

**Portsmouth School Board
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Minutes of the January 7, 2008 Reorganization Meeting

The reorganization meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Monday, January 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Little Harbour Elementary School.

Attendance

PRESENT: Ms. Rebecca Emerson, Ms. Sheri Ham Garrity, Mr. Kent LaPage, Mr. Dexter Legg, Mr. Brendan Ristaino, Dr. Mitchell Shuldman, Mrs. Lisa Sweet, Mrs. Ann Walker

ABSENT: Mr. Carson Smith

PARTICIPATING: Dr. Robert J. Lister (Superintendent of Schools), Mr. Stephen Zadravec (Assistant Superintendent), Mr. Stephen T. Bartlett (Business Administrator), Ms. Abigail Rockefeller (Student Representative)

CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order

Superintendent Lister called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed the new and veteran Board members and people in the audience. He called for a moment of silent reflection and asked people to remember how fortunate we are to live in the community of Portsmouth. Mr. LaPage led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OATH OF OFFICE

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Dr. Lister administered the Oath of Office to new members Rebecca Emerson, Dexter Legg and Lisa Sweet and to returning member Ann Walker.

NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRPERSON

*Nominations for
Board Chair*

Dr. Lister called for nominations for School Board Chair. Mr. Ristaino nominated Dr. Shuldman; Ms. Garrity seconded the nomination. Mr. Ristaino thanked Mr. LaPage for his many years of leadership. Mr. Ristaino said that over the last two years, Dr. Shuldman has shown that he studies everything that comes before the

Board.

Mrs. Walker nominated Mr. LaPage to be School Board Chair and said no speech was needed.

Dr. Lister asked the nominees if they wished to say anything. Dr. Shuldman said he had not thought about saying anything, but that he has enjoyed the last two years and its challenges, and said there are issues that will be coming before the Board. Dr. Shuldman said that he is up to the challenge and he looks forward to the challenge of running the School Board and moving forward with negotiations and the Middle School project.

Mr. LaPage said he has been fortunate to have been chosen the Board Chairperson in the past. He said there is no difference between the Chair and Board members; they all have leadership roles. He told the Board that Portsmouth has the best superintendent in the country and is fortunate to have a superintendent who has worked his way up within the school system. Mr. LaPage said that Steve Bartlett has done an outstanding job as business administrator, and Steve Zadavec has done fantastic work with the curriculum. Mr. LaPage said that all nine Board members hold leadership roles. And, he said a leadership role is not to please The Portsmouth Herald, much to the dismay of the local newspaper. He said the Board Chair has to remain neutral. Mr. LaPage stated that he has never chosen a site for the Middle School and he will not do so until all of the facts and costs are in and reviewed by the Board. He said it is important for the Board Chair to know the employees within the school system and their roles. Mr. LaPage said that Dr. Shuldman is an outstanding individual and would do a good job as Board Chair. Mr. LaPage said there are two years remaining on his term, and he would like to finish these last two years in the position of Board Chair.

Votes Cast

Votes were cast by written ballots, which were collected and turned in to the Superintendent. Dr. Lister, Mr. Bartlett and Ms. Wojnar counted the ballots, and the Superintendent announced that Mitchell Shuldman had been elected to the position of Board Chair in a six to two vote.

Chairperson Elected

Dr. Shuldman took the seat to the right of the Superintendent.

***Vote of Confidence
in New Board Chair***

Mr. LaPage requested a hand vote indicating that Dr. Shuldman would have the full support of the School Board. This vote was unanimous.

Superintendent Lister handed the gavel to Dr. Shuldman. Dr. Shuldman said he was humbled by the vote.

(Approved by the Portsmouth School Board on January 22, 2008.)

***Nominations for
Vice-Chair***

Dr. Shuldman called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Mr. LaPage nominated Mrs. Walker for the position of School Board Vice-Chair. He said Mrs. Walker is an outstanding individual and has shown her leadership qualities. He said that she would be able to take over in the event the Chair is not available.

Ms. Garrity nominated Mr. Ristaino, and said his dedication to the School Board and his knowledge of education will lead the School Board in a new direction.

There were no other nominations, and the Chair declared the nominations closed.

Mrs. Walker said it was an honor to be nominated.

Vice-Chair Elected

Voting was done by written ballots, which were counted by Drs. Shuldman and Lister. Dr. Shuldman announced that Brendan Ristaino was elected Vice-Chair in a five to three vote.

Dr. Lister thanked Mr. LaPage for his service to the School Board in his role as Board Chair, and said that he has made great contributions to the School Board and school system, and will continue to do so as a member of the Portsmouth School Board. The Superintendent said that he looks forward to working with the new members of the School Board and moving forward. He wished Dr. Shuldman and Mr. Ristaino the best of luck in their new roles.

Adjournment

The Chair called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Legg moved, seconded by Ms. Garrity, the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m. A reception immediately followed.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Robert J. Lister
Executive Secretary