

PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD PUBLIC MINUTES FOR JANUARY 22, 2013

PORTSMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL, SULLIVAN LIBRARY
DATE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2013

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

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- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
 - II. **ROLL CALL** LESLIE STEVENS (CHAIR), TOM MARTIN (VICE CHAIR) ANN WALKER, KENT LAPAGE, PATRICK ELLIS, DEXTER LEGG, MITCHELL SHULDMAN, MARY OLEA, ED MCDONOUGH, (SUPERINTENDENT), STEVE ZADRAVEC (ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT), STEPHEN BARTLETT (BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR) AND OLIN JOHANNESSEN (EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE).
 - III. **INVOCATION**
 - IV. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Chair Stevens led in the pledge of allegiance.
 - V. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - a. JANUARY 8, 2013
MOTION: Motion to accept the minutes of January 8, 2013 by Mr. Legg
SECOND: Ms. Walker
DISCUSSION:
VOTE: Unanimously Approved
 - b. JANUARY 15, 2013
MOTION: Motion to accept the minutes of January 15, 2013 by Mr. Ellis
SECOND: Mr. Shuldman
DISCUSSION:
VOTE: Unanimously Approved
 - VI. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
 - VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
 - a. **REDEDICATION OF LIBRARY:** JAMES MICHAEL SULLIVAN LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER – Mr. Sullivan thanked administration and the School Board for inviting him and his family to the rededication ceremony. Mr. Sullivan shared a brief history of his son's passion for the media industry and concluded by thanking the School Board for bestowing such an honor on James. Two plaques now hang in honor of James Sullivan. One outside above the doors upon entering and one inside to the left of the doors.
 - b. **UPDATE AND INTRODUCTION OF CHINESE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR, MR YANG** – Mr. Yige Wang introduced the new Mandarin Instructor who will begin teaching at Portsmouth High School and Portsmouth Middle School, Mr. Yang is excited to begin teaching after spending his first week observing in the different language classes. Mr. Wang expects to introduce one more instructor to the Portsmouth School Department next semester.
 - c. **HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE PRESENTATION** – The Portsmouth High School Guidance Department provided an in-depth look at what each guidance counselor is responsible for and how the team works as a whole. A PowerPoint presentation highlighted the Naviance Program, a program utilized by students and their parents as students prepare for college.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. ITEMS OF INFORMATION
 - i. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE, JANUARY
 - ii. SUPREME COURT RULES AGAINST MUNICIPALITIES IN RETIREMENT FUNDING LAWSUIT
 - iii. FAQ's ON EMPLOYER RATES FOR FY14 & FY15 FROM NHRS
- b. CORRESPONDENCE
 - i. LETTERS OF RESIGNATION
 - 1. LISA SWEET, PMS MATH/SCIENCE
 - 2. KATHLEEN KNATOW, LHS, GRADE 1

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- a. WORKSHOP SESSION: SCHOOL TRUANCY – Board members reviewed data provided by administration on cohort school districts. Gathered data suggests that the Portsmouth School Department is functioning effectively with the loss of CHINS but slowly realizing slightly higher truancy rates at the high school level. Principal Collins shared practices that have been put into place to replace CHINS: guidance counselors and assistant principals meeting after more than three absences with students, doctors notes being required, meetings with Principal Collins or the SRO after more than four and finally a visit to the home to speak with parents to discuss how a student can become re-engaged. Administration is working with the Portsmouth Housing Authority to procure a grant.

Mr. LaPage asked the Guidance Department if extra training was necessary to reduce truancy issues. Administration will meet with Ms. Donovan to discuss counselor needs and resources that might be available through the community.

Assistant Superintendent concluded the workshop by reminding the Board of the administration's goal to decrease the percent of students who hit 18 absences or more. Over the past year the admin team has been working on what to put in place to achieve this smart goal and how to better coordinate what already exists. Board members agreed that truancy was not a policy issue but an execution issue. Because CHINS has disappeared, administration must work on how to best utilize all available resources to assure it does not grow into a bigger problem. Mr. Zadavec is meeting with administration and will share their findings with the Board. The Policy committee will also revisit the attendance policy.

X. NEW BUSINESS - NONE

XI. COMMITTEE UPDATE

- a. JBC – The City of Portsmouth conducted additional testing regarding jacking and came to the decision that there was not sufficient benefit for what it would cost. The JBC decided to repair the piers with concrete rather than timbers piers. There are 31 piers total that will need to be addressed.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. WORKSHOP SESSION: SCIENCE, TBD

Motion to adjourn at 9:45 pm. by Vice-Chair Martin, Seconded by Mr. Ellis. Unanimously Approved.