

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS**

APRIL 8, 2014

School Board Members Present:

Peter Mello
Daniel Alcorn
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Richard Courcelle
Peter Fagan
Alison Notte
Matthew Olewnik
Kate Thomas
Christian Wideawake

Cooper Babbitt

Members Absent

Rob Kurchena
Erin Shimp

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Peter Amons
John Rice
Bill Olsen
Steve Sampson
Kristen Hubert
Ellie McGarry
Jay Slenker
Patricia Aigner
Ted Guilmette
Wil Cunningham
Cathy Farman
Molly Wasserman

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

Motion by Fagan / Cavacas to accept the minutes of the March 25, 2014 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Written and Oral Communications

Recognition of Bill Olsen - 2014 Vermont Principal of the Year - Mr. Mello recognized and congratulated RHS Principal Bill Olsen, who has been named the 2014 Vermont Principal of the Year.

Swearing in New Board Member - Christian Wideawake took the oath of office for a one year term.

Budget Discussion, Vote & Planning - Mr. Mello summarized the budget status. The statewide property tax rate the Legislature is considering will reduce the property tax impact for Rutland City from a 3% increase to a 0% increase. The cuts the Administration has proposed represent a reduction of nearly \$500,000 and will reduce the budget increase from last year to a 1.9% budget increase. Mr. Mello reviewed staff reductions over the past few years due to declining enrollment. Some of the proposed cuts being reviewed tonight are due to retirement or resignation which will not be replaced. The programs that would be effected are enrollment-driven. There are a couple of maintenance items on the list. Mr. Mello said after the budget is voted on tonight, Board members will sign a petition with the new number and setting a revote date of May 13.

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- There was review of some of the positions being vacated next year that would not be filled. It was clarified that except for the Volunteer Coordinators, there are no

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

**MOTION:
MINUTES
03/11/14
MEETING**

**WRITTEN &
ORAL
COMMUN-
ICATIONS**

**RECOGNI-
TION OF
BILL OLSEN**

**SWEARING
IN NEW
BOARD
MEMBER**

**EDUCATION
REPORT**

**BUDGET
DISCUSSION
VOTE &
PLANNING**

actual job losses for individual people, but there are position losses. Ms. Moran said they are all enrollment driven. For example, there would need to be a reduction in the art department due to enrollment and because someone is resigning, that position will not be filled.

- If this proposal passes, it would mean 44 reductions over the past few years in response to declining enrollment.
- An ELL Teacher has resigned because he is moving out of state. There will be a shifting of World Language teachers in order to cover the ELL position. Due to declining reductions, there will be section reductions in World Language without eliminating a language or advanced offerings in Spanish and French.
- Mr. Rice explained that there are maintenance items on the list as part of a phased renovation of Longfellow. Those items have been moved to the bond project.
- Commissioner Thomas expressed concern for the removal of the aerial platform lift and ground equipment, as it is a safety concern.
- There was discussion about the Volunteer Coordinator positions. Mr. Bliss reviewed all the tasks these Coordinators take care of. There is one Coordinator part time each at Northeast and Northwest and one full time at RIS. Ms. Thomas recommended removing the Volunteer Coordinator cuts from the proposed budget cuts and adding them back in. She also recommended paying for the aerial lift from contingency, which would also remove it from the proposed budget cut list.
- Commissioner Cavacas said he has a concern that once positions are gone, he does not see them being added back in the future. He is concerned about the reduction of one Nurse at RHS. Ms. Moran all cuts have been discussed at length. She reviewed the current and proposed Nursing staffing and said everyone affected believes this reduction will be fine.
- Will these cuts results in a loss of Art programming? Ms. Moran said at no point would there be any program loss with any of these cuts. All art teachers are licensed to teach all art disciplines. We are being creative with scheduling with the staff we have. She said with declining enrollment, we can manage with one less teacher.
- Commissioner Notte said voters clearly indicated they think keeping up with our buildings is important as they approved the building items.

Motion by Cavacas / Thomas to accept the FY15 Budget Cuts for Re-Vote proposal as presented with the removal of the Volunteer Coordinator cuts and the removal of the Aerial Platform Lift cut for a budget amount of \$48,223,062 and sign the "Petition of the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners to Call a Special City Meeting For the Purpose To Vote on the School Budget" as presented and attached. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
APPROVE
RE-VOTE
PETITION
WITH
BUDGET
AMOUNT
AND DATE
OF VOTE**

Co-Teaching - Mr. Slenker introduced third grade teachers Lindsey Dick and Lorin Gides. They presented information about co-teaching, their numbers of students and those on plans, and their planning time together. They reviewed assessing and monitoring student progress and the methods they use. Ms. Gides said the classroom before co-teaching and after are totally different. Special education used to be taught in isolation. She said to integrate on a daily basis for the essential skills makes much more sense to students and educators.

