

Chariho School Committee Meeting  
November 10, 2009  
Regular Session Minutes

Committee Members Present: Chair Holly Eaves, Vice Chair Robert Petit, George Abbott, Deborah Carney, Michelle Cole, William Day, Andrew McQuaide, Andrew Polouski, Terri Serra, Georgia Ure and Richard Vecchio.

Administrators Present: Superintendent Barry Ricci, Assistant Superintendent Carol Blanchette, Director of Administration and Finance Brian Stanley. Also in attendance: School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

I. Meeting Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

Chair Holly Eaves called the meeting of the Chariho School Committee, which was held in the Chariho Middle School Library, to order at 6:31 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silent meditation.

II. Executive Session

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Michelle Cole and it was VOTED: That the School Committee go into executive session at 6:31 PM and close the meeting to the public under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussions pertaining to collective bargaining (ESP contract) and for the purpose of approving executive session minutes. In favor: Unanimous.

The Committee returned to open session at 7:02 PM.

III. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Ricci recommended that minutes related to collective bargaining (ESP Contract) remain sealed until such time as an agreement is reached.

Deborah Carney made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: That the minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (ESP Contract) remain sealed until an agreement has been reached. In favor: Carney, Cole, Eaves, McQuaide, Petit, Polouski, Serra, Ure and Vecchio. Abstained (due to recusal): Day. (Abbott was not in attendance for the vote.) The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

IV. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Chair Eaves reported that a vote was taken in executive session related to collective bargaining (ESP Contract). The vote was 8 in favor with 1 opposed and 1 abstention with Abbott, Carney, Cole, McQuaide, Petit, Ure, Vecchio and Eaves voting in favor, Serra opposing and Polouski abstaining (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

Chair Eaves reported that a vote was taken in executive session related to approval of executive session minutes of October 27, 2009 (ESP Contract). The vote was 9 in favor with 0 opposed and 1 abstention with Vecchio Ure, Serra, Polouski, Petit, Cole, Carney, Abbott and Eaves voting in favor and McQuaide abstaining (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

Chair Eaves reported that a vote was taken in executive session related to approval of executive session minutes of October 27, 2009 (Teacher Contract Negotiations). The vote was 8 in favor with 0 opposed and 2 abstentions with Abbott, Carney, Cole, McQuaide, Petit, Ure, Vecchio and Eaves voting in favor and Polouski and Serra abstaining (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

Chair Eaves reported that a vote was taken in executive session related to approval of executive session minutes of October 27, 2009 (legal update). The vote was 8 in favor with 0 opposed and 2 abstentions with Vecchio, Ure, Serra, Petit, Cole, Carney, Abbott and Eaves voting in favor and McQuaide and Polouski abstaining (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

Chair Eaves reported that a vote was taken in executive session to return to open session. The vote was 10 in favor with 0 opposed and 0 abstentions with Abbott, Carney, Cole, Eaves, McQuaide, Petit, Polouski, Serra, Ure and Vecchio voting in favor (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

V. Recognition – Superintendent Ricci asked all to join him in congratulating:

1. The High School girls' field hockey team for their efforts, through a breast cancer benefit game, to raise over \$600 to find a cure for this disease.

2. High School Boys' Soccer Team will be invited to the next meeting.

George Abbott recognized and thanked all veterans who defended our country and are keeping us safe. He asked that we pray for their safety.

VI. Public Forum

Nothing to report.

VII. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Eaves asked for any clarifying questions. There were no questions. Deborah Carney recognized Bill Day for his donation of a used Beckett Oil Burner to the CTC ReACH Program. Bill Day recognized Tim Horton's and Town Pizza who donated food and drink to the Richmond School H1N1 Flu Clinic and Hope Valley Ambulance EMTs for volunteering their service at the Flu Clinic as well.

Items to be pulled: C-Bills.

Andrew Polouski made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To move the balance of the Consent Agenda. In favor: Unanimous.

A. Minutes – Approved the following:

1. Regular Session Minutes of October 27, 2009

2. Regular Session Minutes of October 29, 2009

B. Transfers – None at this time.

D. Budget Summary – None at this time.

E. Treasurer's Report – None at this time.

F. Personnel Actions –

1. Accepted the resignation request, for the purpose of retirement, of Janice Teolis from the position of teacher assistant effective December 31, 2009.

