

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 28, 2012**

School Board Members Present:

Christopher Book
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Wayne Cooke
Richard Courcelle
Collin Fingon (6:35 pm)
Jamie Pemrick
Erin Shimp
Kate Thomas (6:40 pm)
Rob Towle

Member Absent

Peter Mello
Peter Fagan
Caroline Corsones

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Wil Cunningham
Steve Sampson
Peter Amons
Bill Olsen
Jay Slenker
Ellie McGarry
John Rice
Kristen Hubert
Susanne Engels
Jessica Henderson

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Acting Chair Courcelle noted the absence of Commissioners Mello, Fingon, Thomas, Fagan and Student Representative Corsones.

Motion by Towle / Book to accept the minutes of the Feb. 14, 2012 regular school board meeting with the following changes:

- On page 5: It was noted that the section was titled "Teacher Pension Fund" in the sidebar but it is the "City Pension Fund." All employees are eligible. The paragraph was corrected to reflect those changes.
- Under New Business: Mr. Towle said the summary of the statement he made does not fully explain his intent. He said his intent was that there are some people in the community who might vote no against the budget and he wants people to take time to understand the budget before making a decision. The paragraph was corrected to reflect those changes.

Motion to approve the amended minutes passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Written Communication - None

Oral Communication - None

Presentation - Mr. Courcelle said this is Chris Book's last meeting as a School Commissioner. He has served for ten years and Mr. Courcelle praised Mr. Book's service and said it has been an honor to serve with him. Ms. Moran thanked Mr. Book on behalf of the administrative team and praised his work on the Policy Committee. Mr. Book was presented with a gift.

**CALL TO
ORDER**

ROLL CALL

**MOTION:
MINUTES
02/14/12
MEETING**

**WRITTEN &
ORAL
COMMUN-
ICATIONS**

**PRESENTA-
TION**

Green Mountain Teen Institute (GMTI) Analysis of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) - Mr. Sampson introduced Megan Upjohn, GMTI and Junior Class Advisor at RHS. The students have been working on the YRBS and looking at behaviors. Ms. Upjohn said the students represent both the Student Senate and GMTI. The students are focusing on prevention and education around substance and alcohol abuse. The students gave a review of how they analyzed the YRBS results, their dialogue day, and said the next step is writing an action plan. They will invite in the community to participate.

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- There was a question about the statistics and Ms. Upjohn said for this round, the 25 students participating in the dialogue day decided to focus on just the substance and alcohol abuse issue. Every year they focus on new data and they do not discuss names or specific incidents. Ms. Upjohn said the survey is given to 7 - 12th graders every other year, throughout the state.
- Is the focus the same for all schools? Ms. Upjohn said the focal point is chosen locally. The students just use RHS data.
- Is there an opportunity for the students to collaborate with students from other schools? Ms. Upjohn twice a year the students go to Montpelier and hear about others' analysis day and dialogue night. The students present at the state level.
- Was any of the data surprising to the students? One student said the statistic stating that 52% of the students said they have recently had a drink other than a few sips was surprising to him.
- Do the students take the survey seriously and answer honestly? One student said the majority of the students do take it seriously. There are checks and balances in the questions to help tell if the answers are not being answered truthfully. Surveys they find to be problematic are not counted.
- Do you think you had success from going through the action plan last year? Do you feel you made a difference? One student said she thinks they did make a difference. From last year's action plan, they brought the Yellow Dress presentation to the sophomore class. Most of the students were touched by that presentation and it opened the eyes of students that the threat is real. The play was based upon a true story and students found it realistic. Ms. Upjohn said the students had worked with the health teacher to create a YES Plan class on Healthy Boundaries and Self Defense and that class filled. The students felt good knowing they created something successful.

Mr. Courcelle said we know there are problems in the community and he commended the students for doing the work they are doing.

RIS Presentation introduced Ms. Henderson and Mr. Michael Lenox, who are on the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team. PBIS is a framework for teaching behaviors. Mr. Lenox and Ms. Henderson explained the work done by the team, the program, its roll-out, and their successes. They have brought back a previous RIS initiative, R.R.R.S: Respect, Responsibility, Reaching For Your Best, and Safety First. They spoke about the monthly assemblies and the raffle ticket incentives. Making PBIS school-wide has been important and everyone in the school community is

involved. The team is creating a baseline data point and then will develop interventions and a check-in / check-out phase. Mr. Slenker thanked the large PBiS team.

**RIS
PRESENTA-
TION OF
PBIS, cont.**

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Commissioner Pemrick applauded the RIS team for moving forward and making positive changes.
- Is there still momentum after school vacation breaks? Ms. Henderson said there was a dip when students returned in January and the team did a second roll-out. They continue to re-teach skills. Mr. Slenker said the hope is that the students bring the positive behaviors into the community.
- Mr. Towle suggested integrating the ticket system for parents, who are sometimes the ones to blame for students being tardy. Mr. Lenox said they will bring that suggestion back to the team.

