

**Portsmouth School Board
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Minutes of the May 8, 2007 Meeting

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2007 in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers in the Portsmouth Municipal Complex (City Hall).

Attendance

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

ABSENT: Mr. Brendan Ristaino

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

Non-Public Non-Session with Counsel

Prior to the regular meeting, the School Board met in a non-public non-session with Counsel in the Legal Department Conference Room.

Call to Order

Chair LaPage called the regular meeting to order at 7:18 p.m. He asked the Board to keep in mind those who are less fortunate. He also asked the Board to keep in mind the family of Gary Eastman, a retired teacher, who recently passed away.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair called for approval of the April 10, 2007 minutes. Mrs. Walker moved, seconded by Ms. Garrity, to accept the minutes. Mr. Lyons requested a correction to the last paragraph of page four to reflect that he was asked by the Governor's Office (and not Senator Gregg) to speak in support of the Governor's proposed Constitutional amendment. Mrs. Briolat said the name of the young man who spoke in support of the strings program is Nathan Booth (second paragraph, page three). The Board unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended.

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the April 11, 2007 public hearing. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Ms. Garrity, the

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minutes be accepted as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

Correspondence

Letters Accepted and Placed on File

The Board received a letter from Mary Carey Foley, PHS Student Council Adviser, thanking them for hosting students during this year's Student Government Day. Dr. Shuldman moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the letter be accepted and placed on file. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Board received a letter from Deborah Lielasus Tombleson, Executive Director of the Prescott Park Arts Festival, encouraging them to become season members. Ms. Garrity moved, seconded by Mrs. Clayburgh, the letter be accepted and placed on file. The motion was unanimously approved.

AGENDA APPROVAL

The Chair said this heading has been placed on the agenda, per discussion by the Board at its retreat.

Mr. Lyons asked if the Board will receive notes from the retreat, as these notes will contain discussion about the agenda. Dr. Lister said the facilitator, M. L. Hannay, has been away on vacation and will forward notes to him, which he will then forward to the Board.

Mrs. Clayburgh requested to talk about "Portsmouth Listens" under Committee Reports this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION

There was no one, other than a presenter, in attendance at the meeting. The Chair declared the Public Commentary Session closed.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

School Nutrition Program

Mrs. Patricia Laska, RD, SNS, School Nutrition Director, thanked the Board for the opportunity to talk about her program and said the timing is most appropriate as this week is "Childhood Nutrition Employees' Appreciation Week."

Mrs. Laska reported on the history of the school meals program (started in 1946 by the U.S. Congress) and how the program has changed over the years. She said a lot of school districts have chosen

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to purchase pre-made foods as opposed to cooking or baking from scratch, as that is labor intensive. She said that today's children want more choices than students 20 or 25 years ago. Mrs. Laska invited Board members to come to the schools for lunch and to see the variety of foods offered to students. She reviewed student participation at each of the school levels (high school, middle, and elementary). She reported that, while costs have increased, the deficit is half of what it was last year at this time due to labor-saving measures. She said the next step is to increase meal participation.

Mrs. Laska reviewed the challenges of running the school meals program, which include: cost control and break-even points, the image of school meals, one lunch at the high school, and marketing. She informed the Board that, because of broken equipment, some cooking is done at the high school and the food is then shipped to the schools. Mrs. Laska said most people do not realize that only 10% of the food sold by the program is from Government commodities; and her employees have to be creative in using these commodities. As an example, she stated that pork crumbles is available from the Government. She said she has heard complaints about how often pizza is on the menu. She said the pizza is made from whole wheat flour and low fat cheese. She said pizza is only one of the menu choices; there is always another choice. Mrs. Laska said she is hesitant to raise prices, as she would prefer to keep the price as low as possible so that more people can participate in the program. She also said that allowing high school students to leave campus to purchase lunch does not help her program. She said there are lines the first 20 minutes of lunch, but she believes her staff is meeting the performance measures and serving as many students as possible in a short period of time.

Mrs. Laska said she has served as President of the New Hampshire School Nutrition Association and has worked with Steve Bartlett and the New Hampshire Association of School Business Officials to coordinate a joint session for professional development.

Mrs. Laska answered questions from the Board.

***School Security
Update***

Dr. Lister presented an update on the status of installing cameras and buzzers at each of the schools. The systems have been in place at New Franklin School and the Middle School for a couple of weeks, and the Principals and Secretaries report it is working well. The Superintendent said the doors are locked when school is in session, and visitors have to be identified and buzzed into the building and asked to come to the main office, where they receive an identification badge. He reminded the Board that Seacoast Crimestoppers, Inc. provided the funding for this project.

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Personnel

Mr. Zadravec presented a request from Karen Wisbey, occupational therapist at Dondero elementary school, for a leave of absence for the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Walker, the request be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Leaves of Absence
Approved***

Mr. Zadravec presented a request from Melissa Ranks, language arts teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, for a leave of absence for the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mr. Hayward, the request be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Resignation
Accepted***

Mr. Zadravec presented the resignation of Kimberly Puglia, math teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective the end of this school year. Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Ms. Garrity, the resignation be accepted. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Second Reading of
Homeless Policy
Approved***

The "Homeless" policy was presented for second reading. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, the second reading be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

***2007-2008 Meeting
Dates***

On a motion by Ms. Garrity, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board unanimously approved the 2007-2008 School Board meeting dates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

***"Portsmouth
Listens" Study
Circle Dialogue***

Mrs. Clayburgh reported that on April 30th, "Portsmouth Listens" had its kick-off in Council Chambers at City Hall. She said that 170 people had signed up to serve on study circles, which will meet for the next four weeks. The first two meetings will be held at the High School, and the last two meetings will be held at the Middle School. Two site walks of the Sagamore Creek site are scheduled for May 15 and 17. After the study circle dialogues are completed, a report will be compiled and presented to the School Board and City Council on June 18th.

FINANCIAL

Mr. Bartlett said a report will be given to the Board at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair stated the topic of “Next Agenda” will be added back to future agendas.

Demographics Report

The Chair stated a report on demographics will be given at the next meeting.

Presentation on Technology

Dr. Shuldman requested to address the Board about technology at a future meeting. The Chair stated this would be scheduled for the June 26 meeting.

Committee Reports on Next Agenda

Mr. Zadavec requested the Curriculum Council be listed on the next agenda.

Mr. Hayward requested the Safe Routes to School Committee be listed on the next agenda.

Adjournment

There was no further business to come before the Board. On a motion by Dr. Shuldman, seconded by Ms. Garrity, the Board unanimously adjourned its meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Robert J. Lister
Executive Secretary