G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quotes – None at this time.

H. Permission to Award Contracts - None at this time.

I. Home Instruction – Approved the following:

1. Request of Rachel Mullen to home school her child, David Malek (Grade 11).

J. Grants – None at this time.

K. Donations – Accepted the following:

1. Donation from Bill Day of a used Becket Oil Burner (valued at @ \$100) for the CTC ReACH Program.

2. Donation of food from Tim Horton's and Town Pizza for the Richmond School H1N1 Flu Clinic.

3. Donation from Hope Valley Ambulance of EMT Personnel for the Richmond School H1N1 Flu Clinic.

C. Bills – Andrew McQuaide made a motion, which was seconded by Andrew Polouski, to approve the bills. Brian Stanley requested that the \$400.00 bill from Mario Celani be pulled to which Deb Carney asked why it was being pulled. Brian explained that this charge should have been billed to the Building Committee as it was for the installation of cameras behind the Middle School. The invoice was coded incorrectly. He will do a better job scrutinizing these bills so this does not happen. Discussion ensued on how administration will insure that the bills get charged to the correct accounts.

Deborah Carney made an amendment to the motion, seconded by Michelle Cole and it was VOTED: To pull the \$400 invoice from Mario Celani. In favor: Unanimous.

Georgia Ure made a motion, which was seconded by Deborah Carney, that the invoice from Allie's Tack Shop be pulled and not paid. We already purchased mats for the track from Pioneer and paid over \$1,000 for those. These should come out of the Building Committee account. Brian explained that these actually should be charged to the Middle School Track account and an adjusting journal entry will need to be done. Bill Day explained that it is his understanding that these mats are heavy duty and are used to cover the track when vehicles need to access the soccer/football field. This has nothing to do with the building project. There are over 6,000 accounts now and mistakes will be made. We are being notified and the mistakes are being rectified.

Georgia Ure made a motion, seconded by Deborah Carney and it was VOTED: To pull and not pay the invoice from Allie's Tack Shop. In favor: Vecchio, Ure, Carney and Abbott. Opposed: Serra, Petit, McQuaide, Day, Cole and Eaves. Abstained: Polouski. The motion failed by a vote of 4 in favor with 6 opposed and 1 abstention. The bill will be paid and the account number will be rectified.

Deborah Carney made note of the Beta Engineering invoice in the amount of \$14,000.

Georgia Ure questioned the invoice from Capeway to which Brian Stanley explained this is for the Ashaway School Roof. Georgia asked if the Building Inspector has inspected this. Brian replied that he was not sure but the architect has reviewed the bill and there is still \$15,000 that has not been paid. Georgia Ure made a motion, seconded by Rick Vecchio, to pull the bill until we receive the Building Inspector's approval. Brian questioned if the check could be cut and held. That way, if the Building Inspector has already given his approval, the check could be mailed. Discussion ensued on whether or not the check should be cut. Chair Eaves felt the Committee should not micromanage. This could be an incremental payment. Superintendent Ricci stated that the District never finishes paying a vendor until the project is complete. Andrew Polouski suggested that the Committee approve the bill but make sure we have the Building Inspector's approval for the next meeting.

Georgia Ure made a motion, seconded by Richard Vecchio and it was VOTED: To pull the bill from Capeway and not pay it until we have the Building Inspector's approval. In favor: Abbott, Carney, Ure and Vecchio. Opposed: Cole, Day, McQuaide, Petit, Polouski, Serra and Eaves. The motion failed by a vote of 4 in favor with 7 opposed.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Andrew Polouski and it was VOTED: To approve the bills as amended. In favor: Serra, Polouski, Petit, McQuaide, Day, Cole and Eaves. Opposed: Ure, Carney and Abbott. Abstained: Vecchio. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 3 opposed and 1 abstention.

## VIII. Business

A. Permission to Participate as an Independent Athlete – Superintendent Ricci recommended approval of the request of Joshua Merritt to participate as an individual for the Westerly Middle School Wrestling Team with the stipulation that his family pays all necessary transportation, coaching, league fees, and insurance costs and that his coaches possess all necessary certifications as required by the State of Rhode Island.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Andrew Polouski and it was

VOTED: To approve the request of Joshua Merritt to participate as an individual athlete with the stipulation as noted above. In favor: Unanimous.

