

PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR JULY 21, 2009

LITTLE HARBOUR ELEMENTARY
DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2009

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

THERE WILL BE A NON-PUBLIC MEETING IN ACCORDANCE WITH RSA 91-A:3, (2) AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE LITTLE HARBOUR ELEMENTARY CONFERENCE ROOM.

I. CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 7:25 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

Absent:

III. INVOCATION

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Motion: Motion to seal the minutes of July 21, 2009 Non- Public Session by Ms. Garrity.

Second: Ms. Walker

Vote: Unanimously Approved

V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

a. JUNE 23, 2009 – PUBLIC SESSION

Motion: Motion to approve the minutes of June 23, 2009 Public Session by Mr. Legg

Second: Ms. Walker

Vote: Unanimously Approved

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION - None

VII. RECOGNITION, EDUCATIONAL AND/OR SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Eighth grader Alex MacNair, former seventh grade student on Team Voyager, presented a comprehensive and impressive presentation focusing on the success of Team Voyager's yearlong IMPACT Sustainability project and more specifically how they incorporated the technology of social networking via a team-wide "ning" Internet site.

Alex highlighted how the entire team of students participated in blogging, photo/video sharing and virtual interactions with their peers and teachers, all while utilizing Internet safety protocols and focusing on digital citizenship.

Alex, who ran training sessions to help his teammates learn to navigate the ning, showcased the team's site and selected student pages; the overall project goal - to spread the "impact" of Team Voyager's yearlong project was a success, thanks in large part to Alex's continued effort and support of his team, school and community. For a complete viewing of the 7th grade project, please visit www.voyagersgogreen.ning.com.

Alex also encouraged the district to look into electronic homework, further reducing paper waste throughout the district.

Ms. Sweet thanked Alex for presenting to the board and appreciated being able to learn about a networking social site related to education.

Ms. Birrell mentioned that, as teachers and students utilize more and more on the Internet, more bandwidth would be needed. If the district can truly save paper and toner, then perhaps, with a commitment, it could provide more funds toward bandwidth.

Ms. Birrell will be invited to report back on the LOTI results, showing how comfortable the staff is with integrating technology into their classrooms.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Items for Information
 - i. Donderific Newsletter -
 - ii. Superintendent's Update – sent via email throughout the district
 - iii. Letter explaining reimbursement from NH Department of Health and Human Services – 2009 stimulus bill, increasing reimbursement from 50 to 56.2%. Check was received and the district will continue to receive the adjusted reimbursement amount throughout the year.
 - iv. NESDEC Information – “Improved Leadership for Improved Achievement” Materials provided by the superintendent to prepare members for the upcoming school board retreat. Mr. Goodman, NESDEC representative, will be in attendance.

- b. Correspondence
 - i. Thank you card from Dr. Lister
 - ii. Invitation to participate in National Night Out on August 4, 2009 – Historically, school board members have rented a bus and visited certain neighborhoods together. If members are interested, Mr. McDonough will arrange for a bus to be rented.
 - iii. Letter received from the New Hampshire Associations of Counties, the New Hampshire Local Government Center and the New Hampshire School Board Association regarding the reduction in the state's share towards funding educators' retirement. In 2010, a shift in the state's contribution will decrease by 5%. On July 1, the district learned of the adjustment to the rates. Mr. Bartlett will calculate the gap anticipated in the FY 10 budget. The city is planning to participate in this lawsuit.
 - iv. Request for Proposal – Safe Routes to School Travel Plan Study
- c. District Reports
 - i. Financial
 - 1. 2009 End of Year Preliminary Overview – Mr. Bartlett stated that he anticipates an unaudited report for August 11, 2009. Several line items were discussed. Mr. Bartlett is projecting that the district will stay within the budget for the year. It was noted that Food service turned around and is looking to break even for the year.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Formal Roll Call Vote – Renaming PASS Alternative School to Robert J. Lister Academy

Motion: Motion by Ms. Walker 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: Mr. LaPage

Roll Call Vote: Unanimously approved
- b. Update on Middle School Project – August 10, a presentation by JCJ Architects will be made to city council. Due to the Peirce deed restriction coming in below budget and fluctuation in numbers, it was decided to hold a special meeting, prior to August 10, 2009, in order to propose an accurate amount to the City Council for bonding.

Mr. Bartlett anticipates meeting with JCJ to discuss changes in the budget, as well as introduce the new superintendent before the board holds its special meeting.

Mr. LaPage inquired about the status of the middle school pilings. Mr. Bartlett stated he is waiting for a report to be completed. All data will be funneled to JCJ to decide if the piling situation will affect the middle school budget. The work completed on the pilings to date will not come out of bonded funds but out of district funds that will be reimbursable in the future.

