

## PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

EILEEN C. DONDERO COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PORTSMOUTH, NH

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

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

### **II. ROLL CALL 7:00 pm**

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

Absent:

### **III. INVOCATION**

### **IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

#### **a. AUGUST 11, 2009 – PUBLIC SESSION**

**MOTION:** Motion to approve the minutes of August 11, 2009 by Ms. Sweet

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

### **VI. PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION**

Mr. Rich Dipetima- 16 Dunaway Portsmouth, NH. Mr. Dipetima stated how pleased he was that the Superintendent and School Board Chair decided to air President Obama's address to school children. Mr. Dipetima stated that he believes the real winners are the children and democracy that is under threat within this great country.

### **VII. RECOGNITION, EDUCATIONAL AND/OR SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

- a. Safe Routes to Schools – Ms. Kirsten Barton, a parent at Little Harbour School, shared the History of the SRTS committee and presented board members with an invitation to participate in a national course being offered October 27th at the Portsmouth Public Library. A proposed action plan will be created at this seminar.

The two grants received by SRTS were explained and improvements/projects funded by these funds include, but are not limited to: safe walkways, bike racks, safety signs, informational courses and National Walk to School Day. ALTA, a consultant firm out of Massachusetts, is creating a travel plan for all three elementary schools and Portsmouth Middle School. City council members, Portsmouth's mayor, school principals, school administrators and staff members are encouraged to attend the meeting as well.

- b. Sabbatical Presentation by Joy Bryan Markley - Ms. Joy Markley conducted an accelerated math program during and after school throughout all three elementary schools called AMPed and reported the program to be a huge success. The program ran from January through June of 2009. Mr. LaPage thanked Ms. Markley for her willingness to share her findings and thanked all who participated in the program. Mr. Legg requested that administration work closely with Ms. Markley to institutionalize the program and assure that the program continues, particularly the after-school high school tutoring component. Assistant Superintendent Zdravec noted that he is working on that with Ms. Markley and the elementary school principals. A report will be given in one year. Assistant Superintendent Zdravec stated that part of Ms. Markley's sabbatical includes an aspect of sustainability. Training and work with teachers throughout the summer hopefully will help to sustain the AMPed program this coming academic year. Mr. Ellis stated that he found it refreshing to provide an enrichment program, such as this, with so much funding and focus on No Child Left Behind.
- c. Superintendent McDonough introduced the School Board's new Student Representative, Philip Boynton, a senior at Portsmouth high school. Philip is involved in several student activities, including Student Council. After graduation, Philip is interested in pursuing criminal law or state politics. The board welcomed Mr. Boynton.

## **VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- a. Items for Information
  - i. Superintendent's Update – September 2009
  - ii. Memorandum from Legal Dept. re: JBC - Memorandum outlined duties and responsibilities of the committee, along with the application on line. Chair Shuldman stated that the Mayor and he would discuss who has applied and decide together who will sit on the committee. Although the statute doesn't talk about a necessary number appointed to JBC, equal numbers will be chosen. (4 by Mayor Ferrini, 4 by School Board Chair and one chosen together.) Chair Shuldman will announce the appointed committee members at the next regularly scheduled board meeting on September 22, 2009.

Mr. LaPage stated that the Business Administrator will also sit on the committee as a non-voting member and the city will also have a non-voting representative.

- iii. News Media Release – JBC Application Deadline
- iv. Tentative Culture Exchange with Nichinan Gakuen Educational System in Nichinan, Japan – Mr. Masakuni Soeda, Director General of the Nichinan Gakuen Educational System, visited Portsmouth thirteen (13) years ago and returned for a second visit on September 1st. Miyazaki, Japan has enjoyed a twenty-year sister/ school relationship with Portsmouth. During his recent visit, Mr. Soeda met with Mr. Collins, Principal of Portsmouth High School, and invited twenty (20) students and staff members to fly to Japan and attend a national cultural event, all expenses paid. In return, he requests that his ninth graders will be granted to visit in October. Mr. Collins will work closely with Japanese officials to prepare for the exchange due to occur next year.
- v. Resignation – Donna Blessing – PMS Student Services Coordinator  
**MOTION:** Motion to approve the resignation of Ms. Blessing by Ms. Walker  
**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Garrity  
**VOTE:** UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED
- vi. Extra-Curricular Activities Policy – Superintendent McDonough received a request to re-examine the school's extra curricular activities policy. Mr. McDonough suggested that this matter be referred to the Policy Committee to examine. After a short deliberation, it was decided that the Policy Committee would review and report back to the school board with their findings. Mr. LaPage requested that he go on record stating that he believes a vote should have been taken to refer the matter over to the committee.  
**MOTION:** Motion to accept Keith and Lisa McFarland's letter to be placed on file by Vice-Chair Garrity.  
**SECOND:** Ms. Walker  
**VOTE:** Unanimously approved.
- vii. Superintendent McDonough and Chair Shuldman reported that, despite the late notice of President Obama's speech to school children, every classroom was able to view the president's speech. They thanked principals and all staff members who worked quickly to set up televisions and rework schedules in order to accommodate such a late request. Superintendent McDonough stated that he was pleased that all children within the district were able to view this event.

