

RSU #12
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2010 ~ 6:30 P.M.
WHITEFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYM
MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call at 6:35 pm.

Absent: Richard DeVries (E), Bob Temple (E), Gary Emond (E) and Albert Lawrence (U). Joan Morin arrived at 6:42 pm. Also present were Renee` Seiders (RSU # 12 employee), Becky Wilson (RSU # 12 employee), Antoinette Williams (Somerville resident), Ralph Hilton (Alna resident), Mike (Chelsea resident), John Begin (former Chelsea School Board member), Glen Plier (Wiscasset resident), Seth Koenig (News Reporter Times Record) and members of the RSU # 12 Administrative Team and residents of the surrounding communities.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Birmingham led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. New Business

3.1 Appointment:

(a) Mr. Richard Iba, Head Custodian, Chelsea Elementary School.

Motion: *To appoint Richard Iba as Head Custodian....*

1st Blake Brown, 2nd Shawn Carlson; Discussion ensued concerning the candidate's background/experience:

Vote: 15-0-0 Motion Carried: Unanimous by all those in attendance and voting.

Superintendent Potter gave a PowerPoint presentation, which was an overview of the new proposed budget for FY 2011. Questions were entertained by the Board pertaining to: the role of a "Certification Committee"; Transportation to High Schools out of the RSU; Tuition Rates; Elimination of Summer School Programs; Medicaid Reimbursement and starting a Capital Improvement Fund for future big maintenance costs and repairs.

4. Adjustment to the Agenda - Public Comment

Motion: *To make an adjustment to the agenda to move this agenda item to before 3.2.*

1st Lester Sheaffer, 2nd Allen Hallett; No discussion: Vote 15-0-0 Motion Carried: Unanimous by all those in attendance and voting.

*Mr. Ralph Hilton – (Alna resident) He suggested that we don't start a Capital Improvement Fund, but to close a lot of the small schools in the RSU and build a large consolidated High School. This would eliminate the need to transport high school students to out of district high schools and to pay those tuitions. He then asked of Mr. Potter, how he arrived at the 7 mil rate as shown on his PowerPoint. It does not seem to correspond to what towns actually raise to pay.

*Mr. Potter explained that the State of Maine uses a figure in EPS as a minimum to be raised within the formula and it is not the same issue as Ralph was referring to. What towns commit to education annually is sum total of minimum to raise and local additional needed to pay their total local amounts. Having a cap improvement strategy is a need for RSU 12. Unfortunately, in this economy, some projects may have to wait and the RSU will focus on "emergency" type issues (e.g. freezer replacement at WMS).

*Mr. Nault also explained that Alna's mil rate was due to other factors within the town, such as a reduction in revenue and town overlay – it was not just the school that raised their taxes but other expenses in that town that also contributed.

* Mr. Ralph Hilton – went on to say that he feels the RSU is run like a business and different rates are being charged when they should all be the same. He disagreed with asking employees to take a cut in wages and benefits.

*Mrs. Hilary Holm explained that no one's wages or benefits were being taken back.

*Mike (Chelsea resident) stated that it appeared that Chelsea is taking a disproportionate cut with the loss of teachers. In reference to the teacher that is leaving, that teacher is a high priority for/to the Special Ed students and it seems unfair to the rest of the children for those kids to be absorbed into other programs. Was there a specific plan for those children?

*Mr. Potter and Mrs. Dearnley explained that some of those children would be dealt with in an alternative program, such as the new plan for Somerville or a future 7-12 program. They ended by saying that they were treading close to violating confidentiality and could not discuss the case further in public.

*Mr. Birmingham added that although each school is losing a staff person, the services provided by that person will not be lost.

*Mr. Nault shared that the Finance Committee did some research and classes will be rearranged. There is a wide variance of student to teacher ratios throughout schools and that we have developed an equity formula for FY 2011.

*Mr. Potter shared the current actual ratios.

*John Begin (former Chelsea School Board member) shared his appreciation for how much work has gone into the budget. His concern is with the decrease of the Chelsea Foreign Language Teacher and urged that a look be taken at the potential impact on the kids – a loss of 2.5 teacher positions would be devastating.