Dr. Shuldman has heard that some city council members have concerns about “secret hidden features” in the budget. He assured the community and council members that there are no hidden costs in the middle school budget. Parking lots and a parking garage may have been discussed by city officials but not by the school board. All parking issues related to the renovation of the Portsmouth Middle School have been solved without the construction of a parking garage.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consideration and approval of new scholarship trust – Diane Lieberman Share. Ms. Lieberman Share was a former school board chair and an employee of the Portsmouth School District for many years. The scholarship shall be paid after the completion of the student’s first semester of post high school education and shall be awarded a graduating senior from Portsmouth High School who has been accepted to an institution of higher learning with the intention of becoming an elementary educator.

Motion: Motion to approve the Diane Lieberman Share scholarship by Mr. Ellis.

Second: Ms. Walker

Roll Call vote – Unanimously approved.

A letter of appreciation will be sent to Ms. Lieberman Share.

- b. Consideration and approval of Employment
 - i. Grade 4 – Dondero Elementary – Lisa Lisbon.

Motion: Motion to approve the hiring of Lisa Lisbon by Ms. Walker

Second: Vice Chair Garrity

Vote: Unanimously approved.

- ii. Computer Technology Integrator – PHS – Susan MacNicoll

Motion: Motion to approve the hiring of Susan MacNicoll by Ms. Walker

Second: Mr. Legg

Vote: Unanimously approved.

- iii. Spanish – PHS – Carolyn Morse-Finn
 - Motion:** Motion to approve the hiring of Carolyn Morse-Finn by Mr. LaPage
 - Second:** Ms. Walker
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
- iv. French – PHS – Jeannette MacDonald
 - Motion:** Motion to approve the hiring of Jeannette MacDonald by Mr. LaPage
 - Second:** Vice Chair Garrity
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
- v. Computer Technology Integrator – PMS – Anna Leijon-Guth
 - Motion:** Motion to approve the hiring of Anna Leijon-Guth by Ms. Walker
 - Second:** Vice Chair Garrity
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
- vi. Library Media Specialist – PMS – Kelly Moore
 - Motion:** Motion to approve the hiring of Kelly Moore by Ms. Walker
 - Second:** Ms. Stevens
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
- vii. 50% grade 5 at Dondero Elementary – Elizabeth Lichtenberg
 - Motion:** Motion to approve the hiring of Elizabeth Lichtenberg by Ms. Walker
 - Second:** Vice Chair Garrity
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
- c. Consideration and approval of Retirement
 - i. Maggie Evans – Reading Specialist at Dondero Elementary
 - Motion:** Motion, with regret to accept the retirement of Maggie Evans by Mr. LaPage
 - Second:** Ms. Stevens
 - Vote:** Unanimously approved.
 - d. Other - Mr. LaPage reminded board members that Chief Magnant is soon retiring. The Portsmouth School District has had an outstanding relationship with the police department and Mr. LaPage contributes this to Chief Magnant's commitment to working with the district.
 - Motion:** Motion to write a letter of recognition and thanks to Chief Magnant by Mr. LaPage
 - Second:** Mr. Legg

Discussion: Chair Shuldman stated that Chief Magnant's professionalism and integrity should be recognized by all as outstanding.

Vote: Unanimously approved

Mr. LaPage requested that in the future, Ms. Sue DesJardins, a graduate of PHS, be invited to speak regarding her recent rank in status, Adjunct General to the United States Air Force.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Safe Routes to Schools – In 2007 a grant was received for \$93,000. The more visible results of these funds include flashing yellow signs, and bike racks soon to be installed. Other projects include:
 - A \$27,000 project at Dondero for bike lanes and parking lanes will soon be implemented.
 - In October, a workshop will be held at the public library.
 - A survey will be going out to parents regarding walking.
 - "Walk to School Day" will be the last week in October.
 - The 2008 grant was inclusive of a \$65,000 travel plan that was put out to bid. An RFP from Alta Corp. received the bid. They will be looking at five schools, minus the high school, to see how SRTS can work with the city to improve crossings. JCJ will be invited to study plans relating to the middle school. Once this travel plan is created, the committee will be able to apply for further granting.
- b. Food Service Negotiations – Mr. LaPage reported that City Council passed the TA for Food Services and that the last school related contract is at an impasse. (Custodial)
- c. Other – Mr. LaPage provided a letter written to Mr. Duane Frank. Mr. Frank has been the voice of Portsmouth clippers for many years. Mr. Frank will be recognized on the opening night football game and it is being requested that the announcer's booth be dedicated to Mr. Frank and commemorated with a plaque. The school board will entertain the vote at their next regularly scheduled board meeting.

Ms. Walker reported that the Committee for Sustainable Practices is working on a policy for 0% waste.

Motion: Motion to adjourn by Vice Chair Garrity.

Second: Ms. Stevens

Vote: Unanimous at 8:50 p.m.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. LOTI Survey Results
- b. Sabbatical Presentation by Joy Bryan Markley in August

Respectfully submitted by:

Mr. Edward R. McDonough
Superintendent of Schools