**CO-
TEACHING
REPORT**

The teachers reviewed Progress Monitoring, which usually takes place once a week. Ms. Dick explained what tools they are using. Mr. Mello said they have demonstrated that the chemistry between the teachers makes such a difference. Ms. Gides said she and Ms. Dick get along very well and the students see and feel that. Commissioner Courcelle said he thinks information from this presentation is an excellent example of how the Board can do a better job of showing progress. He said he likes to see the data and progress and the Board can demonstrate it to the community, the state, or whomever. He wants to see more of this at a higher level.

CO-TEACHING REPORT, cont.

Mr. Bliss said they are often asked about the impact of co-teaching. He presented analyses of special education IEP numbers. The data shows grade levels of when students are identified and also shows the numbers of students moving into the schools who are on IEPs. The data shows we are addressing the students' needs early on. Mr. Bliss said we are doing some co-teaching at the high school and it will be increasing. 100% of K-6 is co-teaching.

PERSONNEL

Motion by Fagan / Thomas to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 499 dated April 4, 2014, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

MOTION: PERSONNEL MEMO #499

The professional leave of absence and resignations were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

BUSINESS REPORT

Financial Statement and Audit Report - Audited financial statements were distributed. Mr. Amons said we have been given a clean opinion in the management letter. There was a surplus of about \$1,100,000, which comes off what we ask for from the state. That is a main reason why our tax impact is low in the coming year. Mr. Courcelle said both the management letter and supplemental audits are very important to review. Our reports show we have made good improvements.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT & AUDIT REPORT

Contingency

CONTINGENCY

Bid at Northwest - Mr. Rice said this is a result of the work done at Northwest due to the moisture issue. He reviewed the improvements made and said this bid is for the finish work. Giancola Construction was the lowest bidder of three bids.

Motion by Courcelle / Fagan for the Board of School Commissioners to approve charging the contingency account \$64,460 for the rehabilitation of the lower classroom at NW School as accepting the lowest bid from Giancola Construction. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

MOTION: APPROVE BID FOR NORTHWEST SCHOOL WORK

Aerial Platform Lift

MOTION: APPROVE PURCHASE OF AERIAL PLATFORM LIFT

Motion by Fagan / Courcelle for the Board of School Commissioners to approve charging the contingency account \$20,000 for the purchase of the aerial platform lift and ground equipment.

Mr. Rice said the only other thing he anticipates needing from contingency in this budget is possibly some asbestos removal as we prepare for the pellet stove conversion. He

does not believe it will be over \$50,000. He recommended that bids are received for the aerial platform lift but that it not be purchased until we know what happens with the asbestos costs. This was agreed upon by all.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Purple Angel Foundation Scholarship Award - Ms. Moran said we have been notified of a new Scholarship called purple Angel Foundation Scholarship in loving memory of Carly Ferro and gifted by Carly's grandmother. She reviewed the scholarship guidelines. The gift will be \$1,000 each year.

Motion by Thomas / Fagan to establish the Purple Angel Foundation Award, in Loving Memory of Carly Ferro, as presented. Passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Announcements

- Cooper Babbitt said it is CyberYou Week at RHS. Senior civics students attended a conference put on by the ACLU at Castleton State College. The spring athletic season has begun. Cooper and Ms. Moran recently went to the statewide VSBA discussion on student involvement on school boards. RHS and Rutland City Public Schools, with the new creation of a junior-senior representatives, are a benchmark for student voice.
- Ms. Moran said April is Autism Awareness Month. Our district has been helping families and making the cause well known. Thanks to the Tobins for the pins.
- The Northeast School PTC meetings will next be held May 5 and June 2 at 6 pm. School photos are occurring April 10. The school is gearing up for end of year events including picnics, a cleanup day and field trips.
- There will be a Northwest School STAR jar celebration with local celebrity James Mee on Thursday. Friday is the STAR student indoor soccer trip. Thank you to RHS girls soccer players for all their help, along with their coaches.
- RIS hosted another great PTC Movie Night last Friday. The last movie night will be on May 23. Science NECAP tests for 4th graders will take place in early May.
- The RMS Talent Show will be held on April 10 from 6:30-7:30 and April 11 from 1:30-2:30. Congratulations to RMS seventh graders Francie Etori, Grace Perkins, Brianna Beauchamp and Emma Gonzalez for creating the winning posters in Month of the Military Child poster contest. The students and their families went to the State Capitol to meet with Governor Shumlin and be acknowledged by the state Legislature.
- RHS announces two prestigious appointments by staff members. Erica Wallstrom and Marsha Cassel were chosen by Vermont's Rowland Foundation to share a Rowland Fellowship for the 2014-2015 school year. As well, Erica Wallstrom won an Einstein Fellowship with the National Science Foundation. She will spend a good part of the 2014-2015 school year in Washington, DC and in Greenland with NSF. She will be coordinating that work with Marsha and the Rowland Foundation. Their goal is to continue the school's development of its Global Studies and STEM initiatives. Last week, Steve Sampson accompanied Dawn Adams and Fieh Chan to the Vermont ASCD Vita-Learn Project Ignite Conference in Montpelier as they were recognized for integrating technology in their classrooms. Lyle Jepson and Laurie Wilson shared several examples of the great work that is taking place at RHS / STC. Peter Drescher from the AOE spoke

SCHOLAR-
SHIP
AWARD

MOTION:
ESTABLISH
THE
PURPLE
ANGEL
FOUNDA-
TION
AWARD

SUPERIN-
TENDENT'S
REPORT

ANNOUNCE-
MENTS

highly of our Global / STEM fair and specifically mentioned a maple sugaring tap that students designed and created with the use of our 3D printer.

