

**Portsmouth School Board
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Minutes of the September 26, 2006 Meeting

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, September 26, 2006 in the library at Portsmouth High School.

Attendance

PRESENT: Mr. Kent F. LaPage (Chair), Mrs. Nancy Novelline Clayburgh (Vice-Chair), Ms. Sheri Ham Garrity, Mr. Clay Hayward, Mr. John Lyons, Jr., Mr. Brendan Ristaino, Dr. Mitchell Shuldman, Mr. Carson Smith, Mrs. Ann Walker,

PARTICIPATING: Dr. Robert J. Lister (Superintendent of Schools), Mr. Stephen Zadavec (Assistant Superintendent), Mr. Stephen T. Bartlett (Business Administrator), Miss Elisa Loeser (Student Representative), Mrs. Ann Mayer (SAU 50 Representative), and Mrs. Linda Briolat (Employee Representative)

Non-Public Session

Prior to the regular meeting, the Board met in a non-public session, held in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3 II. (a) and (c).

Call to Order

Chair LaPage called the regular meeting of the Portsmouth School Board to order at 8:30 p.m. He thanked Mr. Jeff Collins, High School Principal, for hosting the meeting, and he apologized for the late start to the meeting.

Remembrances

The Chair called for a moment of silent reflection. He asked people to remember Patricia Danforth, a retired teacher and long-time employee, who passed away last week. He said that Mrs. Danforth was well-known in the educational and Portsmouth community, and her children reside in the community and work with children. The Chair asked people to remember Marlene Mayo, the wife of a former High School Principal, William Mayo, who passed away last week. He said that Mr. and Mrs. Mayo had an outstanding love for children and people in the community. He also asked people to remember those who serve our Country at home and abroad.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair asked Miss Loeser, who was recently elected as President of the Student Council, to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The Superintendent then called the roll.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

***August 22 Minutes
Approved***

The Chair called for approval of the August 22, 2006 minutes. Mrs. Walker moved, seconded by Mr. Hayward, the minutes be approved. The motion was unanimously approved

***September 12
Minutes Amended
and Approved***

The Chair called for approval of the September 12, 2006 minutes. He said that in the folders this evening is revised page five to correct the date of the budget work session to be Wednesday, November first. Ms. Garrity requested a correction to the first paragraph of page eight to indicate that Jodi Record (not John Stokel) is working on a write-up for the Middle School. Mrs. Walker moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, the minutes be approved as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION

No one had signed up to address the Board. The Chair declared the public commentary session closed.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF/STUDENTS

***Requests for
Student Field Trips***

Mr. Collins presented to the administration and Board a request for Mr. Stan Lyford, High School cross-country coach, to take 16 runners to compete in the Manhattan Invitational Cross-Country Meet held in Van Cortland Park in October. Mr. Lyford said although he has 15 boys and 15 girls on the cross-country teams, he is only allowed to register seven runners plus one alternate for each team. The students would be selected for the most part based on their speed. Mr. Lyford said it would be cost prohibitive to bring the entire teams. He said that in order for the trip to also be educational, he is making arrangements for the students to visit the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Mr. Lyford said some excess resources from the New Castle Road Race have been offered to him to help fund this trip. Mr. Ristaino moved the Board approve the cross-country trio to New York to compete in the Manhattan Invitational Cross-Country Meet. Mrs. Walker seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Cross-Country Trip
Approved***

Ms. Kathleen Metterville, Assistant Principal at Portsmouth High School, thanked the Board for allowing the Environmental Club students to spend a week at Rimrock Ranch in Wapati, Wyoming this past June, and brought some pictures of that trip. Ms. Metterville presented a request for the Environmental Club to travel to South Water Caye in Belize, to the same site visited in 1999 and 2004, with International Zoological Expeditions for a field workshop at the end

**Requests for
Student Field Trips
(cont.)**

of June, 2007. She said the pristine marine environment provides a unique experience for the students, and explained the educational value of the trip. Ms. Metterville said if the trip is approved, she would apply for a GPEPC grant to award as a scholarship to allow a financially disadvantaged student to participate. At the present time, she estimates the cost of the trip to be \$2,000 per person. Students would participate in fund-raising activities. Ms. Metterville said the trip is a field trip, and the students would have assignments. Therefore, the student's transcript would state that one-quarter credit was earned on the study in the marine biology of Belize. Mrs. Walker moved, seconded by Mr. Ristaino, the Board authorize the trip to Belize in June 2007 for the Environmental Club. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Environmental Club
Trip Approved**

