.

Mr. Lyons would like the committee to consider “what is the role of the school versus what is the role of the parent” regarding the expectation of student behavior.

Ms. Ham Garrity stated this sub committee would decide if a contract is needed or just a policy.

Ms. Rockefeller mentioned that the Athletic Contracts were given out Monday and need to be back signed on Wednesday or the athlete cannot play. Students are upset that there is not a contract for others such as members of the band and other school activities. They are also upset it is a 365 day contract not just a seasonal contract.

Mr. LaPage would like to see Ms. Rockefeller on the sub committee.

### Snack Shack

Mr. LaPage stated that the snack shack is close to being complete. It will be operational for the next home football game on September 14, 2007 when those who assisted in the work will be recognized. All teams will be invited to attend. It is a beautiful facility which took a long time to complete since little to no taxpayer money was used to build it. There were many volunteers and a lot of work completed by Ken Linchey and his staff. There will be a meeting of all snack shack users in the near future.

Mr. Lyons asked who the contact person would be for use of the Snack Shack.

Mr. Bartlett said the high school would be responsible for the scheduling of this building. There will be a fee for using this as there is for use of other buildings and facilities by local organizations.

### ***Financial Report:***

Mr. Bartlett handed out the updated 2007 – 2008 rental rates. Rental rates are still being worked on. Parking passes at PHS will remain the same. Driver’s Education fee is based on the bid/contract, substitute pay will remain the same to start and will be adjusted if needed at a later time. The Food Service Rates remained the same. The Out of School Travel pay will be increased and lunch monitors were added this year.

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Mr. LaPage would like rental rates to include a breakdown of specific needs such as security if needed, cleaning, supervision if cafeteria used, etc. He hopes the boosters will use the new cafeteria for banquets rather than spending high prices for other facilities.

Mr. Bartlett stated the rates would be posted on the web site when complete.

***Other:***

Food Service

Mr. Bartlett asked the Board to allow an advance for the Food Service Budget since there is a lag from the State in getting reimbursed. Mr. Lyons made the motion to approve and Ms. Novelline Clayburgh seconded. The Board approved this unanimously.

Policy Committee

Ms. Ham Garrity asked if the next Policy Committee is on August 21<sup>st</sup> and if Kathleen Dwyer would be attending. Dr. Lister will confirm this.

School Board Candidates

Mr. LaPage announced that the deadline to file as a candidate for School Board is September 7, 2007.

***Adjournment:***

At 8:22 p.m. Mr. Lyons made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Ristaino seconded.

Respectfully submitted

Robert J. Lister, Ed.D.  
Executive Secretary

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