

**Portsmouth School Board  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

**Minutes of the March 23, 2004 Meeting**

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, March 23, 2004 in the auditorium at Portsmouth High School.

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***Attendance***

**PRESENT:** Mr. Kent LaPage (Chair), Mrs. Nancy Novelline Clayburgh (Vice-Chair), Mr. Raimond Bowles, Mrs. Roseann Vozella Clark, Mrs. Nansi Craig, Mr. Clay Hayward, Mr. John Lyons, Jr., Mr. Charles Vaughn, Mrs. Ann Walker

**PARTICIPATING:** Dr. Lyonel B. Tracy (Superintendent of Schools), Dr. Robert J. Lister (Assistant Superintendent), Mr. W. Peter Torrey (Business Administrator), Mr. Adam Irish (Student Representative), Diane O'Leary McGee (Employee Representative), and Mrs. Ann Mayer (SAU 50 Representative)

***Informational Session***

Prior to the regular meeting, the Board hosted an informational session in the auditorium to discuss the student drug and alcohol policy.

***Call to Order***

Chair LaPage called the regular meeting of the Portsmouth School Board to order at 9:47 p.m.

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**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

***Minutes Approved***

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the March 9, 2004 meeting. Mr. Vaughn moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the minutes be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the March 11, 2004 meeting. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the minutes be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Yard Sale at Portsmouth High School***

The Board received an announcement of a "yard sale" of surplus school furniture to be held at Portsmouth High School on Saturday, March 27. Mrs. Clayburgh moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the Board allow the Business Administrator to sell all remaining unusable furniture at this time. The motion was unanimously

approved.

The Chair reviewed the informational items that were placed in the Board folders: two articles on yearly progress from the “No Child Left Behind” newsletter and a nomination form for the 2004 “Awards for Excellence in Education” celebration.

Mr. Lyons moved the Board suspend the rules and hear from the Guidance Department. The Chair stated he would prefer to hold the Public Commentary Session and requests for overnight student trips before moving to the presentation from the Guidance Department.

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### **PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION**

***Request to Name  
PHS Track In  
Honor of Mike  
Grogan***

The Chair handed the gavel to Mrs. Clayburgh and joined Mr. Peter Anania, 197 Woodlawn Circle, Portsmouth, and graduate of the Class of 1973, at the podium. Mr. Anania said a lot of great things have come out of Portsmouth High School: great students, musicians, athletes, teachers, coaches, etc. Mr. Anania presented petitions to name the outdoor track at Portsmouth High School after Mike Grogan, a retired teacher and track coach at Portsmouth High School from 1963 through 1986. He said Mr. Grogan continued assistant coaching duties at Portsmouth through 1999, when he had to put his coaching duties on hold to stay at home to take care of his disabled wife. Mr. Anania reviewed the accomplishments of the track teams under Coach Grogan’s leadership. He said Mr. Grogan was also a great teacher at Portsmouth High School, and spent many of his own hours being a mentor advising and helping his athletes and students. He requested the Board consider the request to name the Portsmouth High School Track after Coach Mike Grogan. Mr. LaPage said he supports the petition to name the track after Mike Grogan. He said Mr. Grogan was a teacher at this facility, and was the only teacher to teach a class called “New England Folklore.” He said Mr. Grogan was a disciplinarian, yet never had to raise his voice. Mr. LaPage said Mr. Grogan is very deserving of this honor and is still actively coaching in the Seacoast area.

Mr. Vaughn requested the topic to name the track after Coach Mike Grogan be placed on the next agenda; Mr. Hayward seconded the motion. Mrs. Craig stated the community needs to have a say in this, and asked if the Board would be considering this before the public has time to comment. The Vice-Chair stated the next Board meeting is three weeks away, and that should allow time for people in the community to learn of the request and respond. The motion to place the request on the April 13 agenda was unanimously approved. The Chair returned to the table and the gavel was returned to him.

