

## PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES FOR JUNE 23, 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

PORTSMOUTH, NH

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### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Present: MITCHELL SHULDMAN (CHAIR), SHERI HAM-GARRITY (VICE-CHAIR) REBECCA EMERSON, PATRICK ELLIS, DEXTER LEGG, KENT LAPAGE, ANN WALKER, LISA SWEET, DR. ROBERT LISTER (SUPERINTENDENT), STEVE ZADRAVEC (ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT), ANN MAYER (SAU 50 REPRESENTATIVE) AND LINDA BRIOLAT (EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE)

Absent: LESLIE STEVENS

### **III. INVOCATION**

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Chair Shuldman led in the pledge of allegiance.

### **V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

#### 1. JUNE 9, 2009 – PUBLIC SESSION

**Motion:** Motion to approve the minutes of June 9, 2009 Public Session by Ms. Walker

**Second:** Dexter Legg

**Discussion:** NONE

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

### **VI. COMMUNICATIONS**

#### 1. HARBOUR LIGHTS

#### 2. NEW FRANKLIN GAZETTE

3. CLASS OF 2009 GRADUATED ATTENDING COLLEGE - Ms. Emerson commented that the list of graduates and the colleges attended was impressive. She also recognized students going into the military and other fields.

4. SUPERINTENDENT AUTHORIZATION – Dr. Lister stated that there are vacancies that will need to be filled throughout the summer. A letter authorizing the superintendent to proceed with hiring throughout the summer months was voted on.

**Motion:** Motion to authorize the superintendent to proceed with summer hiring of open positions by Mr. LaPage

**Second:** Ms. Walker

**Discussion:** NONE

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

5. SCHOOL CALENDAR 2009-2010 – A copy of the new calendar will be placed on the school's website and sent home with each student. It will also be available in student's handbooks.

6. Other

**VII. RECOGNITION/UPDATE OF STAFF AND STUDENTS**

Dr. Lister recognized the new Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Ed McDonough and welcomed him to Portsmouth. He thanked staff for a successful school year and listed some highlights of each school.

1. Nominations

Kelly Whelan – New Franklin Elementary

Motion: Motion to approve by Ms. Walker

Second: Mr. Ellis

Vote: Unanimously approved

Sarah LaHut – PEEP

Motion: Motion to approve by Ms. Walker

Second: Ms. Sweet

Vote: Unanimously approved

Jennifer Fitt – PHS Math

Motion: Motion to approve by Ms. Walker

Second: Ms. Garrity

Vote: Unanimously approved

Shanyn Grenier – PHS Guidance

Motion: Motion to approve by Ms. Walker

Second: Ms. Sweet

Vote: Unanimously approved

Karen Dowling – Dondero Special Education

Motion: Motion to approve by Ms. Walker

Second: Ms. Garrity

Vote: Unanimously approved

2. Robert J. Lister Academy – Ms. Walker made the following motion...

**Motion:** The Portsmouth School Board wishes to honor the outstanding work of Dr. Robert J. Lister by naming the Portsmouth Alternative Secondary School, the program known as PASS, the Robert J. Lister Academy.

**Second:** Kent LaPage

**Discussion:** Bob Lister began his career as a Special Education teacher at Portsmouth High School thirty-three years ago. Although he later moved on to a variety of administrative roles, ending with Superintendent, his heart has always been in Special Education. He is a champion of Special Olympics, and an especially proud founder of the PASS Program. This project based differentiated curriculum ensures success for all students. For these reasons, it is most appropriate to name this successful banner program for its founder.... and let it be know henceforth as the Robert J. Lister Academy. Mr. LaPage stated that Dr. Lister is well known throughout the state by Special Olympics participants and their families. He noted that through the program at PASS, literally thousands of students have stayed in school to achieve a diploma by other districts emulating the PASS program in their own districts.

**Vote:** Unanimously Approved.

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION**

1. Mr. Mike Quinn, President of the New Hampshire Special Olympics, commended Dr. Lister for his years of service and dedication to Special Olympics, stating that he has made the state of New Hampshire and the Portsmouth community a better place for all.

## **IX. FINANCIAL**

1. Stimulus Update – Mr. Bartlett provided an update on Competitive Bonding awards from the state. Nine applications were received. Schools awarded were Somersworth, Winnisquam, Pembroke and Concord. Portsmouth, Dover, Keene, Mason and Pinkerton did not receive funds. Based on the criteria the state went by, it would have been nearly impossible for Portsmouth to receive any funding. So far, the City of Portsmouth has applied for twenty-two stimulus packets and only been awarded two minor portions. Towns that did receive funds were towns that have not been successful raising funds in their community. Another portion took into consideration the food service grant. The cut off for free and reduced needed to be 50% or higher. Portsmouth is 20%.