**DRAFT 2012-
2013
SCHOOL
CALENDAR**

Draft 2012-2013 School Calendar - Ms. Moran reviewed the draft calendar and said it is very similar to this school year. She reviewed the procedure and process for the development of the calendar which is used by all the school districts which send students to STC. We are now ready to submit it to the Department of Education as the official regional calendar. All the county schools collaborate well.

**SCHOOL
CHOICE
REPORT**

School Choice Report - Ms. Moran gave a summary of the School Choice program. Rutland County's schools participate in a regional voluntary choice program. The idea is to allow youngsters a chance to try something different. Each school can set the number of children who can enter and who can leave. She said the Commissioner is making changes to the program going forward. Ms. Moran reviewed the reasons why students might participate in school choice. Rutland High School has a total of ten in-bound students. If two graduate in any given year, only two can enter the next year. Once we take the student, we guarantee their place until they graduate. RHS has had a lottery system since the beginning. We do not limit the number going out. Ms. Moran said the Board's position has been that as long as money does not follow the student, there is a maximum of ten students allowed in to RHS.

PERSONNEL

Motion by Fingon / Towle to approve the Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 458 dated Feb. 28, 2012, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO #458**

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

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**BUSINESS
REPORT**

FY 12 Contingency Recommendations - Mr. Rice said both of these items were discussed in previous budgets and have been deferred. The first request is for the repair of audience risers in the performing arts area at RHS. Mr. Rice plans on taking two sets for repair parts for the remaining four risers. The work will be done this summer.

**FY12
CONTIN-
GENCY
RECOMMEN-
DATIONS**

Motion by Cooke / Fingon to approve the recommendations of the Director of Buildings and Grounds and charge FY12 Contingency Account \$12,855 for the repair of audience risers in the performing arts area at RHS.

**MOTION:
CHARGE
CONTIN-
GENCY FOR
REPAIR OF
AUDIENCE
RISERS**

There was discussion about the cost of repairing the risers as opposed to replacing them.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
CHARGE
CONTIN-
GENCY FOR
PROFES-
SIONAL
CLEANING
OF
SPECIFIC
AREAS**

Motion by Cooke / Fingon to approve the recommendation of the Director of Buildings and Grounds and to charge FY12 Contingency Account \$19,912 for professional cleaning of ductwork at Keefe Gym at RIS and the performing arts area at RHS, accepting the bid of New England Air Systems.

Mr. Towle recused himself from this discussion and vote.

Mr. Book asked if there is enough for the fuel oil line item and Mr. Amons said since we did a fixed bid for 170,00 gallons at \$3.18 a gallon, that line item should be fine.

Passed with one abstention (Towle)

**SUPERIN-
PENDENT'S
REPORT**

Announcements

- At Northeast School, as part of the 100th day celebration, children participated in "Jump Rope for Heart." Coordinated by Marie Marallo, the children raised over \$150 for the American Heart Association. As a culmination to the pioneer studies, second grade students had an opportunity to experience "Pioneer Living" through a hands-on museum setup in our gymnasium. The primary school counselors, Kathy Riley, Nancy Spalding-Ness and Madison Akin presented the fourth in a series of five evening parent workshops. The focuses of these sessions were derived from a parent survey completed earlier in the school year. During the week prior to mid-winter recess Northeast had an Artist in Residence Program sponsored by the PTC. Brian Chevalier, a singer song writer, will be sharing various musical styles with students from rock to blues to reggae to folk. Thanks to Summer Stoutes who coordinated this activity. Northeast School will receive the Gold Award (and a \$3000 check) from the Vermont Department of Health. "The annual School Wellness Awards recognize schools whose policies and practices reflect a high priority on healthy outcomes for students." Congratulations to the Northeast Wellness Team: Marty Irion, Food Service Director, Lexi Moore, Volunteer Coordinator, Sandi Marcell, School Nurse, Marie Marallo, PTC President and Second Grade Teacher, Kathy Riley, Home-School Coordinator, Robert Johnson, Principal.
- It has been Dr. Seuss week at Northwest School with a different spirit day event each week, with a mystery reader on the morning announcements. The Cat in the Hat will be making a special appearance in school on Friday. There will be an Ice Skating Club celebration this Friday. Next Monday is the STAR student ice skating trip to the Spartan Arena
- RIS and the PTC will have a used book sale / coffee house on March 14 during

**ANNOUNCE-
MENTS**

Parent-Teacher Conferences. Used books and board games can be dropped off at the RIS Main Office.