## **RECOGNITION OF STAFF/STUDENTS**

### ***Overnight Trips Approved***

#### ***Dondero Fourth Grade Trip***

Dr. Lister presented a request from Jill LeMay, Dondero School Principal, and Mike Anderson, fourth grade teacher at Dondero School, for Mr. Anderson to take his fourth grade class to an overnight field trip to Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham, New Hampshire on June 4, 2004. Dr. Lister said the purpose of the trip is the culmination of the science curriculum and work completed with his class. He said parents will go along to chaperone, and communication will be available by cell phones. Mr. Lyons moved the Board approve the trip to Pawtuckaway State Park for the Dondero School fourth grade class. Mr. Vaughn seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### ***Future Career and Community Leaders***

Mr. Ransdell, High School Principal, presented a request from Pam MacArtney and Joy Betts to allow 12 High School students and three adults two teachers to attend the Future Career and Community Leaders of America Conference and Competitions at the Summit Hotel in Bartlett, New Hampshire. Mr. Ransdell said the conference appropriately ties in with the curriculum, contact information has been reviewed, and the chaperone ratio is sufficient. Ms. MacArtney, Career Technology Director, said students have gone every year and they compete in competitions. In the past, students have won at the State level and have then gone on to the National competitions. Mr. Vaughn moved, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the overnight trip be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

### ***Honors Ensemble***

Mr. Ransdell presented a request from Wendell Purrington for seven student musicians from Portsmouth High School to participate as performers in honors ensembles in the New Hampshire Music Educators Association Spring Conference on April 1 – 3, 2004 at Pinkerton Academy in Derry. Gwen Baker and Wendell Purrington will drive the students to the festival on Thursday, April 1, after school. Accommodations for the students' overnight stay will be in two hotels (one for the boys, another for the girls). The students will return home with their parents after the final concert on Saturday afternoon. Mr. Vaughn moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the Board approve the overnight trip. The motion was unanimously approved.

### ***Report from High School Guidance Department***

Counselors and support staff from the High School Guidance Department were in attendance to present a report on the duties of the guidance staff. Mr. Mike Modern, a guidance counselor since 1980, introduced Jean Fleischmann, guidance secretary, and Debbie Paul, registrar, and reviewed the duties of their positions. The following guidance counselors were in attendance and presented a report on the duties that are unique to each academic class: Susan Anderson, Jamie Garneau, Amy Mercier, Mike Modern, and Laurie Relinski. The counselors meet with individual students on a daily basis for

***Report from High School Guidance Department (con't.)***

numerous purposes as well as meeting with classes of students when appropriate. Ms. Anderson reviewed guidance offered for grades 9 through 12: student meetings; crisis counseling; course selection/scheduling; develop and refine individual four-year plans; coordination of homework requests; review progress reports and report cards; send failure letters when appropriate; maintain parent contact; facilitate parent/teacher conferences; referral source for students and families; 504 case management; write recommendations; new student registration; participate in special education meetings and in Principal Leadership Team; coordination and participation in the Student Services Team; and participation in college visitations. Eighth grade transition and college counselor duties were also reviewed.

Chair LaPage stated he was disappointed that no faculty members addressed the Board at the previous work session, and he asked the counselors if they would like to comment on the issue of drug use by high school students. Ms. Anderson said that drugs are a serious problem, and there are students who will experiment, yet a good percentage will not become addicted. She said the counselors have discussed what can they do that will have an impact on the students. Ms. Relinski said that if you think about it all the time, it will seem so over-whelming. She said the counselors all do what they can everyday with the students they come in contact with. She said there is a group for children of alcoholics. She said there is a group of students whose parents are addicted to drugs and alcohol. Ms. Relinski said they never turn the children away; they are always there for them. Mr. Modern said very few of the parents will come and address this group. He said they deal with kids who are using drugs or alcohol who will grow up to be fine citizens. He said very few kids will become addicted or be heavy users. He said they also deal with students of addictive parents and there is a whole other set of issues involved. Mr. Vaughn asked what the situation is at the high school. Mrs. Garneau said it is most disturbing to her when students arrive at school high as they must be doing this at home. Ms. Anderson said the good news is that the majority of these kids will go on to graduate and become productive, healthy, wonderful citizens. The Chair thanked them for their report and their candid comments.

