

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS  
JUNE 22, 2010**

**School Board Members Present:**

Peter Mello  
Christopher Book  
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.  
Roberta Dress  
Peter Fagan  
Collin Fingon  
Peter Forshay  
Erin Shimp  
Rob Towle  
Daniel Wigmore

**Members Absent**

Wayne Cooke  
Richard Courcelle

**Also Present:**

Superintendent Mary Moran  
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss  
Peter Amons  
Ellie McGarry

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The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted the absence of Commissioners Cooke and Courcelle

**CALL TO ORDER**

Motion by Towle / Book to accept the minutes of the June 8, 2010 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**ROLL CALL**

**MOTION:  
MINUTES  
06/08/10  
MEETING**

Written Communication - Commissioner Forshay read a thank you letter from RHS Class of 2010 parents and friends for the Board's Project Graduation donation.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

Mr. Forshay read a letter from the Rutland Education Association thanking the Board and Superintendent for the end of year celebration, a good year, and an amicably-reached settlement.

**LETTERS OF THANKS**

Oral Communication - Linda McIntyre, 3 Crampton Ave., said she has concerns about the changes at Success and how quickly changes are being made. She praised Success and said the students have built therapeutic relationships with the people there. She said there has been a lot of trust built up and she feels like this vulnerable population of students is being "thrown to the wolves." She said the Success students need the best that can be offered and she is concerned for next year.

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**CONCERNS WITH CHANGES AT SUCCESS**

Angel Lonergan, 116 State St., said she is a parent of a student at Success. She told the Board about some of her son's problems with school in the past and said he has a counselor he trusts at Success and is very upset if that counselor's job "is on the chopping block." She said he does not want to go back to school if that counselor is not working there. Her son also spoke and said his counselor is a friend to him and other students feel the same way with other counselors. He said he started a petition with student's signatures and will get it to Ms. Moran. He said the students at Success love their counselors who are best friends to them.

Meggen Hanna, 59 Chestnut Ave., said she has two children in the schools and she is here to support changing the food service contract from Sodexo to the Abbey Group Co. She said she has done a lot of research. The Abbey Group is a Vermont company which offers a lot of things parents are interested in such as local food, school gardens, and Farm to Table. She would like to eliminate styrofoam and see more freshly prepared food.

**CONCERNS  
WITH FOOD  
SERVICE  
CONTRACT**

Emily Nelson, 185 Dorr Dr. said she boycotted Sodexo this year. She think it is hypocritical to teach students about earth day, recycling and taking care of the earth when in the same cafeteria, hundreds of styrofoam trays are thrown away daily. She said she thinks the food could be better and that it is cheaper and better for the environment to wash trays.

Recognize Outgoing Student Representative - Daniel Wigmore - Mr. Mello thanked Dan for his time, his work behind the scenes at school with the student body, and with Student Council. He said Dan has represented the study body well. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Mello presented Dan with a plaque for outstanding service. Dan thanked everyone for everything they do for students and for valuing his opinion. He said he is very impressed with all the work that board members do.

**RECOGNIZE  
OUTGOING  
STUDENT  
REPRESENTATIVE**

Education Report - None

**EDUCATION  
REPORT**

Motion by Dress / Towle to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 427 dated June 17, 2010, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**MOTION:  
PERSONNEL  
MEMO #427**

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

Are the team leaders are being rotated? Ms. Moran said there is a three year cycle. Some of the appointments are new because some teachers cycled out and some are continuing.

Will the resignation of the paraprofessional effect co-teaching? Ms. Moran said eleven paraprofessionals were laid off and some have been re-called. This resignation will allow another to be re-called..

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**BUSINESS  
REPORT**

Report on IDEA-B ARRA Funds to Date - Ms. McGarry said the ARRA funds are for a 27 month period of time from the origin. The total allocation is \$731,525. We have requested \$322,696 to date with \$408,829 remaining. Ms. McGarry reviewed the investment to date and the plans for the remaining funds.

