

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MINUTES WILL NOT BE FINAL UNTIL THE BOARD HAS APPROVED THEM AT ITS NEXT MEETING.

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October 8, 2009

The Board of Directors of Maine School Administrative District No. 75 held a **regular** meeting at **Harpswell Islands School** on **Thursday, October 8, 2009**.

The following Directors were present: Joanne Reinhart, Chairman; Claudia Beckwith; Dorothy "Dee" Carrier; Dorothy Gardner; Robert W. Hill; Scott McKernan; Jane Meisenbach; Joanne M. Rogers; Jane Scease; Rebekah Stimpson; Kim Totten; and Gwendolym Thomas.

Not present were David A. Johnson and Roland Tufts.

Also present were Hayley LaPointe and Tyler Washburn, student representatives to the Board of Directors.

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reinhart at 6:30 p.m.

Mrs. Reinhart thanked the Harpswell Islands School PTO for the dinner to which Board members were treated earlier this evening.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited by those present.

3. To consider action relative to additions or adjustments to the agenda and to ask for comments from the audience

Agenda adjustments were noted, as follows:

{add}

6.5 To acknowledge the receipt of the **Merrymeeting Teachers Association's** intent to negotiate a successor collective bargaining agreement

{add}

6.6 To acknowledge the receipt of the **Merrymeeting Employees Association's** intent to negotiate a successor collective bargaining agreement

{add}

8.3 Facilities tour (scheduling of it)

3.1 RECOGNITIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

✓ **Welcome to Harpswell Islands School from Principal Michael Estes**

✓ **Lisa Hogan** – Named ACTEM Leader of the Year

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- ✓ **Audrey Johnson, Mt. Ararat High School senior** – Named a “commended student” by the National Merit Scholarship Program
- ✓ **Danielle Smith, Mt. Ararat High School student** – Named a “semi-finalist” by the National Merit Scholarship Program

4. To take action relative to accepting as printed the minutes of September 24, 2009, regular meeting of the Board of Directors

*It was moved by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Carrier, and **VOTED (unanimously)** to accept as printed the minutes of the September 24, 2009, regular meeting of the Board of Directors.*

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- 5.1** *To undertake a second reading and adoption of policy on exclusion of employees during a public health threat*

Based on conversations with representatives of the Merrymeeting Educators Association and legal counsel, the policy was amended. The finalized version will reflect those changes.

*It was moved by Mr. McKernan, seconded by Ms Thomas, and **VOTED (unanimously)** to accept as amended the second reading and adopt the policy on exclusion of employees during a public health threat.*

- 5.2** *To undertake a first reading of changes to the Student Transportation Policy (EEA)*

This is considered the first of two required readings.

- 5.3** *To undertake a first reading of a new policy, Student Conduct While Riding on School-Provided Transportation (EEAB)*

Mr. Hill questioned why skateboards would be prohibited on any of the buses. Mrs. Carrier indicated it creates a hazard and that there are space issues. Mr. Hill wondered whether the skateboard issue could be a behavioral concern instead of listing it as a prohibited item.

When the suggestion was made that perhaps a policy could be set stipulating that a skateboard must be “manageable” instead of strictly prohibited, Ms. LaPointe readily agreed.

Mrs. Totten related her knowledge of a student being told he could not take a guitar on the bus and disagrees with this in light of cuts in the music program, preferring to see children be able to avail themselves of any opportunity to be exposed to music.

Superintendent Wilhelm suggested that Transportation Director Bill Donovan could be present at the next Board meeting to address the issue of prohibition of skateboards and to discuss the carrying on of musical instruments.

This is considered the first of two required readings.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- 6.1** *To acknowledge **Sheryl Willette's** intent to retire at the end of the 2009-2010 contract year*

*The Board of Directors **DULY ACKNOWLEDGED** the intended retirement of **Sheryl Willette** at the end of the 2009-2010 contract year.*

- 6.2** *To hear a report on the State of the Maine Economy as provided by the Maine Department of Labor*

Superintendent Wilhelm made a brief PowerPoint presentation to the Board.

- 6.3** *To hear a report on the application to the Department of Education for the closing of West Harpswell School*

Copies of the prepared application were distributed to Board members. On Friday, October 9, 2009, a copy will be mailed to Commissioner of Education Susan Gendron. Dr. Wilhelm will hand-deliver a copy to the Harpswell Town Office. Harpswell will have ten days within which to ask questions or offer comments to the Commissioner. At the end of the ten-day comment period, the Commissioner will have an additional ten days in which to render her decision. Dr. Wilhelm noted that the recommendation to close West Harpswell School is based primarily on declining enrollments. Business Manager Steven A. Dyer spoke to the data contained within the application. Superintendent Wilhelm thanked Mr. Dyer for his work on the application.

Dr. Wilhelm noted that the Board will need to address the issue of scheduling the referendum, once the Commissioner has made her decision. This decision should be rendered by the next Board meeting (November 5), so that scheduling of the referendum could be done at that meeting.

