

**REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #16 SCHOOL BOARD  
Mechanic Falls – Minot – Poland**

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Meeting of the RSU #16 School Board  
for 2011–2012 was held  
Monday, September 19, 2011 at 6:30 P.M.  
Poland Regional High School Library**

“I’ve learned that if someone says something unkind about me, I must live so that no one will believe it.”

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Terri Arsenault, Carl Beckett, Sue Callahan, Melissa Hodgkin, Steve Holbrook, Mary Ella Jones, Tina Love, Jeanne Manley, Joe Parent, Ed Rabasco, Scott Sawyer, Scott Tiner, Jack Wiseman

**Absent:** Yvette Murray

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** Mary Ella Jones, Vice Chair

Mary Ella Jones called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Resignation – Dave Griffiths has resigned due to his business travel schedule. Dennis read a letter to the board from David Griffiths. Mary Ella thanked him for all his years of service and support.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**2.0 PRESENTATION:** Test Scores & AYP Report – Gary Chapin

- Gary Chapin handed out and explained the Adequate Yearly Progress Report for 2010–2011 and talked about the State Test Boot Camp happening each morning in each K–6 school. Jack asked if there was an update on the option out of NCLB and Gary said that the state has applied for the waiver.
- The federal government sets the standards for the number of kids that have to reach AYP, but the state sets the actual standards the students are expected to meet.
- Carl commented that he read that there will be no school in Maine that will pass this AYP in two or three years.
- High school AYP is based on the SAT scores, which is being administered to all students.

**3.0 ACT ON MINUTES:** (Minutes will be on the October Agenda)

**4.0 ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** Approve Financial Statements of August 2011

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to accept the Financial Statement of August 2011

Seconded: by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Unanimous

**5.0 NEW BUSINESS:**

Approve Guidance Counselor Nomination – PRHS

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Corey McFadden as the new guidance counselor

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Unanimous

Approve Music Teacher Nomination – PRHS

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Gil Donatelli as the new music teacher

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: Unanimous

Approve Title 1A Interventionist Teacher Nomination – Elm Street School

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Carol Coy as the new Title 1A Interventionist teacher

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: Unanimous

Nomination for Vice Chair

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to nominate Jack Wiseman as Vice Chair of the School Board

Seconded: by Melissa Hodgkin

Vote: All in favor except Scott Tiner and Jack Wiseman who abstained

- Terri – Has received nine calls and a couple of emails about the timeline of the voting. Does it have to be a one-week process? In some cases, it takes longer than that to get a ballot mailed to a voter and then the voter has to mail them back to the town. Mary Ella said we will need to allow plenty of time for people to get ballots mailed and back in.
- Eric Peterson – Has this just happened because of the third vote, or was it an issue with the first two votes? It just came up after this third vote.

## **6.0 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION – REPORTS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT:**

A-team Reports

A-Team Reports – No questions. Carl Beckett praised the administrators for such complete and informed reports.

- Cari Medd – Accreditation – Our re-accreditation date is two years from now, but the process takes about a year and a half. We will have an accreditation visit in November 2013. The last time we were accredited was in 2002. Part of the process is that peers from throughout New England come and visit and provide their feedback, which is then measured against a list of standards. The standards have been updated since 2002 so we have already planned and made some adjustments for that. Part of the standards are examining core beliefs about education in the district, so the school board will be involved in looking at that and establishing a district mission/vision statement. The NEASC committee gives us a report and addresses anything that needs

to be addressed. Tina Love asked for a copy of the 2002 report. Jeanne Manley asked for the current standards for accreditation.

## 7.0 REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD:

Sub-Committees: Dennis provided a description of the subcommittees and members were established.

- Public Relations Committee – Joe, Tina, Melissa
- Budget Committee – Terri, Jack, Tina, Scott T, Jeanne
- Negotiations Committee – n/a
- Facilities Committee – Rick, Steve, Carl, Scott S and Scott T.
- Curriculum Committee – Gary, Joe, Sue, Jeanne and Melissa
- Policy Committee – Dennis, Ed, Sue and Mary Ella

Report of the Superintendent – Dennis Duquette

Discuss 2011–2012 School Budget –

- Dennis recommends we have limited discussion on the school budget tonight and schedule a school board workshop next Monday night with two members from the budget committees in each of the three towns.
- Mary Ella suggested people send information or questions that they can take up next week.
- The list of budget questions and answers will be emailed out to everyone again.
- Dennis said he would also supply the new questions that have come in.