- The RMS Drama Club is presenting student-written and student-directed plays on Feb., 29 at 7 p.m. in the RIS auditorium.
- At RHS, Hilary Poremski-Beitzel was a finalist for the Ruth Stone Poetry Prize, sponsored by the literary magazine Hunger Mountain. Her poem entitled "Bird Triptych" was one of only 12 poems selected for final consideration for the contest. Rutland High School's Encore Theatre presents "The Scarlet Heart" on Feb. 29 and March 1. This is Encore Theatre's entry to the one act festival which will be held at Rutland on March 3. Other schools involved are Springfield High School, Otter Valley Union High School, Stowe High School, and Twin Valley High School. The Unpredictables sang for the opening reception, at the Chaffee Art Gallery, on Friday evening, February 17. The current exhibit is "Women in the Arts."
- From Caroline Corsones: The RHS spring sports meeting is March 1. Congratulations to the following students for being accepted to Vermont All State Music Festival: Katelin Benini, Erin Dundas, Taylor Ampatiellos, Jessica Poljacik, Jonah Bissell, Nick Coccia, Dylan Conboy, Samantha Hart, Lena Cohen, Jamie Peterson and Michael Santana. The Student Senate will be having an anti-cyber bullying program next week. The Key Club is looking for donations of formal attire to be sold at the Princess for a Night Project on March 10, to benefit breast cancer awareness.
- Stafford Technical Center held its first Winter Carnival on February 16 at Pico Mountain Resort. Thanks to the help of STC English Instructor, Melissa Paterson and Brenda Welch, from Pico Mountain, approximately 250 students and staff learned to ski, snowboard, snowshoe and enjoy other local recreational opportunities that are available through the Vermont Tourism industry. For 65% of the students, this was their first time participating in a winter sport. Special thanks go out to Pico Mountain Resort, for orchestrating the first annual STC/ PICO Mountain day.
- The Stafford Open House will be held on March 8th for all interested students and parents. This year's Open House has been designed to be informal to give you the opportunity to tour all 15 Technical programs and to meet faculty.
- A letter of thanks was received from Susan Bassett of the Community Cupboard for Rutland City Public Schools continued support.

LEGISLA-
TIVE
REPORT

Legislative Report - A report will be sent to board members. Ms. Moran highlighted a few of the activities and discussions.

COMM.
REPORTS

Building Committee - Watkins Building - Mr. Cooke presented the major points about the sale of the Watkins Building and reviewed some of the details of the Purchase and Sale Contract. The closing is scheduled for the summer. There was Board discussion about the Contract and it was clarified that if the closing does not take place as presented, the proposed buyer will lose \$1000 of their \$5000 deposit. The resolution was read by Cooke.

BUILDING
COMM.

WATKINS
BUILDING

Motion by Cooke / Cavacas for the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners to adopt the Resolution of the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners in connection with the sale of the Watkins School Property as presented and attached.

MOTION:
ADOPT
RESOLU-
TION
REGARDING
SALE OF
WATKINS
SCHOOL
PROPERTY

Mr. Amons reviewed some of the items in the Contract which, if they do not happen, could negate the sale. He said he thinks there will be delays because this is development and the buyers might request an extension. Ms. Moran said we do not anticipate difficulties with any of the approvals needed. The sale has been vetted by City and School Council. There will be a meeting with the Alderboard Committee on March 19. It is one of the steps we must go through. Ms. Moran said there has been good work done and she does not expect problems. Mr. Amons said the funds from the sale are projected to go toward capital improvements. Ms. Moran said that was done for both Lincoln and Park Street schools. It is the intention and obligation of the resolution for the funds to go into the capital fund for necessary improvements. Mr. Book said the Board just recently finished spending monies from the sale of Park Street so it can be used over a period of time.

**DISCUS-
SION ABOUT
SALE OF
WATKINS**

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**VOTE ON
MOTION
REGARDING
WATKINS**

New Business

**NEW
BUSINESS**

Old Business

**OLD
BUSINESS**

Informational brochures regarding the upcoming school budget vote were distributed. The vote is March 6. Information will be mailed to voters. The administration has been meeting with faculty. All information is on the website. There will not be a final tax rate until after Town Meeting. Mr. Towle said the deadline to register to vote is 5 pm February 29. There will be a pre-town meeting discussion and time for questions and answers for citizens on Monday, March 5 at Longfellow at 6:30 pm.

**INFORMA-
TION FOR
SCHOOL
BUDGET
VOTE.**

Motion by Towle / Thomas at 7:53 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing 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 8:20 pm.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

Motion by Towle / Pemrick to adjourn at 8:20 pm. Passed.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak
Recording Secretary