*Mr. Potter shared that it was still being discussed and no formal decisions have been made yet. The 6-8 grade levels have Foreign Language in Wiscasset, but it doesn't formally exist in the other schools. Erskine Academy has a volunteer service they provide to a couple of our schools.

*Mrs. Holm added that the Foreign Language position Mr. Begin was referring to would be a shared position, which would allow us to offer Foreign Language over the entire RSU.

*Mr. Birmingham noted that some school districts (i.e. Bath) will be using Rosetta Stone to teach foreign languages and will not hire Foreign Language Teachers.

*Glen Plier, a Wiscasset resident, (retired Special Ed Teacher and retired Military) commended the RSU Board for all that they have been going through and for their devotion, but had questions about the high school transportation costs being discussed. He felt transportation is a huge and growing problem and asked if he could speak to a board member about his ideas and to share a survey he created. Although he was not from Maine originally, he feels that Mainers seem to solve problems.

3.2 To Approve and recommend the FY 2011 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Budget Adoption Meeting and a date for the Regional Budget Validation Referendum.

Motion: To approve and recommend the FY 2011 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Adoption Meeting.

1st Blake Brown, 2nd Kim Andersson: Amendment by Allen Hallet

Motion: To approve and recommend the FY 2011 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Adoption Meeting and to put funding back in for transportation for Chelsea high school busing.

1st Allen Hallett, 2nd Jerry Nault: Discussion ensued about AARA funding, state funding and maintaining the figures in the budget. Vote: 0-15-0 Motion Failed unanimously by all those present and voting.

Mrs. Morin wished to amend the original motion.

Motion: *To approve and recommend the FY 2011 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Adoption Meeting and to add in an additional \$31,260.00 back in to specifically fund transportation for Chelsea high school busing.*

1st Joan Morin, 2nd Allen Hallet: Discussion ensued. Objection to amendment made by Mr. Brown.

Vote: 7-8-0 Motion Failed. Blake Brown, Chris Johnson, Michele Chartier, Shawn Carlson, Kim Andersson, Thomas Birmingham, Jerry Nault and Hilary Holm voted nay.

Motion: *To approve and recommend the FY 2011 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Adoption Meeting.*

1st Blake Brown, 2nd Kim Andersson: No discussion. Vote: 13-2-0 Motion Passed. Sherrill Hallett and Betty Larrabee voted nay.

Motion: *To instruct the Superintendent to find funds with in the budget to fund high school transportation.*

1st Joan Morin, 2nd Allen Hallett: Discussion ensued.

Kim Andersson wished to make a friendly amendment to not take funds from general instruction or the student supply line. Chair Thomas Birmingham offered that direction could be made to Superintendent Potter without a motion. Mrs. Morin challenged the Chair.

Motion: *To instruct the Superintendent to find funds with in the budget to fund high school transportation other than in General Instruction.*

1st. Blake Brown, 2nd Joan Morin: No further discussion. Vote: 6-8-0 Motion Failed. Kim Andersson, Shawn Carlson, Michelle Chartier, Chris Johnson, Blake Brown, Thomas Birmingham, Jerry Nault and Hilary Holm voted nay.

3.3 To approve and recommend the FY 2010 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Budget Adoption Meeting.

Motion: *To approve and recommend the FY 2010 Operating Budget and establish a date, time and location for the Regional Budget Adoption Meeting.*

1st Joan Morin, 2nd Hilary Holm. Discussion ensued.

Mr. and Mrs. Hallett departed at 9:15 pm.

Vote: 12-1-0 Lester Shaeffer voted nay.

Motion for friendly amendment: *To add June 8th as the Regional Budget Validation Referendum for the FY 2010 budget.* Motion withdrawn.

Motion: *To add June 8th as the Regional Budget Validation Referendum for the FY 2010 and FY 2011 budgets.*

1st Blake Brown, 2nd Hilary Holm; Discussion ensued. Vote: 13-0-0 Motion Passed unanimously by all those present and voting.

15. Adjournment at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregory G. Potter, Superintendent of Schools

Approved May 13, 2010 by the RSU # 12 Board of Directors