Public participation on the budget:

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to open **8.0 Public Participation** at this point in the agenda

Seconded: by Terri Arsenault

Vote: Unanimous

- Ollie Emery – Vice chair of Mechanic Falls Budget Committee. Commented on a program he watched called “What is wrong with education in America?” The answer was the teachers unions and tenure. If you are for the kids and you go to performance based pay, the test scores go up.
- Winn Durgin – Reminded the school board that next Monday’s workshop is a selectmen meeting night
- Steve Robinson – Suggested some alternate ways to break down, detail and summarize the budget moving forward. The PCS marquis sign message from the PTA was urging people to vote yes. He recommended that the school board have a policy about what can go on the signs. Margaret said PTA checked with their national organization, but we will not do it again.
- Steve Holbrook – Four citizens in Minot couldn’t get in to vote at 7:55 PM. The clock in voting booth was five minutes fast.
- Steve Robinson – Regarding school cancellation notification system and appropriate use. He has heard that calls were made to urge people to go vote. Is that appropriate use of the system? What is the policy around that? He asked if the school board has to do the Freedom of Information

Act and FEMA online courses. Dennis explained that some new members haven't done it yet and they also have some additional training with Maine School Management coming up. Mary Ella said they would look at a policy with regards to the calling system.

- Eric Peterson – There is no budget, and he thinks the problem is that the school board does not communicate with their community. People are deemed anti-educational if they are not “for” the budget. He was offended that back in the spring the board didn't feel the need to involve the budget committees from the three towns. The perception is that if you're against this budget you're against the kids. Misleading statements have been made to the public about justification for the increases. People did not realize that the first vote taken in the public meeting became the working budget. For the next budget, listen to your neighbors and what they are saying.
- Bernice Frazier – Mr. Tiner called her up and asked what he could do to make her vote yes for this budget? You have to get the trust of the people. They don't trust the board, the school or the PTA. Senior citizens and others are living off \$500-\$700 a month. When they see what people are saying, you have lost the support of those people.
- Ollie Emery – The people of Mechanic Falls passed this budget by 18 votes. He wonders why it was so close with Mechanic Falls coming in with a zero tax increase. It is the opinion of many that PRHS, from day one, has failed its students. We have asked every year what each graduating class is doing four years from graduation. All we get is “we are working on it.” Cari Medd explained that she did a presentation for the board last year with all that data and shared some of that. She can make this report available.
- Terri A – In the beginning her kids weren't going to go to school here, but things have changed over the years. Her kids go to this school. Any doubt she ever had about this high school is gone. Her kids have thrived here.
- Melissa Hodgkin – Still hears negative talk about the high school around town. She agrees that her student here at the HS is also thriving. The things from 2002 that people didn't like have changed, but people don't know that.
- Walter Gallegger – We have run into a Perfect Storm. Trying to pass a budget and trying to pass a teacher contract. People can't get a grip on what's happening over the next couple of years and that's what scares them. People don't trust that you are going to fight for our needs when negotiating that contract.
- Dennis – The trust factor – The school board, the administrators and all the staff are the ones that created that \$750,000 fund balance. That was a remarkable effort on the part of our staff. The jobs bill money, we put away instead of spending it. We have done things trying to create trust in the community. We are trustworthy and there is a lot of miscommunication out there. Within a 30 to 40 mile radius of our towns, there is no other school union that became an RSU. That is why we have

been able to reduce our budget from three years ago. We are not currently negotiating because there is no budget to negotiate.

- Curt Becker – Has two kids (07 & 09) that went through this high school. Both kids were honor society, math club, great grades, etc. The oldest is an engineering student at UMO and had to take remedial math and science classes to catch up. He brought it up to the board and was told it was addressed. His second son also had to take remedial math at USM. Mary Ella said they will look at this, and she has also heard from many kids who are now taking advanced calculus.