Ms. Jenn Dunham, fifth grade teacher at Dondero Elementary School, was present with three UNH students (Chris Sellars, Alita Pedley, and Charlie Manganiello) who are participating in the Kinesiology 682 Outdoor Leadership course. Ms. Dunham said she and the UNH students, along with Professor Pamela McPhee, have worked to plan an extensive unit for her fifth grade class to participate in an Outdoor Leadership Wilderness Expedition, concluding with a hike to Greenleaf Hut on Mount Lafayette and two-night stay in the UNH Outing Club's Frankie Cabin. She reviewed the goals for this trip, including wanting the students to appreciate the recreational benefits of the environment and learn how to travel comfortably within the environment. Ms. Dunham said there are 20 students in her class, and the Dondero PTA will provide \$300 for this trip, and the estimated cost per student will be \$15. Mr. Ristaino moved the Board accept the field trip; Mrs. Walker seconded the motion. Mr. Manganiello said there is a back-up plan to take the students to Pawtuckaway State Park if the weather will be too severe at Mount Lafayette. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Dondero Fifth
Grade Trip
Approved**

Correspondence

**Letter from Rye
School Board**

The Chair stated he received a letter from the Rye School Board thanking him and the Board for allowing a member of the Rye School Board to serve on the search committees for the High School Principal and Assistant Principal as well as parents from Rye. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, to accept the correspondence and that it be placed on file. The motion was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Joint Middle School
Advisory Comm.**

Joint Middle School Advisory Committee – Mrs. Clayburgh reported the Committee met on September 20th and voted to have some

***Joint Middle School
Advisory Comm.
(cont.)***

engineering studies done on two sites, Parrott Avenue and Jones Avenue. She said these will not be the only two sites to be considered, but the motion was intended to get the ball rolling. Mrs. Clayburgh reported that City Attorney Bob Sullivan talked about the manner in which the City may take the Peirce land by eminent domain, which is estimated to cost the City somewhere between \$1.7 million and \$2.2 million. Mrs. Clayburgh said that she is personally impressed with the spirit of the Committee members and their willingness to work together.

***Business Education
Collaborative***

Business Education Collaborative – Mr. Zadravec distributed a pamphlet for the Greater Portsmouth Business Education Collaborative. He quoted the mission statement, which is to promote business and community involvement in our schools to enhance education, career awareness and workforce readiness of our youth. Mr. Zadravec said the group serves a number of purposes, including acting as the required Advisory Committee to the Career Tech Center at the High School, and its broader purpose which is to look at innovative ways of connecting business partnerships to the schools. Mr. Zadravec cited the example of a group of businessmen who taught a business education class at the High School last year. Mr. Lyons stated this Committee is much more than the required advisory committee; it is constantly looking for new directions in which to move and offers many resources to the schools. It is another example of how the community gets involved in the schools.

Curriculum Council

Curriculum Council: Mr. Zadravec reported the Curriculum Council met last Thursday, September 21st, in the Board Room at Little Harbour School. He said the Committee will meet the third Thursday of each month. Mr. Zadravec stated that last year the Committee talked about how to go about revising the curriculum to fit the State frameworks, and this year they will revise the curriculum. He said another area of importance this year will be around student assessments and how we can measure the progress students make on a variety of measures.

***Communications ad
hoc Committee***

Communications ad hoc Committee – Ms. Garrity reported the Communications Committee met on Sunday, September 24th and discussed how the Board can best communicate with the public. Committee members agreed the first topic to get out to the public is the Middle School concept. The Committee will meet again to review articles submitted by Jodi Record and Dr. Shuldman. Ms. Garrity said the Committee then came up with a list of other topics to explain to the public, including: “Follow the Child,” “No Child Left Behind,” “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP), students in need of improvement, class sizes and the weighted count. Ms. Garrity stated the Committee will work on an article on the Middle School and will submit it for the Board’s approval, along with a prioritized list of

topics next to be addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

Elementary School Populations

Dr. Lister distributed information about the elementary student population. He stated that as of yesterday morning, there are 2,625 students in grades pre-K through 12. The Superintendent reviewed the elementary enrollment information, which included the District's mobility rate, how weighted students affect class size, and information from the City's Master Plan. The Superintendent asked the Board's permission to share this information with the City Council. Dr. Lister further requested the Board wait one more year before reviewing the District's redistricting plan; therefore to look at the redistricting plan at the end of the next school year and not this year. Mrs. Briolat explained to the Board how a student with special needs affects class size and the extra duties that accompany each student with special needs. She said the teachers are not complaining about these students, yet want the Board to be aware of the time involved in determining how to best meet the needs of those kids.

Mrs. Clayburgh moved the Board share the elementary population information with the City Council as soon as possible. Mr. Lyons suggested the history of determining the weighted counts for students with disabilities be researched prior to providing the information to the City Council, and cautioned the skeptics would only discount this information if the formula had been created by the schools and teachers. Mrs. Mayer agreed it would be helpful if it could be proven that other school districts utilize the weighted count when determining class size. The Board agreed to allow the Superintendent to forward the elementary school population information to the City Council along with a cover letter.