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**PERSONNEL**

***Coaching Nominations***

Dr. Lister presented the nomination of Brian Moore to the position of varisty lacrosse coach. Mr. Vaughn moved, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the nomination be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Lister presented the nomination of Sarah Olsen to the position of girls varsity tennis coach. Mr. Vaughn moved, seconded by Mrs.

Walker, the nomination be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

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### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### ***Second Readings of Policies Approved***

Policy Committee – Mrs. Craig presented the second reading of two policies that had been amended, Subject Areas and School Calendar. Mr. Lyons moved the Board approve the second readings of these policies; Mrs. Craig seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Craig said the first reading of the Curriculum policy will be postponed to the next meeting.

#### ***Second Readings to Eliminate Policies Approved***

Mrs. Craig presented the second reading to eliminate the following policies in section three of the policy book: Elementary Schools, Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Mr. Lyons moved the Board approve the second reading to eliminate these policies; Mrs. Craig seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

#### ***Joint Building Committee***

Joint Building Committee: Mr. Torrey reported the City's Planning Board, last Thursday, approved the portion for the expansion and renovation of the Technical Career Center. He said the project is now ready to move forward. Mrs. Clayburgh reported the High School Parent Teacher Student Association hosted an open house last Monday evening, and about 700 people toured the new building.

Mr. Bowles asked if the Athletic Committee has met; Mrs. Craig responded they are waiting to be contacted by Mr. Ransdell and Mr. McKenney.

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### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### ***Discussion About Bringing Police Dogs Into Portsmouth High School***

The Superintendent reported the Portsmouth Safe Schools Team had discussed bringing dogs into the high school and had decided to wait until the new Principal was on board and the students and staff were settled into the new building. Dr. Tracy said that Mr. Ransdell has been working with the Police Department to produce a plan for bringing the dogs into the school. He said that as long as there is no objection from the Board, Mr. Ransdell will proceed with that plan. Mr. Vaughn suggested the plan include both the staff and students. Dr. Tracy stated that if the Board wants to include investigating staff, he would need to obtain a legal opinion. Mr. Lyons said he is not sure that he is in favor of bringing the dogs into the school, and that he would want for the Board to be given a presentation to discuss the

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***Discussion About  
Bringing Police  
Dogs Into  
Portsmouth High  
School (con't.)***

issues. Mr. Lyons said the Board has taken a positive step by placing in the budget a second security person. He also stated the athletic contract needs to be reviewed, and he suggested the athletic sub-committee be brought together. Mr. Vaughn said comments made at the previous work session have raised some issues that should be debated by the Board. The Chair stated that at some point the Board needs to go on with business. He said the Board continuously reviews its policies, and if somebody feel that a policy needs to be changed, to please notify Nansi Craig.

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**CONTINUING BUSINESS**

There was no Continuing Business to come before the Board.

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**FINANCIAL**

***Reimbursement of  
Expenses to Come  
from Athletic  
Budget***

Mr. Torrey said he has received a request for reimbursement of expenses incurred with taking Cory Thorne to a National track meeting. He said Cory was accompanied by an individual, at the School Department's request, who incurred expenses of \$811.95 for travel. Mr. Torrey said these funds will come from the Athletic Department budget.

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**NEXT AGENDA**

***Next Meeting***

The Chair stated the next meeting of the School Board will be held in Council Chambers on April 13.

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**OTHER**

***PTSA Meeting***

Mrs. Clayburgh reported the High School Parent Teacher Student Association will meet tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m.

***Computer Safety  
Classes***

Mrs. Walker asked about the schedule of the computer safety classes that were conducted at Dondero School by the Police Department.

***Adjournment***

There was no further business to come before the Board. The Chair thanked Mr. Ransdell for hosting the meeting. Mrs. Walker moved, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyonel B. Tracy, Ed.D.  
Executive Secretary