#### Report of the Superintendent (continued)

- Dennis – We have changed the starting and ending times at Minot and Mechanic Falls by five minutes due to bussing schedules. We have gone from five to four busses serving MCS and we used to have a double bus run at ESS that we don't have anymore. Transportation is working very well with the exception of the 4YO programs, but they are working on this. Sue Callahan said many elementary and middle school kids are riding the bus for an hour. Others have heard the same thing.
- Cari said that the kids and parents think that Patrick Flynn the new Dean of Students is responsible for the bus changes, and she wanted to clarify that a group of administrators decided this last spring. Patrick didn't work here when this decision was made.
- Melissa asked why the kids have to sit on the bus outside for ten minutes. Why can't they get off the bus?
- Dennis – Last year the busses were getting here way too early and it was too much unsupervised time. We are making adjustments to the bus schedules.
- Arthur Reed pointed out that the roads will take longer to pass on in the bad weather than they do now.
- Jeanne asked if ed techs could be staggered to arrive early to supervise kids before school.
- Dennis – Ed techs work six hours a day with kids and we are trying to utilize our ed techs to have those six hours with kids.
- Steve Holbrook – Do we really have to depend on ed techs to watch kids? Don't our teachers report for early duty?
- Dennis – We allow students into the building at 7:15. Before that they would be unsupervised.
- Laurie Callahan – Her daughter rides 55 minutes on the bus. Parents drop kids off very early in the morning and figure they will be all right there. Do we integrate the ms and hs busses?
- Dennis – The routes will shrink as we figure out which parents are driving and which students are driving.
- Sue C. – When we cut things like busses, this is the effect of it.
- Melissa Hodgkin – Does ESS go to school 20 minutes less than the other towns? Dennis said they would address this with the next contract.
- Terri A – Before we consolidated, we each had a fund balance that we had to give back to the town. The RSU didn't get it back. If the law says any money raised for education had to stay with education, why didn't the money come

back to us? Dennis said it was a stipulation in the law. Each of the towns would have to spend that money only on the school in that town. Terri would like to see a final number of what each town had that was given back to the town. Mary Ella said she recalled a bunch of capital improvement was used at the end of the year.

- Bonnie Payette – The auditor would have financial statements on that.
  - Salary Comparison – Administrators – Next week at workshop
  - MSMA School Board Annual Conference – Let Lauren know if you want to go
  - October School Board meeting date – October 17<sup>th</sup> due to Columbus Day. Scott and Terri can't be here. Jack asked where the meeting would be held? Mary Ella suggested we could begin to meet once at each of the other schools and get a tour of each school and have the administrator tell us what their needs are. Scott said being on TV is important. Melissa liked going to the other towns, but had a hard time remembering where to go. Sue said constituents had the same issue. Tina said having it on TV is nice, but how many people do watch it.
- Tina – Can we compromise and go to each location at least once and have the majority of the meetings at the HS where it can be televised
- Joe – We need to consider what is the best location so when people make the effort to be here, they can find us and it is comfortable.

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to leave the meeting location as how it was voted on six months ago to rotate the meetings at each town.

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: (Tabled) Ed Rabasco moved to table the item to October agenda.

- Support Staff New Hires:
  - Melissa Lyons, Ed Tech 111 – Minot
  - David Southwick, Ed Tech 111 – PRHS
  - Nicole Chinnock, Ed Tech 1 – Minot
  - Suzanne Marston, Ed Tech 1 – Elm Street
  - William Foss, Ed Tech 111 – BMWMS
  - Aaron Rand, Ed Tech 1 – PCS
  - Scot Vachon, Ed Tech 111 – PCS
  - Deb Parker, Ed Tech 1 – Elm Street
  - Leslie Hayes, Food Service Specialist – PRHS

Jean asked why the difference in ed tech salaries. Dennis explained that it depends on years of service and if you are an ed tech 1, 2 or 3.

Resignations:

- Kim White, Minot – Food Service
- Nancy Hall, PRHS – Guidance Counselor
- Cindy Petherbridge, BMWMS – Librarian

**8.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Moved to 7.0 above

**9.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:**

See 8.0

**10.0 COMMUNICATIONS:** Communications to the School Board

**11.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**12.0 REMINDER:**

**13.0 ADJOURNMENT:**

Dennis handed out the warrant on tax assessments to be signed. Tina & Jeanne asked if this was based on the \$17.8 budget and asked why we would do this now? Dennis explained that we have to operate the school department. Mary Ella said if there is an adjustment we will sign a new warrant. It has to balance out at the end of the year.

Carl asked about the solar committee and the project with the middle school teacher? Dennis said the company is looking for their grant and preparing for the permits they are going to need.

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to adjourn at 8:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Duquette