Review of Redistricting Postponed

Mrs. Clayburgh suggested the School Board reconvene the Redistricting Committee one year from now, allowing the administration and Board to focus on contract negotiations and curriculum this year. Mrs. Walker made this in the form of a motion; seconded by Mr. Hayward. Mr. Lyons said it may not be necessary for the redistricting plan to be re-opened, it simply needs to be looked at within five years from the date it was approved. Dr. Shuldman suggested the motion be amended to state the Board will look at the redistricting plan in one year and will then determine whether or not it needs to be re-addressed. Mrs. Walker and Mr. Hayward accepted the amendment. The motion was unanimously approved.

Issue Referred to Policy Committee

Chair LaPage declared the subject of forming a committee to look into a student behavior contract will be referred to the Policy Committee, and the Committee will report back to the full Board.

To be voted by the Portsmouth School Board at its next scheduled meeting.

***Adjustments to
Board Committees***

The Chair also stated that he will be making adjustments to committee assignments, due to the resignation of Mr. Bowles. He stated that Mr. Bowles is still the School Board's representative to the Library Trustees.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

***Energy
Conservation***

Mrs. Walker stated that she represents the School Board on the City's Sustainability Practices Committee. She suggested the School Board request the City to fund an energy audit of the City's schools, similar to the one the City funded for some of its buildings. She also suggested that perhaps the staff and students could be encouraged to come up with ideas to conserve energy in the schools.

Mr. Kenneth Linchey, Maintenance Supervisor, was present to discuss the measures that have been taken to date to conserve energy in the schools. He said lighting upgrades have been completed. In addition, he has encouraged Principals to have their staff turn off lights when they leave their rooms; he has looked into a device that will automatically shut down computer monitors when not in use and no one is in the room; and he has learned of a device that will turn off vending machines during hours when no one is in the buildings. Mr. Linchey said that he is presently taking a class with Alan Mulak on commercial energy auditing. Mr. Linchey said he has worked in the Maintenance Department for 13 years and they have maintained all boilers in all of the schools during that time. He said some may be old and inefficient, but they will be able to heat the buildings during the cold spells. He answered questions from the Board, including heat in the classrooms, lights left on in the buildings, and discussion of boilers and hot water heaters.

***Board to Request
City to Fund Energy
Audit***

Mrs. Walker moved the Board request the City to pay for an energy audit of the schools; Mr. Ristaino seconded the motion. Mrs. Walker suggested that perhaps Mr. Linchey could work with Mr. Mulak on this audit. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Use of Council
Chambers***

Chair LaPage stated the Board's request to meet in Council Chambers for its second meeting of the month must now be discussed with Dave Holden, Planning Department Director. He explained that the Board of Adjustment has reserved the Council Chambers for the remaining Tuesdays of the month. The Chair stated that he will speak to Mr. Holden and will report back to the Board.

FINANCIAL

Tuition Rates

Mr. Bartlett presented the tuition rates for 2006-2007. He explained

2006-2007 Tuition Rates

these rates are determined by a formula using figures from the District's MS25 and DOE 25 forms that are submitted to the State Department of Education. He said the formula includes all expenses and excludes funds received from grants and fee and tuition-based programs. Mr. Lyons asked if these numbers could be used to indicate the true cost per pupil. Mr. Bartlett stated this formula was invented before special education became a reality. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the Board approve the proposed 2006-2007 AREA tuition rates. The motion was unanimously approved in a roll call vote.

NEXT AGENDA

**Next Meeting,
October 10, 2006**

The Chair stated the next agenda is already becoming lengthy. He asked Board members to contact him or the Superintendent if they have items to place on the agenda. He said they will try to not have a non-public pre-meeting in order to allow the Board to arrive early and meet the new staff who will be introduced that evening.

OTHER

**Reception to Honor
Raimond Bowles**

The Chair reported that a reception to honor Raimond Bowles will be held on Monday, October 16, 2006 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Portsmouth Room at City Hall. Brief presentations will occur during the City Council's meeting that evening.

**Tailgate Party,
October 6, 2006**

The Chair stated the School Board will host a tailgate party before the October sixth home football game against Souhegan High School. He said that invitations will be sent to the City Council and SAU 50 school boards.

**Athletic Committee
to Discuss Coaches
and Parents As
Coaches**

Mr. Ristaino requested the subject of coaches and parents as coaches be placed on a future agenda. Mr. Lyons suggested this be referred to the Athletic Committee before it comes to the full Board. Mr. Ristaino, as a member of the Athletic Committee, was agreeable to this.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment

There was no other business to come before the Board. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Robert J. Lister, Executive Secretary