Mr. Ellis requested that if the state has the formula that they used readily available, he would like to have a copy. Mr. Bartlett will follow up on this request.

Mr. Bartlett also updated the board on IDEA funding and Title I funding. The positions created with these funds will not create a future burden on the district budget and will focus on training staff members to better assist students with differentiated learning styles. Mr. Zadravec stated that administration looked at stimulus funds as an opportunity to narrow the focus of the district and assess where training is necessary.

The contracted positions are targeted to raise staff's abilities to learn and sustain services after the two-year period ends.

2. Tri-State ASBO Scholarship Recipient – Ms. Lisa Howard was this year's recipient and will be attending Thompson School of Applied Science at the University of New Hampshire and hopes to own her own business after graduation.
3. May financials – Fluctuations are holding and are expected to hold through June. It is anticipated that there will be a salary over run but a benefits overage will compensate for the shortage. Copier vendors changed, resulting in some cost savings. The middle school foundation continues to be monitored and will continue to take a toll on the maintenance budget line. Mr. Bartlett commended Mr. Linchey on his research in utilities, resulting in a lower energy rate for the district. FEMA funds were received to help offset maintenance for a compressor that failed during the ice storm. Mr. LaPage requested a breakdown of costs incurred by the district during the storm, including any reimbursement amounts received to date.

4. EOY Report – Covered under financials. A more complete EOY report will be given at the first meeting in August.
5. Reserve Fund Update – A meeting was held between Mr. Bartlett, the city Finance Director, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and the City Manager to discuss the possibility of a reserve fund. This fund would be utilized to fund non-recurring items that would have a lasting improvement for the school district. The fund will need to be acceptable to the city's auditors. Future meetings will focus on guidelines in setting up a reserve fund in a way that does not give the school district an advantage over another city department.
6. Bus Contract Extension – The bus company is close to securing a supply of bio-diesel B5 that will not change the costs of the contract, yet allow the school district to convert to bio-diesel transportation. The contract should be finalized and appear before the board for vote on July 21, 2009.

## **X. AGENDA**

1. Network Device Policy – First Reading. It was unclear whether or not wireless was password protected. School Board members requested that the superintendent inquire about access to the school district's wireless hookups.
2. Attendance Policy – Second Reading

**Motion:** Pending the legal changes made in the previous Non-Public meeting with Legal Counsel, motion to approve the revised Attendance Policy by Mr. Legg

**Second:** Ms. Walker

**Discussion:**

**Vote:** Unanimously approved
3. VOTE 2009-2010 Budget – Superintendent Recommendations

**Motion:** Motion to accept the reductions as recommended by the Superintendent by Mr. Legg

**Second:** Ms. Emerson

**Discussion:** Mr. LaPage believes that the recommended school budget will leave the district over \$200,000.00 short next year and positions are being cut that will affect sports and learning for all students. Mr. LaPage also raised concerns about a local business being granted a contract without the district opening the bidding process up to other companies that may have interest. Ms. Emerson raised concern about the board micro managing Administration's decisions on what to cut to achieve the 0% budget while still providing a high quality education. Ms. Garrity agreed. The board submitted the budget and now it is up to administration to maintain the budget.

**Vote:** 6 Ayes, 2 Opposed (KL, SG)

4. VOTE: TA for Cafeteria Workers –

**Motion:** Motion to approve the Tentative Agreement of the Cafeteria Workers by Ms. Emerson

**Second:** Ms. Sweet

**Discussion:** Mr. Ellis stated he supports the union but is disappointed that there continues to be language in the contract that prevents privatization. He believes this to be an obstacle within the contract.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

5. Other – Ms. Garrity attended a public meeting on the city’s recreational needs and reported that two more meetings will be scheduled.

Ms. Sweet reported that the state budget emerged from conference including \$91 million for past, present and future building projects.

Ms. Walker inquired about a new position titled “Coalition Coordinator”. Dr. Lister reported that he is meeting with Dr. Cushing and interviews are being conducted to hire a coordinator through grant funding to develop a plan and performance indicators to address underage drinking in the Greater Portsmouth area.

Ms. Garrity requested that Mr. Zadavec notify parents and the community of the change to late start days and the reasoning behind the change. A registration form for breakfast and child care needs is being created and will be sent to all parents before the first late start day.

**XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Other

**XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. LOTI Survey Results
2. Sabbatical Presentation by Joy Bryan
3. Results of Middle School Timeline meeting with City Manager
4. Other

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy L. Noble