

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

**The 10th Regular Meeting of the RSU #16 School Board
for 2009 – 2010 was held
Monday, April 12, 2010 at 6:30 P.M.
in the Poland Regional High School Auditorium**

How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these.

George Washington Carver

MINUTES

Present: Annette Annance, Carl Beckett, Sue Callahan, Norm Davis, Yvon Gilbert, Dave Griffiths, Melissa Hodgkin, Steve Holbrook, Mary Ella Jones, Jeanne Manley, Yvette Murray, Scott Sawyer, Martha Stone, Jack Wiseman, Chris Woodford (arrived at 7:40 PM)

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** Dave Griffiths, Chair
Dave Griffiths called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACTION ITEMS:

2.0 EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION:

3.0 ACT ON MINUTES:

Approve 5th Special Meeting Minutes – 03-29-10

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to approve the minutes of 03-29-10

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Unanimous

4.0 ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Approve Financial Statement of March 2010

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to approve the March 2010 Financial Statement

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Unanimous

Rick explained that they are spending money on legal fees and auditors to get things squared away for this year and we may need to move some funds around.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Approval Proposed 2010 – 2011 RSU #16 School Budget

- ➔ There will be a meeting on April 15th at 6:30 PM to vote on the budget or sign the warrants if the budget passes tonight.
- ➔ Dennis presented the 2010-2011 RSU16 school budget. This year's budget is \$18.3M. Next year it is \$17.2M. This doesn't include the federal stimulus funds we received this year or any for next year. This budget for next year is a 6.49% reduction. Rick went over the cost center breakdowns.
- ➔ Steve asked why there is such a large increase in transportation. Dennis explained that they have lost a lot of revenue in state and federal subsidy and things like Maine Care, plus increases in transportation costs in general.
- ➔ Nancy Watson spoke about the Adult Education budget and the proposed \$40,000 cut. Adult Ed numbers are increasing, with 232 enrollments currently. 63 students completed graduation work this year. The budget she proposed is a status quo budget with a \$2,000 reduction and no salary increases and the budget committee approved it. She referred to the administration proposed budget tonight with the \$40,000 cut and what those cuts would mean for Adult Ed. She suggested a midway approach to this. She reviewed the individual budget lines and her suggestions. Carl said he supports the original budget as proposed prior to the proposed \$40,000 cut or Plan X. Melissa agreed with Carl. Rick explained that if they vote to increase the Adult Education budget he would need to know where that money would come from out of the general fund.
- ➔ Dennis explained how the budget committee reached their proposal and the work they did up to get to this point. The budget committee was not looking for any tax increase at this time.
Motion: by Melissa Hodgkin to approve the budget as written
Seconded: by Mary Ella Jones

Amended: by Carl Beckett to adopt Plan X and add the \$40,000 to the budget

Seconded: by Melissa Hodgkin

- Jack suggested that we need to find the money before we vote on putting an increase in the budget. Norm suggested all the administrators divide the \$40,000 and each take a piece of it as a pay reduction. Rick reminded the board that all the administrators do have contracts. Norm said it would be voluntary on their part.
- Dennis explained that if/as additional funds are available or come forward, we will allocate some to Adult Ed. He explained that all school districts in the state are going through the same thing. He can't find \$40,000 to add back in to Adult Ed, but can probably find \$17,000. He does not support Norm's suggestions of the administrator pay reduction.
- Steve asked why so many young students are going to Adult Ed and stated that he supports the budget as proposed by Dennis. Dennis provided an explanation of the D-Path Alternative Program in place at the high school.
- Yvette asked if the pay reduction would affect Nancy's retirement benefit. Yes it would.
- Carl stated he is on the budget committee and supports a flat budget but if Dennis can find the \$17,000 additional for Adult Ed he will support it, it is a win-win situation.
- Nancy said Plan Y on the second page of her handout explains the \$17,000 addition to the Adult Ed budget.

Amendment: by Carl Beckett based on what Dennis is saying and supporting Plan Y as proposed by Nancy Watson with the addition of the \$17,000

Seconded: by Missy Hodgkin

Carl withdrew the amendment until Thursday's meeting on April 15, 2010.