**UPDATE ON  
IDEA-B  
ARRA  
FUNDS TO  
DATE**

What is Autism Pro? Ms. McGarry said it is a web-based program which we use for many purposes: Train staff in autism; it is student-specific so a team can better communicate around a student; it gives lesson plans and strategies for students; it graphs and tracks student progress; and it helps staff and parents communicate. The same strategies can be used for students with other disabilities also, not just autism.

The program costs about \$12,000 annually and she would like to continue to carry this after the ARRA funds expire.

What is Technology Student and Staff? Ms. McGarry said she is exploring how technology can assist students with different needs.

The ARRA funds were additional funds. The next item on the agenda addresses funds which we receive annually.

Acceptance of FY 11 IDEA-B Grant Funds - Ms. McGarry said these are federal grant funds. She outlined how the funds will be spent.

**MOTION:  
APPROVE  
FY11 IDEA-B  
GRANT  
FUNDS**

Motion by Fingon / Fagan to approve the IDEA-B FY11 grant funds in the allocation amount of \$625,487 plus \$62,010 carryover for a total of \$687,497

Ms. Moran said we are mandated to spend funds on children in private schools.

Passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
APPROVE  
FY11 IDEA-B  
PRE-  
SCHOOL  
GRANT  
FUNDS**

Motion by Book / Towle to approve the IDEA-B Pre-School FY11 grant funds in the allocation amount of \$21,384. Passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

School Food Service Bid - Mr. Mello said before the discussion begins, he would like Mr. Amons to describe how the process was conducted and who was involved in the process. Mr. Amons said the State requires that contracts be re-bid every five years. We follow the "Request For Proposal" process, which is tightly defined through the State. We were required to form a committee. Mr. Amons said the committee members were: Mary Moran and Jay Slenker representing educators; Collin Fingon and Peter Amons representing financial and Ann Bannister (school nurse) and Shannon Stover (nutritionist at RRM) representing health and nutrition.

**SCHOOL  
FOOD  
SERVICE  
BID**

Mr. Amons said part of the process was interviewing the main person that would be assigned to the district from each of the companies. The committee interviewed someone from both Sodexo and Abbey and they were asked the same ten questions. The scoring system was supplied by the state. Mr. Amons said Sodexo scored higher and the recommendation is for the Board to enter into a contract with them for one more year. It is common to re-bid every five years and then enter into renewals each year but the Board can change that after one year. Mr. Fingon represented the financial sector and was a board person on the committee. He said both Sodexo and Abbey were credible. Sodexo had more points. He feels confident bringing forward the recommendation.

Motion by Fingon / Forshay to accept the recommendation for Rutland Public Schools to negotiate with and enter into a contract for food service with Sodexo Inc for fiscal year 2011

**MOTION:  
NEGOTIATE  
WITH AND  
ENTER INTO  
CONTRACT  
WITH  
SODEXHO,  
INC. FOR  
FOOD  
SERVICES**

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Why is the contract for only one more year? Mr. Amons said the federal requirement is for a one year contract but it must be bid at least every five

years.