- 6.4** *To discuss the current work and goals of the Comprehensive Strategic Planning Committee and the M.S.A.D. No. 75/Brunswick Task Force*

Mr. McKernan presented an overview of this. A major question is how to communicate to parents. A question for the Superintendent is how the Board wants to talk about this.

Mrs. Reinhart indicated that the Board is in agreement of the importance of all students having access to courses – whether it be at either high school or Region Ten.

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Mrs. Gardner offered her opinion that the Board will continue to need to look at the way students are taking academic and trade courses.

Mrs. Carrier feels that some students are being “shortchanged” because of their attendance at MVR 10.

Mrs. Scease asked for amplication on the fiber optic project. Dr. Wilhelm indicated that, as an example, this would provide the capability for sharing library services. He related that the District formerly had the ATM capability but that it had proven not to be a practical application in the District, and that the fiber optic connection could make online learning opportunities more accessible.

Mr. Hill supports moving forward on this initiative.

Mr. McKernan reiterated that the question of how to engage the larger community needs to be addressed. It was suggested that a survey be developed and that presentations be made at Selectmen’s meetings and the work of the Task Force be publicized in Town newsletters.

Dr. Wilhelm reminded Board members that these meetings should be televised. Mr. Hill stated that Harpswell’s Channel 14 is the only one available to all five communities (those of the District and Brunswick).

Mr. McKernan encouraged students from both high schools to come to the meetings and “be heard.”

Mr. Hill suggested that perhaps at the October 26th meeting of the Task Force, members could discuss conducting a survey, feeling that some very meaningful information could be gleaned.

Tyler Washburn asked whether a joint forum could be hosted for the purpose of asking questions and inviting all students to participate.

- 6.5** *To acknowledge the receipt of the **Merrymeeting Teachers Association’s** intent to negotiate a successor collective bargaining unit*

*This intent was **DULY ACKNOWLEDGED** by the Board of Directors.*

- 6.6** *To acknowledge the receipt of the **Merrymeeting Employees Association’s** intent to negotiate a successor collective bargaining agreement*

*This intent was **DULY ACKNOWLEDGED** by the Board of Directors.*

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- 7.1 Ad hoc Transportation Committee** – Mrs. Carrier indicated that the Transportation Committee will be meeting at **6:00 p.m. on October 28th in the District Office** to continue discussions regarding students in maximum rider times.
- 7.2 M.S.A.D. No. 75 Task Force meeting** – addressed earlier in the meeting
- 7.3 OPAC Committee** – Mrs. Reinhart presented a report on the September 29th meeting. She invited Board members to visit the OPAC's website. The next meeting will be held on December 3rd.
- 7.4 Guidance Advisory Committee** – Ms. Thomas would like to schedule a meeting of this committee. She will communicate with members of the Committee and check Principal Craig King's availability.

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

- 8.1 Canam Drive** – Superintendent Wilhelm noted that John Wasileski of the Highlands is prepared to open the maintenance road, but it does need work. Dr. Wilhelm needs to talk with John Shattuck. In his conversation with Mr. Wasileski, they talked about alternative energy possibilities at the Highlands – wind devices, geothermal systems, and using natural gas to create energy. All agreed this would be a tremendous opportunity to involve high school students.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the Board could approach a construction company to “donate” a road. Dr. Wilhelm needs to talk with Town officials first, before any such move. Mr. Hill asked and Dr. Wilhelm agreed that it is not appropriate for the District to be building roads.

- 8.2 Audit report** – Christian Smith from Macdonald Page could not be present at this evening's meeting, but he is available to present his report at the November 5th meeting.
- 8.3 Facilities Tour** – Possible dates for the Board's annual tour of the District's facilities were discussed. It was determined that either November 9th or 10th are workable, and Dr. Wilhelm will discuss this with Facilities Director Chris Shaw.
- 8.4 Name of District** – Mrs. Carrier reiterated that the name “M.S.A.D. No. 75” has evolved into a highly respected system recognized for the quality teaching and excellent education delivered to students in a large system. Her personal preference is that the system continue to be referred to as “M.S.A.D. No. 75” in all arenas except those in which we must legally be referred to as “RSU 75.” She ended her comments by expressing her opinion that the District has earned the right to “stand out.”

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When Board members readily agreed to this proposal, she indicated she would put that in the form of a motion; and Mr. Hill seconded.

*It was moved by Mrs. Carrier, seconded by Mr. Hill, and **VOTED (789 yeas, 0 nays, 67 abstentions, and 144 absent)** that this system continue to be referred to as “M.S.A.D. No. 75” in all arenas except those in which we must legally be referred to as “RSU 75.”*

Voting “yea” were Ms. Beckwith, Mrs. Carrier, Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Hill, Mr. McKernan, Mrs. Reinhart, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Scease, Ms. Stimpson, Mrs. Totten, and Ms. Thomas.

There were no nay votes.

Abstaining from voting was Mrs. Meisenbach.

Absent were Mr. Johnson and Mr. Tufts.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

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