

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 9, 2008**

School Board Members Present:

Christopher Book
Wayne Cooke
Richard Courcelle
Roberta Dress
Collin Fingon
Peter Forshay
Gina Fucci
Karen Gartner
Cindy Kilic-Murray
Nicholas Ouelette

Member Absent

Peter Fagan
Peter Mello

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Peter Folaros
Peter Amons
Ellie McGarry
Bob Johnson
Paula Albro
Bill Olsen
Glenn Olson
Patricia Aigner
John Rice
Lyle Jepson

Motion by Gartner/Courcelle to convene to executive session at 6:15 pm for the purpose of discussing personnel matters, the premature release of information regarding those subjects which would place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimously passed by those in attendance.

The Board came out of executive session at 6:50 pm.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Clerk Courcelle noted the absence of Commissioners Fagan and Mello.

Motion by Gartner/Fingon to accept the minutes of the Aug. 26, 2008 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Written Communication - None

Oral Communication - None

School Choice Report - Superintendent Moran presented the Rutland County School Choice Collaborative report showing the history of the program as well as the current status. Rutland High School allows a total of ten students to attend at any given time. All high schools in the county participate and each school sets their own limits for outgoing / incoming students. Money does not follow the student at this time. The Board's position has been that further participation outside of this collaborative should require that money follows the student. RHS uses a lottery to choose the students. A survey was given a few years ago and at that time, the top choices for participation were: parental convenience, fresh start, programmatic, and size of school.

School Board Summer Retreat Report - Mr. Courcelle said the Board spent time at their summer retreat doing planning. He reviewed the list of board accomplishments 2007-2008 and the desired activities for 2008-2009. Comments and additions:

- ☒ Add to accomplishments: the low budget increase
- ☒ Add to accomplishments: two new administrative hires.
- ☒ Add to desired activities energy conservation / performance contract
- ☒ The Policy Committee is spending a lot of time on the Policy Manual updates.
- ☒ Add to desired activities: encourage board members to be more involved in the legislative process.
- ☒ How will these outcomes be used? They will be used to inform board leadership for setting board agendas for the coming year.
- ☒ Last year, Ms. Moran provided the board with a group book read / discussion. It was a great discussion on "how we learn." Board leadership would like to do this again with a different book. Ms. Moran has suggested reading some chapters in a book called Ahead of the Curve, which is a series of essays by different authors on assessment and curriculum. Ms. Moran said effective assessment is a major goal of the administrative team. Commissioners expressed that they liked the last read / discussion and were open to doing it again. The books will be distributed with the goal of holding discussion on one essay a month.

School Board Planning Calendar and Budget Timeline - A draft board meeting schedule with agenda items for each meeting was distributed for the entire school year as was a draft budget timeline. Since the budget will be voted on by the Rutland City voters, the Board will need to build the budget earlier and do more public outreach. Meetings the second half of the year will focus on programs. Ms. Moran reviewed some of the meeting dates and changes from the regular meeting schedule. Mr. Amons explained the changes made in the scheduling in order to move the budget building and ratification process forward.

Communication Planning - Board Discussion - Mr. Courcelle said the Board needs to discuss how they will engage the community and gather input in the budget building process. Ms. Moran said the Board needs to talk about how they see their role as elected officials. As working toward a vote, the role of the community becomes more active. Communication is very important especially because school budgets are very complicated. Discussion of ideas:

- ☒ Regular board meetings are aired on television. Should we take out time from each meeting to review segments of the budget to show how they are prepared?
 - ☒ Administrators have the most knowledge and they should be on hand to help people understand.
 - ☒ PEG-TV is now streamed and available online.
 - ☒ Can we schedule additional PEG-TV discussions with a panel and invited members of the public who could ask questions?
 - ☒ Set up a way for the public to connect to the Board through the internet and by using email.
 - ☒ Have each board member hold neighborhood get-togethers at their homes. Administrators would need to also be present to help with explanations and neighbors would be invited.
 - ☒ Hold pre-town meetings with administrators on hand to answer questions.
 - ☒ PTCs are active in the buildings and are supportive in promoting the schools and the children.
- Ms. Moran said one of the administrative team goals is to do more with communication. There is a new revamped website and principals are thinking of ways to showcase student work. This helps inform the community. Ms. Moran asked for Board members to come to PTC meetings. Ms. Kilic-Murray said people are trying to get a PTC at the Middle School.

Motion by Forshay/Kilic-Murray to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 389 dated Sept. 5, 2008, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

The appointments and retirement were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Mary E. Moran and Robert S. Bliss Employment Contracts

Motion by Gartner/Fucci to extend the employment contracts for Superintendent Mary E. Moran and Assistant Robert S. Bliss through FY 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 as negotiated and agreed to by the Rutland City School Board and the respective parties. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Performance Contracting Update

Mr. Courcelle said this is an information update. Mr. Amons said over the next few months, we will update the numbers from two years ago from Johnson Controls. Mr. Rice has additional ideas for them to study. Information will be brought to the Building Committee and then there will most likely be a recommendation to the Board. If the recommendation exceeds ten years, it will have to be on the ballot for voter approval in March. Mr. Amons said the goal of the program is to spend less money on a net basis.

Mr. Rice prepared a summary of the ten year versus twenty year approach. The comparison shows the recommended improvement measures for the two approaches. New calculations are needed because of changes in energy costs and in the costs of making the changes. There are also some potential renewable energy options which need to be explored. Mr. Cooke said the Building Committee will be looking at the scope of the project and then the financial implications in the next few months.

Mr. Rice said one of the goals is to be able to manage the environment in the buildings, rather than just controlling temperatures. Mr. Forshay said he would like to better understand the guaranteed savings and Mr. Amons explained them. He said there is a cost built in to the project for purchasing the guarantee. He said that most organizations sign up for the guarantee for the first few years to make sure they are realizing the savings. If Johnson Controls finds we are not yielding the savings, they will reimburse us for the difference but and then make the enhancements necessary.

Announcements

- Ms. Moran reminded families of the parent open houses upcoming in the buildings. STC held their open house last week with a turnout of 250 parents.
- At Northwest School, Kid Community meetings have started with the September theme of “personal power.”
- Northwest and Pierpoint will participate in the “Giraffe Heroes” project this year. Students are encouraged to “stick out their necks” for one another and in their lives. Each month, various students will be recognized and honored, with their name joining the “Giraffe Heroes” wall.
- Artist in Residence, Candy Bar, joins Northwest and Pierpoint this year in October. Students will build tapestries by using various artistic forms coinciding with the literary works for author Eric Carle.

Building Committee - Report given earlier.

Alumni Field Committee - Ms. Fucci said on October 10 there will be a reception before the football game for contributors to the field. Mr. Fingon said on Sept 25 there will be the annual Bob Fingon Memorial Golf Tournament. This year's contributions will go to the Field Committee. Nick Ouelette said he played on the field and it is the best turf field he has ever played on.

Policy Committee - Upcoming meeting announced.

New Business - Mr. Fingon said the Joint Pension Committee met last night and they will be reporting about some updates.

Old Business - Board / Administration Workshop - Ms. Moran said this has been held the past couple of years with a topic of joint interest. One of the purposes is for board members and administrators to get to know each other in a different setting. The date is still to be set.

Motion by Book/Fucci to adjourn at 8:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak
Recording Secretary