B. FY09 Budget Reduction – Rick Vecchio requested this item as he would like the Committee to reinforce its commitment that was made to the towns pertaining to the possibility of additional cuts in state aid. He feels the Committee has a duty to help the towns financially if this happens. He made a motion, which was seconded by Deborah Carney, to grant permission for the Superintendent and Finance Director to work with the towns to assist financially if any additional state aid is cut this year. Superintendent Ricci explained that the Committee can direct him and Brian Stanley to work with the towns and come back with a proposal. The Committee can vote on the intent but not a specific approach. Deb Carney stated that if the motion is approved, we should send a letter to the Town Councils. It was noted that this was not part of the motion. Bob Petit stated that he and the Chair have a meeting with the State on the 21<sup>st</sup> and they should have more information to share after this meeting. He has a problem with sending letters as the message might be misconstrued. Andrew Polouski agreed that he did not want to assume the responsibility if a cut is made in municipal funding rather than education as this is not our issue to deal with. George Abbott added that the towns need to do due diligence and use their surplus to cut the bill to taxpayers. Discussion centered on the motion. Chair Eaves stated that part of the motion is to have the Superintendent and Brian Stanley work with the towns to find money. That is not just reaffirming our position; that is action. Bill Day noted that he would vote against the motion as it is too broad. Concern was raised over whether or not the Committee should be involved if the cuts are not specific to education. Superintendent Ricci stated he would not put forth a recommendation that would put the Committee in a situation that would compromise its budget and he would expect a similar reaction from the towns.

Deborah Carney made an amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Andrew McQuaide to include “if the State does cut state aid”. Superintendent Ricci again reminded the Committee that he and Brian do not have the authority to appropriate funds. They would have to come back to the Committee. The amendment and second were withdrawn. The Superintendent questioned if sending a letter was part of the motion to which Deb Carney clarified that the letter would only state the action the Committee took this evening.

Richard Vecchio made a motion, seconded by Deborah Carney and it was

VOTED: To grant permission for the Superintendent and Finance Director to work with the towns to discuss the District’s financial assistance if any additional state aid is cut this year. A letter will be sent to the Town Council’s stating the action taken by the Committee. In favor: Vecchio, Ure, Polouski, Petit, McQuaide, Cole, Carney, Abbott and Eaves. Opposed: Serra and Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 2 opposed.

C. Approval of Revised Math Curriculum – Superintendent Ricci recommended approval of the revisions to this policy. If, after tonight’s presentation by Carol Blanchette, the Committee needs more time to review this policy, action can be held until the next meeting. Carol presented the minor revisions that were made. Sue Allen and Jackie Vetovec assisted Carol with the presentation and answered questions of the Committee. Andrew Polouski felt that curriculum should be left to the professionals. He does not think those who are not certified should make changes. We should have faith in the individuals we hired to do this job. Discussion ensued on

the differences between the old program versus the new one. Georgia Ure questioned the cost of the new textbooks and materials to which it was noted that the books and materials have already been purchased. There may, however, be a need to purchase new books for the High School. Georgia asked if additional personnel would be needed to which it was noted that no additional personnel would be needed. Once all the data has been compiled, a report will be provided to the Committee. Chair Eaves thanked Carol Blanchette and the Curriculum Committee for the excellent job they did.

Andrew Polouski made a motion, seconded by William Day and it was  
VOTED: To approve the revisions to the K-12 Mathematics Curriculum. In favor: Unanimous.

D. Approval of Revised ELA Curriculum – Superintendent Ricci recommended approval of the revisions to the K-12 English/Language Arts Curriculum. Carol Blanchette provided an overview. Again, there were no major revisions to this policy. Deb Carney noted that a lot more has been added and the document is very comprehensive which she thinks is good.

Michelle Cole made a motion, seconded by Deborah Carney and it was  
VOTED: To approve the revisions to the K-12 ELA Curriculum. In favor: Unanimous (Andrew Polouski was not in the room at the time of the vote).