- Melissa asked how much time throughout the year would middle school students have Health and PE? Dennis said it hasn't been completely worked out yet, but they are working on it.
- Yvette asked what the cost is to move the middle school here? Dennis said it is all broken down throughout various lines in the budget. Rick said it is about \$40,000.
- Scott asked about increases in stipends. Dennis said we are contractually obligated at PRHS to increase stipends.
- Mary Ella asked what the current proposed budget means for changes. Dennis said fewer staff & fewer stipends overall. Programs eliminated: French at the high school, JSIT at the high school and Spanish in the middle school. Programs reduced: PE at MCS & ESS reduced to half-time teacher, librarian at PCS replaced by and Ed Tech, Art at ESS reduced to ½ time due to student population while Art at the middle school is increased to full time. Music K-6 has been changed to a district-wide teacher who will begin with 4-6. Music 7-12 continues. Gifted & Talented is reduced to one full time, which is a reduction of two half-time people.
- Jerry Cook (audience) asked about Music. They previously asked for the amount of the current music program cost and what they got was this K-6 proposed program. Is K-3 going to have no music at all? She does not believe this can be done with one teacher. Dennis said it would be about \$200,000 to equalize music across the district K-12.
- Laurie Champagne (audience) Regarding the three scenarios: She thought K-6 music was protected. That's not what she is hearing now. Dennis explained that they would go with 4-6 band and chorus, then see what can be done with K-3. All the schools currently do not have K-3 music. They are working on restructuring the entire program. They want to bring the new teacher on board for their input as well.
- Carol Lundberg (audience) asked about the early retirement incentives and if they are being worked on. Dennis said they are looking into it. The legal firm is looking at it. Anything would have to be negotiated with the association.
- Mary Martin said that program reductions also include additional Health & PE reductions at ESS.
- Lee Libby (audience) clarified that the K-6 music as proposed is a reduction of 1.5 positions, which means a reduction of kid's current programming in Music. She doesn't understand the music program cuts. They need music early on in order to sustain the middle school and high school programs. It should start in Kindergarten. Scott asked about the new K-6 music teacher and how many kids this teacher would be responsible for? Approximately 800 students. There will be one teacher shared by the three schools.
- Melissa pointed out that with the .5 position cuts from full-time, we will lose those people and have to hire half time people.
- Dennis said what we are proposing is something that is sustainable. It is ultimately a school board decision.
- Mary Ella said we are trying to propose program equity in all three towns. If we bring programs back, it has to be at all three schools the same way.
- Carl supports Dennis' position regarding both this year and next year. This year's curtailment from the state has wiggled. Next year, there is no stimulus money and a larger curtailment from the state.
- Chris Woodford thanked Dennis for the efforts put into this budget. There is no win here; it is not a good situation. The budget committee looked at different scenarios and they are trying to keep a level budget and then look at next year. We have contractual obligations and we are trying to keep equity across the schools. He encourages the school board to accept the budget that has been put forward.

- ➔ Dave Griffiths - We got some money back from the state this year that they said we wouldn't. Next years predictions are based on the current economic conditions. When we start to see money coming back in we have to be prepared for what we are going to do with it.
- ➔ Audience member – Regarding PE and Art at ESS. A half-day for those teachers will not completely cover all the K-6 classes. Regarding Music, there are currently 2.5 teachers doing the 4-6 programs in the three schools. That's being reduced to one music teacher, plus that person is also going to try and develop general music. The reality is it's just not feasible.
- ➔ Bill Stubbs (audience) Please provide figures before May 3rd showing the total money that will be required to pay for athletics at all the public schools for next year. Dennis said 7-12 it is \$377,765 for district-wide athletics.
- ➔ Norm pointed out that this has been the toughest budget in the last 12 or 14 years. If we add any of these positions back in, it will cost us approximately \$50,000 per person but someone needs to tell us where we would find the money. We have been told no increase in taxes. He supports Music, but we just don't have the money.
- ➔ Mike Carter (Education Association) Reminded people that every employee collectively gave back \$200,000 this year. Regarding the salary freeze to put programming back in place; we can't negotiate that. We can't say we will take a pay freeze if you put this particular program back in. Regarding stipends; don't fill those stipends and you can save money.
- ➔ Dave clarified that what programs might be put back in would be a school board decision. Steve added that the board's word would be good, if we said we would put something back in even if it were not a negotiating point, we would do it.