- What is: Involvement of Student, Staff, Patrons and the Community? Commissioner Towle said he heard concerns tonight and asked if they factored in this item. Mr. Amons said the rating represents the company's ability to market and merchandise the program. The more meals they sell, the better the operating of the system. Ms. Moran said the question means how the company involves the student, staff and patrons. Each group had to respond to that.
- Did the RFP take into account parental thoughts? Mr. Fingon said that was easier with Sodexho because we have data on them. We know how they interact with students, staff, and the overall consumer quality of service. Mr. Amons said there is a steady stream of parental comments throughout the year. It is up to the program to respond and Sodexho does a good job.
- Styrofoam is an issue. Can we look into it? Ms. Moran said it is already in the plan.
- I would like them to go further. There are ways to reduce the waste stream. I hope we have asked Sodexho to do that. Ms. Moran said that project is underway. John Rice is working with Casella for overall waste and that dovetails with this.
- Former Board member Cindy Kilic-Murray pushed Farm to Plate. What is happening? Mr. Amons said Sodexho buys all their produce from Black River Produce and they are pushing Black River to buy more from Vermont farms and they have been doing that. The committee talked about direct Farm to Table but it is hard to do. Sodexho requires Black River to get farm certifications. Sodexho insists the suppliers run through that type of process. Ms. Moran said Sodexho works with RAFFL, gardens are up and running, and they now have a \$107,000 fresh fruit and vegetable grant. She said both companies are fine firms.
- Has anyone compared the food? Dan said he has not had school lunch since the 4th grade. He said if it is not a financial matter, what is the difference? Mr. Amons said he called around to clients of both firms. They have submitted menus as part of the proposal. The two new nutritionists on the committee scored points based on the nutrition. He said he cannot vouch for taste.
- Mr. Fingon said Sodexho has huge cost controls. They have to mass produce and they need to pay attention to nutrition. He said unless the system was really broken, he does not feel a need to change.
- Is the cost the same for both? Mr. Amons said the program self-funds from federal reimbursement and cash at the register. Each firm offers a planned surplus at the end of the year to buy equipment, upgrades, etc. Sodexho's plan had +\$50,000 and Abbey's had +\$30,000. He said that was not the major concern when looking at the contracts.
- Are meal prices scheduled to remain the same? Might meal prices drop if we change to another company? Mr. Amons said not with the numbers he saw. He said with \$50,000 left over in the program, they could technically lower the price of the meals. However, he said that would be premature now.
- Have we ever surveyed parents and students to find out about quality? We might get ideas such as the styrofoam. Mr. Amons said Sodexho watches carefully what gets thrown away. Mr. Amons said there is always a stream of parents who talk with the administration. Ms. Moran said parents do respond.
- What is the percentage of students at the high school who participate in the program? Mr. Amons said Sodexho has worked hard to increase the number of

free and reduced lunch students at the high school. He does not know percentages off-hand. Mr. Fingon said Sodexo has an on line program so parents could see what their child is buying.

**FOOD  
SERVICE  
BID, cont.**

- Do students at the high school eat at the Dollhouse? Ms. Moran said the Dollhouse is the culinary program at STC. It is open to the community. Dan said some students do eat there. They have to pay for each meal.
- How many staff members participate in lunches? Ms. Moran said data is available but she does not have it presently. Commissioner Book said it would be good to know. Moran said it was not part of the bidding process.

Motion to negotiate with and enter into a contract for food service with Sodexo Inc for fiscal year 2011 passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**VOTE ON  
MOTION**

Mr. Mello said he appreciates the concerns of the parents. Ms. Hanna said parents were not given a lot of notice that this was going to be on the agenda tonight. Mr. Mello said the discussion was not open for debate. Ms. Hanna said waiting another a year is unacceptable and delaying the vote is preferable. Mr. Mello said the Board has exhausted the discussion. The bid was selected based upon the committee of six people. He said it was equitable and unanimous. He said a debate process is not how the Board does business.

**SUPERIN-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT**

Superintendent's Report - Ms. Moran said the School Improvement Grant has been completed and has gone to the State. She expects we will first receive a provisional approval and then a final.

**SCHOOL  
IMPROVE-  
MENT  
GRANT  
SUBMITTED**

Committee Reports - None

**COMM.  
REPORTS**

New Business - Board retreat was scheduled for August 17.

**NEW  
BUSINESS**

Mr. Fagan said he would like to have a survey conducted of post-graduates asking, "Did we prepare you well for college?" Ms. Moran said we have that and she will get that information. Mr. Mello said it can be discussed at the retreat.

**BOARD  
RETREAT**

**SURVEY OF  
POST-  
GRADS**

Motion by Towle / Fagan at 7:22 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing a grievance, the premature release of information regarding those subjects which would place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimously passed by those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

The Board came out of executive session at 8:40 pm.

**PUBLIC  
SESSION**

Motion by Cooke/Forshay to adjourn at 8:40 pm. Passed.

**ADJOURN**

Respectfully submitted

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Janet Mondlak  
Recording Secretary