E. Discussion of Superintendent's Goals – Rick Vecchio requested this item be placed on the agenda. He felt the first time this was addressed; there was a lot of energy about having a subcommittee. He believes it is the responsibility of the School Committee to set the Superintendent's goals. These goals should be quantifiable and measurable and should pertain to him. He made a motion, which was seconded by Deb Carney, to form a subcommittee to determine the Superintendent's goals. Terri Serra questioned if there wasn't already a subcommittee in place to which the Superintendent replied that the School Committee adopted the District Strategic Plan as his goals so there was no need to reconvene the Subcommittee. Discussion ensued on the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan. Deb Carney felt that the goals in which the word "all" was used are almost unattainable. She agreed with Rick Vecchio; a subcommittee should determine quantifiable indicators for the Superintendent's goals.

Richard Vecchio made a motion, seconded by Deborah Carney and it was  
VOTED: To form a subcommittee to determine the Superintendent's goals. In favor: Abbott, Carney, Petit, Polouski, Ure, Vecchio and Eaves. Opposed: Cole, Day, McQuaide and Serra. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 4 opposed. Volunteering for the Subcommittee were Deb Carney, Rick Vecchio and Andrew McQuaide.

F. Approval of Monitor Variance – Superintendent Ricci recommended that the Committee allow the submission of a request for a variance for the 2010-11 school year from the requirement which stipulates that bus monitors must be provided on all buses transporting students in grades K-5. This request would apply to secondary bus runs. This variance is currently in place; I am aware of no problems as a result of the absence of monitors on secondary runs. Bill Day questioned if there were monitors on every elementary run every day to which the Superintendent responded that because of absenteeism, there are some runs that do not have monitors.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Andrew Polouski and it was  
VOTED: To approve the Superintendent's recommendation. In favor: Unanimous.

G. Discussion of MCAs – Terri Serra requested this item be placed on the agenda. Superintendent Ricci noted that because of a more serious attitude from students and School Committee policy, fewer students (about 11.8%) scored below a 70 (the failing grade was raised from 67 to 70 this year). Last year there were about 25% who failed mid-term and final exams. The policy will be brought back before the School Committee in spring after more data (and

feedback from parents and students) is collected. Math Department Chair Jackie Vetrovec explained that at the start of the school year, they took the curriculum and mapped it to the GSEs and broke it into four quarterly areas. Once you know what you need to instruct, you can focus on MCAs which are given to every student in every class. She has seen some very high levels and it did not matter what class the student was taking. The data is giving us a lot of information to focus on. Terri Serra stated that she has a lot of questions and Superintendent Ricci and Jackie addressed some of her concerns. When you do something this dramatic, there will be kinks to work out the first time it is presented. Discussion ensued on what is allowed for students who fail and how this grade is factored into quarter grades. Bob Petit requested that the Committee be kept up-to-date on the data to which the Superintendent replied that something will be put together and brought to the Committee as soon as documentation is finalized.

#### IX. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports – None at this time.

B. Superintendent's Report

A. The H1N1 Clinics are going very smoothly. About 70-75% of our students are being vaccinated. There is nothing negative to report. Bill Day added that he spent time Friday night at Hope Valley School and some time at Richmond School and there were about 30 staff members who stayed to assist. He echoed the Superintendent's comments. There were about 50 additional volunteers and he was very impressed with the operation. Superintendent Ricci stated that the District found out about two weeks ago that it would be responsible to control the clinics so we paced the students' times and it seems to be working out very well.

B. Coming events were highlighted.

C. Building Committee – The minutes of the October 5, 2009 meeting were included in the Committee's packet.

#### X. School Committee Requests for Future Agenda Items or Legal Opinions

Andrew Polouski requested that where we stand with NEASC Accreditation be included on an agenda. He is particularly concerned with the number of credit hours an elementary teacher has to have in major subject areas (i.e. math). This reflects on students' scores. Superintendent Ricci replied that the only way the District could compile this information is to survey the teachers but he does agree that most elementary teachers do not have a background in math.

Bill Day requested that the executive session meeting of August 18<sup>th</sup> be put on the agenda. He was concerned, when reading the minutes, about what transpired.

Bob Petit requested discussion about bills and a follow-up to the issue of whether or not the Building Inspector in Ashaway has inspected the roof project. This could be an FYI item.

#### XI. Adjournment

Deborah Carney made a motion, seconded by Andrew McQuaide and it was VOTED: To adjourn at 9:18 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

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Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk