



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.
Portsmouth Middle School

The Safe Routes to School Committee met on Wednesday, February 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the Middle School.

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Debbie Finnigan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:15 a.m.
- II. ROLL CALL:** Debbie Finnigan, Traffic Engineer, Councilor Nancy Clayburgh, City Council Representative, Robert Lister, Superintendent of Schools, Rebecca Emerson, Co-Chair and School Board Representative, Kirsten Barton, Little Harbor Representative, Jean Ward, St. Patrick Representative, and Detective Rebecca Hester, Police Department.

Also present was John Stokel, Principal Middle School and Eric Goodwin, SRO Officer.
Absent: Christina Westfall and Christine Casa. Excused absence John Golumb.

- III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** As there was not a quorum the minutes will be approved at the March meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Grant 2:** Debbie Finnigan reported that she sent out the Grant.
Project 4 - Banners for each school and one for general events such as Walk To School Day.
Project 5 is student incentives. Debbie Finnigan reported that the project includes t-shirts for each student K through 8 in the City of Portsmouth with extras and is hoping that all grades can be in a contest for a logo for Portsmouth. For example, Portland OR has a chicken as their mascot (why did the chicken cross the road?) She is hoping this would get the kids more involved. It will start with a contest at each school and the winner from each of the five schools will be placed on the City website for city-wide voting. There will be a prize per school and for the overall winner. The winning logo will be put on the banners and t-shirts.
It was suggested this be posted in the schools lobby, send home flyers and Debbie Finnigan stated that we have funds for flyers. It was suggested that the Art teachers at the schools be involved.
John Stokel stated the teachers are always willing to work with the kids after school in art clubs, etc., so that it doesn't become a class assignment and take away from the curriculum.

Debbie Finnigan would like to have the logos done by the end of the school year in order to prepare for the Walk to School day in October. We could then print the banners for each of the schools

Debbie Finnigan asked the Committee for direction in order to accomplish this.

Principal Stokel felt the incentive to kids is my logo is going to end up on the t-shirts and banners and also nice they'll get a gift certificate.

Rebecca Hester suggested having a media sponsor for the contest in order to use their on line as well in promoting the voting and Rebecca will look into this.

Debbie stated she will come up with a flyer and send it to the Committee. John Stokel and Jean Ward will speak with their respective art teachers and get back to Debbie.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. SRTS Representatives Required** - City Council, New Franklin School and the Middle School – Debbie Finnigan reported we still need representatives for New Franklin and Portsmouth Middle Schools.

- B. National Course for SRTS – October 2009** – The testing date is not yet known.

At Dr. Lister's request, Debbie Finnigan explained the course. The goal is for us to get more tools for the Committee and gain some community support.

Kirsten Barton stated you go to a school and actually observe the drop-off and pick-up regarding traffic, and get ideas, you are working with real events with regards to school activities.

We need to decide who to invite and plan a specific date and send out a notice of the date.

It was suggested that members of the Traffic & Safety Committee be present.

Having this course at the library is beneficial in that you can see the Portsmouth Middle School and watch Little Harbor from there. Portsmouth Middle School have different issues than elementary school.

- C. City Web site** – Debbie Finnigan presented the Committee with an example of the web site, she will be the City contact person and will work with the City's Webmaster for the website.

- D. Debbie Finnigan** reported she is working on a categorical exclusion for the bike racks, which is the environmental permit to put them in place. Little Harbor, Portsmouth Middle School and St. Patrick will be getting the bike racks. The Portsmouth Middle School will be placed temporarily until the school is renovated.

The design work is complete for the bike lanes in Elwyn Park which can go out to bid as soon as specifications are completed.

The bike path to Dondero will be placed on next month's Agenda for a signification discussion. If done as proposed in the grant it will require an environmental permit as we'll be in the existing wetlands. We should hire an engineer to design a boardwalk instead so there will not be an encroachment into the wetlands and thus will eliminate the permit. This proposal would need approval by the State and the Committee.

The RFP for the travel plan has been, so that we can apply for the next round of Grants. This document gives SRTS a list of priority projects for each school. In our last Grant we received money to hire an engineer in order to do planning, which could include locations to upgrade sidewalks, what intersections need to be fixed, signs, educational programs at each school and enforcement. This plan needs to be completed so that we can apply for the next grant.

Dr. Lister stated he has had many inquiries about the sidewalks in bad weather and the children walking to school and whether or not we are doing any safety things in the winter for the kids walking to school in bad weather?

Debbie Finnigan suggested discussing this at the planning stage when going to each school what is the concern. We could always ask for grant money, but need an extra sidewalk plow for the schools to use to help supplement what is already being done as we can only do so much with what we have. This is obviously just a suggestion, but should be discussed.

Debbie Finnigan reported she is still waiting for the weebles. We asked for six and as they were 50% more than our grant, they are still trying to get approval. We may want to get three for now which is within our budget and figure out where they should go.

This will be put on our next Agenda.

The bike racks came in at about \$1000-1500 more than we had budgeted and was approved by the State.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at New Franklin School.

The Complete packet is on file at the Public Works Department

Respectfully submitted

Elaine Boucas, Recording Secretary