



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday October 15, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.
Public Works Department Conference Room

The Safe Routes to School Committee met on Wednesday, October 15, at 9:00 a.m. at Public Works Department Conference Room.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** In Christina Westfall's absence Debbie Finnigan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 a.m.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Debbie Finnigan, Traffic Engineer, Police Commissioner John Golumb, Police Commission Representative, Rebecca Emerson, School Board Representative, Kirsten Barton, Little Harbor Representative, and Chris Casa, Dondero Representative and Christina Westfall, Chair. Also present was Francesca Tise.
Absent: Dr. Robert Lister and Rebecca Hester.
- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**
MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to accept the minutes of the September 29, 2008 meeting as presented. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. Discussions with Principals – Not present
 - B. Vice Chair – nomination and vote required – Motion made by John Golumb nominating Rebecca Emerson as Vice Chair. Seconded by Kirsten Barton. Motion passed.
 - C. National Safe Routes to School Course – Debbie Finnigan explained this is a one day course lasting until approximately 4:00 p.m. providing snacks and lunch. Suggested having it at a school. We need to decide who to invite and pick a date in the future. The goal is to gather enthusiasm and infuse it into this group, the Principles and parents. People need to understand what this is about and why it is important. The cost is \$5000 for the course, \$1000 for food and any other supplies. The Middle School was suggested and to use the Library conference room which would enable observing arrival and dismissal. Kirsten Barton suggested meeting in April or May. We need to have people there to be successful, to include City Councilors, School Board, Saber, Principles, Police, Supt. Bob Lister, Economic Development Commission, SRO, and persons at the schools who do the walking programs, Barbara

Pamboukas, School Nurse, crossing guards and branch out into the community. Rebecca Emerson referred to the Piscataqua Sustainability Group.

The Chair stated that the schools are not an active part of this, there needs to be some involvement we need their support. If the Principals are not able to be present, need to send a representative from each of the schools. The next person in command is the nurse, there are no Asst. Principals. Chris Casa suggested guidance councilors.

Debbie Finnigan will find out availability for April and May and report back next month. Early release days are at 11:30 a.m. on April 8 and May 20.

- D. New Franklin, Middle School and St. Patrick Representatives – Debbie Finnigan suggested sending a letter to St. Patrick's to see if they will have a representative. We do not as yet have a representative from New Franklin and Rebecca Emerson will see if she can get a representative. Christina Westfall will work with Middle School to have the students form a group and report back next meeting. Monday, December 1st was decided to hear back from the schools.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Evaluate Walk to School Event – Rebecca Emerson reported New Franklin has a very supportive administration, it was very good, the Principle was there as well as the Superintendent and the Asst. Superintendent who has a child in that school, had juice and crackers, the Proclamation was read by the Principle, and at 1:30 p.m. the Principle led the entire school on an all school walk. Some of the students made signs to hold as they walked to school, Drive Slow, Children Walking to School, the support is there from the staff and parents and was very successful.

Debbie Finnigan reported that Kirsten Barton sent an e-mail that the kids had a good time and some kids who particularly don't walk, walked to school that day and they had a good time. The Walk to School Day was successful at Little Harbor.

Christina Westfall reported on the Middle School and thanked everyone for their donations. Prescott Park was not the place to meet and will do different next year meeting at the Masonic Temple parking lot. (approx. 3 kids met at Prescott Park and approx. 200 kids met at Masonic Temple). Two teachers were at Prescott Park and a member of the Police Dept. walked with us to the school. He did the raffle and added some of his own stuff to raffle. He was there the whole duration, met all of them, there were skateboarders and bikers. The Principle was very receptive.

We will do better at Dondero next year. She walked about 30 kids from the Church which was a good place to meet, there were kids who usually took the bus who walked. The food was not there until later in the day, the kids signed up for the raffle and the Proclamation was read. John Corrigan was present. The Principle suggested that the testing be done another day next year and not the day of the National Walk to School Day.

There was a huge Police Department turn out.

- B. National Survey – Email – Rebecca Emerson suggested a follow-up e-mail on the survey/questionnaire that the Principals can send out. The Chair stated that we need to get the Survey out as well. Rebecca Emerson suggested a cover letter “thank you for participating, it was great, what could have made that day better, what was great about it.

Francesca Tise suggested that the secretaries receive information on the Walk as the secretary at Dondero wished she had known and Christina Westfall got the same impression at the Middle School. Francesca Tise discussed a bike rodeo for next year.

The Chair was very pleased and thanked the Committee for all their work, food, donations, etc. and.

The Chair asked about e-mailing the survey. After discussion it was decided to send a hard copy to the teachers to be distributed.

The survey needs to be completed and sent back to the National, they don't do it by school, but by City and they do not have it on line. Debbie Finnigan stated that their survey needs to be completed in order for us to continue to keep our funding for this program. Debbie Finnigan stated that this National Survey could go out now.

Debbie Finnigan informed the Committee that The National Walk to School Day is actually Walk to School Month, so we can pick another date in October.

It was also suggested that Portsmouth have a walk to school day in the spring.

The “No Idling” allowed campaign was discussed.

- C. Time Change: 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (Third Wednesday at DPW) – It was decided to keep it at 9:00 a.m. at this time. Rebecca Emerson stated that when Debbie sends out the Agenda it be sent to the Superintendent, all Principals except the high school as well as the Committee Members. If we want the Principals to come, the Chair should send another e-mail with two months lead time. John Golumb suggested when send an e-mail to the Principals, ask them what time of day other than 7:30 a.m. would work for them.

The next meetings are scheduled for November 19th and December 17th at 9:00 a.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Complete packet is on file at the Public Works Department

Respectfully submitted

Elaine Boucas
Recording Secretary