b. Correspondence

- i. Letter to Parents re: H1N1 and Flu Season –Mr. LaPage voiced his appreciation with the work the Superintendent and Portsmouth Health Officer, Kim McNamara, have been doing to prepare for the onslaught of this year’s flu season. Superintendent McDonough stated that exercises are being conducted to improve on the city’s ability to respond. Schools are being asked to monitor daily attendance, helping to report growing pockets of concern. After Thanksgiving, vaccinations specifically for the H1N1 virus will be available. All schools are encouraging good “cough etiquette” and parents keeping children home, if sick.
- ii. Welcome Back Letter to Staff Members
- iii. Letter from Mr. Carl Diemer re: Recreations Needs Study
- iv. Letter from Keith and Lisa McFarland re: Request for Policy Change
- v. Ms Sweet requested that Athletic Director, Rus Wilson, conduct a needs assessment study to determine the needs, limitations and resources of the district and schools so the School Board could be part of the recreational needs shortage solution. Mr. LaPage stated that this has been done and is readily available. Mr. Legg requested that Mr. Wilson attend a meeting and share his findings with the board.

c. District Reports

i. Financial

1. July and August Financial Reports – Due to school not being in session until September, non-payroll and benefit lines do not hit stride until September or October. Supply and ordering varies as well in the beginning of the year. This should be viewed quarterly. Mr. Bartlett believes that trends for the rest of year will be clearer next month.

Mr. LaPage inquired, under 207 (retirement for state), where does the district stand? Mr. Bartlett estimates that the district will need to make up \$100,000.00 by the end of the year.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Update on Middle School Project – Chair Shuldman stated that the timeline for the middle school project is aggressive. Committee reports should begin in October from the JBC.
- b. Consideration and Approval of School Board Goals – 2009/2010 - Mr. Legg inquired about performance metrics, stating that the School Board did not accomplish what it had hoped last year. He requested that the

Superintendent research some measurements that other schools use and report back his findings.

Approval of School Board goals will be delayed until a goal providing for a quality education index is included. Mr. McDonough discussed a color-coded calendar; visualizing ways that administration plans to assist the school board in accomplishing goals in an acceptable time frame. Principals will report to the board on a rotational basis. Quarterly newsletters will be provided, goals being in the first report and follow-ups in future reports. Ms. Sweet thanked the Superintendent on his planning ahead and breakdown of the school year.

- c. Consideration and Approval to Participate in Financial Support of the New Hampshire Retirement Lawsuit – Mr. Bartlett reported that it would cost the city \$4,473.28 to participate in this lawsuit. Because the school district is a department of the city, participation is by default.

**MOTION:** Motion to Participate in Financial Support of the New Hampshire Retirement Lawsuit by Mr. Legg.

**SECOND:** Ms. Emerson

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. LaPage questioned if the board had authority to allocate funds for this purpose.

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

#### X. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consideration and Approval of Ms. Paula Wensley becoming Title IX Coordinator –

**MOTION:** Approval of Ms. Paula Wensley becoming Title IX Coordinator by Ms. Walker

**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Garrity

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- b. Consideration and Approval of Employment -

- i. Maria Lazanas – PHS School Psychologist

**MOTION:** Approval of Maria Lazanas as School Psychologist, PHS by Mr. LaPage

**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Garrity

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. LaPage questioned why a non-public was not held prior to the regular school board meeting in order to discuss new hires. Chair Shuldman reminded school board members of the letter approved by the board to authorize the Superintendent to hire throughout the summer months.

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- ii. Julie Ricker – PHS Library Media Specialist

**MOTION:** Approval of Julie Ricker as PHS Library Media Specialist by Mr. LaPage

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- iii. Lyndsey Bouzakine – PMS Resource Room Teacher

**MOTION:** Approval of Lyndsey Bouzakine as PMS Resource Room Teacher by Ms. Walker

**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Garrity

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- iv. Ann Mordecai – NFS/PMS Math Coach – Stimulus funding. –

**MOTION:** Approval of Ann Mordecai – NFS/PMS Math Coach by Mr. LaPage

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- v. Brandon Williams – PMS Math Interventionist –

**MOTION:** Approval of Brandon Williams – PMS Math Interventionist by Vice Chair Garrity

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- vi. Susan Avis – Reading Specialist (50%) – Dondero

**MOTION:** Approval of Susan Avis – DONDERO - Reading Specialist (50%) by Mr. LaPage

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously

- vii. Stephen Barry – PHS Math Interventionist –

**MOTION:** Approval of Stephen Barry – PHS Math Interventionist by Mr. LaPage

**SECOND:** Ms. Walker

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- c. Consideration and Approval of Contract

- i. Stacy Kramer – Coalition Coordinator – Unique opportunity with United Way Grant, combating different contributing factors for underage drinking. Business communities and parents will be brought together to communicate and collaborate.

**MOTION:** Approval of contract for Stacy Kramer – Coalition Coordinator by Ms. Walker

**SECOND:** Vice Chair Garrity

**DISCUSSION:** Part of position is researching further funding after grant funding discontinues.

**VOTE:** Unanimously Approved

- ii. Ms. Sweet requested that communication tools be put on a future agenda in order to communicate with parents quickly in case of emergency.

Mr. LaPage thanked the board for honoring Mr. Duane Frank and invited them all to attend the first home football game when Mr. Frank will be commemorated.

**XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- a. LOTI Survey Results – Ms. Susan Birrell (October)

**XII. MOTION TO ADJOURN** – By Vice-Chair Garrity, Second by Mr. LaPage.  
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Mr. Edward McDonough  
Superintendent of Schools