**LEGISLA-
TIVE
REPORT**

Legislative Report - Ms. Moran distributed an editorial discussing the House Governance Bill 883. Mr. Fagan commented on the important work of the organization that sponsored the Month of the Military Child contest. He also reviewed some of the upcoming changes in school financing and governance.

**COMM.
REPORTS**

Policy Committee -Mr. Bliss reviewed the changes for three policies recommended for updates.

**POLICY
COMM.**

Motion by Cavacas / Courcelle to adopt the following Policies for second reading:

- Policy #1360 Student Representation on the School Board
- Policy #3271 No Idling of Motor Vehicles on School District Property
- Policy #7440 Tobacco Use

**MOTION:
ADOPT (3)
POLICIES
FOR
SECOND
READING**

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**NEW & OLD
BUSINESS**

New Business

Committee Assignments - Mr. Mello announced the committee assignments for new Board members. There were no changes for old Board members:

- Matt Olewnick: Activities and Athletics and Pension Committee
- Alison Notte: Building Committee and Staff Relations Committee
- Chris Wideawake: Pension Committee and STC Liaison

**BOARD
COMM.
ASSIGN-
MENTS**

**MAY 13
VOTE
DETAILS**

Details about the May 13 voting - Ms. Moran said the vote for the budget ratified tonight will be May 13. There was discussion on some of the ways the public will be informed. There will be a campaign to get out the vote. The percentage of eligible voters who voted last time was low, at 24%. Mr. Mello said Board members are ambassadors to get out the information.

Board member email addresses - Ms. Moran asked Board members to let the office know if they would like an email address that is part of the school's system.

**NEW VT
STATE
LICENSE
PROCE-
DURES**

Old Business: New Vermont State License Procedure - Ms. Moran said nothing has changed yet. When there is a change, she will provide an update.

Motion by Thomas / Fagan at 8:21 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel and contractual matters, 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 8:37 pm.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

Motion by Wideawake / Fagan to adjourn at 8:37 pm. Passed.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak, Recording Secretary

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Mary E. Moran, Superintendent
DATE: April 4, 2014
RE: Personnel Memorandum – Licensed and Non-Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED and NON-LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 499 dated April 4, 2014, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A. LICENSED SECTION

1. Professional Leave of Absence

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Eric Wallstrom	Science Teacher/RHS	2014-15 School Year

2. Resignations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Fieh Chan	Mathematics/RHS	6/30/14
Michael Lenox	Music Teacher/RIS & RMS	6/30/14
Emily Woofenden	Special Educator/RIS	6/30/14

B. NON-LICENSED SECTION ~ NONE

PETITION OF THE RUTLAND CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
TO CALL A SPECIAL CITY MEETING
FOR THE PURPOSE TO VOTE ON THE SCHOOL BUDGET

WHEREAS, Chapter 34 the Charter of the City of Rutland requires the budget for the Rutland City Public Schools be approved pursuant to the general laws of the state of Vermont; and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget did not pass at the annual city meeting held March 4, 2014; and

WHEREAS, 16 V.S.A. §428(a) provides that if the budget is not approved at the annual meeting, then it must be approved at a duly warned special meeting; and

WHEREAS, 17 V.S.A. §2631 provides that the provisions of the City Charter govern in the calling of City elections; and

WHEREAS, §2.2 of the City Charter provides that the Mayor shall call a special city meeting for any purpose when petitioned to do so by two-thirds of the members of the board of school commissioners voting and present at a regular meeting; and

WHEREAS, §2.5(b) of the City Charter provides that a warning for a special meeting of the City shall contain any question requested by a signed petition of two-thirds of the members of the board of school commissioners, present and voting at a regular meeting;

NOW THEREFORE, we, the undersigned members of the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners HEREBY PETITION the Mayor of the City of Rutland, pursuant to §2.2 of the City Charter, to call a special city meeting for Tuesday the thirteenth of May, 2014 from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm to consider the following question:

“Shall the voters of the City of Rutland appropriate the sum of \$ _____ necessary for the support of Rutland City Public Schools for the year beginning July 1, 2014?”

Adopted at the regular meeting of the Board of School Commissioners, April 8, 2014.

Peter Mello, Chair

Daniel P. Alcorn

Alison Notte

Hurley Cavacas, Jr.

Matthew Olewnik

Dick Courcelle

Erin Shimp

Peter Fagan

M. Kate Thomas

Robert Kurchena

Christian Wideawake