The budget vote was tabled until Thursday, April 15th. This was a unanimous agreement.

- ➔ Don King talked about the proposed athletic participation fee. This would generate roughly \$10,000. We wanted to keep the fee small and we don't want to penalize kids for being good at a sport that costs a lot of money. We are proposing a \$25 flat fee per activity. There will be no fee for free/reduced lunch and also a hardship waiver process. If a family has multiple kids, there will be a \$50 cap per season and a \$125 cap per family per year. Not included in this proposal is ice hockey, which is shared with GNG, and the cost is very high for ice time. They are paying \$450 this year.
- ➔ Jean Manley asked what are we doing with the \$10,000? If we are going to do this, it should be a larger amount so it raises enough money to do something with it. Don said it would be used to pay for our athletic trainer that all athletes have access to. We don't want to discourage kids from participating by raising the costs. Jean added that Poland Rec fees are much higher than that and people still sign up. Don also added that currently football pays \$75; with this proposal, football is included in the \$25 fee. Rick explained how the incoming revenue would be accounted for and spent. Chris asked what happens if a student participates in two sports in one season? Don explained that we discourage being on two teams at once, but if it happens there would be two fees.
- ➔ Annette asked why we would cut the \$75 fee for football now while we are trying to bring in money if they are already used to paying it? Cari Medd said it was her suggestion to equalize the fee across all sports. It was never intended to have football always have to pay a fee; it was supposed to become part of the budget eventually. She asked to have all fees the same for all sports (except hockey) for equity.
- ➔ Jean said football is one of the biggest costs. Don responded that two years ago he did a study and boys basketball was the biggest cost.

Motion: by Norm Davis to approve the participation fee as proposed by Don King
 Seconded; Steve Holbrook
 Vote: Unanimous

Discussion/Approval RSU #16 MEA/NEA Custodial Representation

- ➔ We are looking for the voluntary recognition of the custodial staff of RSU16. Mike Carter explained that as a result of consolidation law, only those that were already in an association were recognized and brought forward. We have a majority of cards from the custodians. Dave read the letter that explained the language for the bargaining. Yvette asked where the contracts were in terms of equity for the 16 current custodians. Only (8) are currently being represented. Jean Manley asked if all custodians would have to be elevated to the same pay. Dennis said all custodians would be put into a single negotiated contract.

Motion: by Carl Beckett to approve voluntary recognition of the RSU16 MEA/NEA Custodial Representation
 Seconded: by Melissa Hodgkin
 Vote: 12-2 (Yvette Murray and Steve Holbrook opposed)

Presentation/Discussion/Approval Wood Chip Boiler Contract

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

6.0 POLICIES

Policies – 1st Reading

- AC – Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
- ACAB – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees
- ACAB-R – Employee discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure
- IJND – Web Site Policy

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to accept the first reading of AC, ACAB, ACAB-R & IJND
 Seconded: Jack Wiseman
 Vote: Unanimous

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION – REPORTS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT:

A-team Reports

- ➔ Dave read an excerpt from Cari’s report regarding our college enrollment rates. Over the past five years, we have increased our college enrollment from 51 to 67%. 80% who enrolled as freshmen returned for their sophomore year. 38% of our students pass their AP exams vs. 14% nationwide and 19% in Maine.

8.0 REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD:

Report of the Superintendent – Dennis Duquette

Handouts:

- * Principal’s Letters to Parents
- * So. Portland School Board approves \$37.8M Budget
- * Portland School Budget Gets Committee’s Approval

Rick reminded the board that the budget vote would be this Thursday, April 15. On May 3rd all articles in the budget warrant will be voted on. The budget referendum will take place on May 11th.

9.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Discussion of personnel issue pursuant under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A)

Motion: by Chris Woodford to enter into Executive Session at 8:55 PM
 Seconded: by Norm Davis
 Vote: Unanimous

Motion: by Chris Woodford to come out of Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.
 Seconded: by Norm Davis
 Vote: Unanimous

10.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

11.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT: (See 9.0)

12.0 COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications to the School Board

13.0 REMINDER:

14.0 ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to adjourn at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Duquette