

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

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the RSU #16 School Board  
for 2011-2012 was held  
Monday, January 9, 2012 at 6:30 P.M.  
Poland Regional High School in the Library**

**MINUTES**

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

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** Mary Ella Jones, Chair, Pledge of Allegiance, 6:55 PM

**2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**3.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:**

**4.0 PRESENTATION:** Dennis

- See Superintendent's report

**5.0 ACT ON MINUTES:**

Approve 4<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes - 11-14-11

Approve 5<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes - 12-12-11)

Motion: by Yvette Murray to approve the minutes of 11/14/11

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: Unanimous

**6.0 ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** Approve Financial Statements of  
December 2011

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve the Financial Statement for December 2011

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Unanimous

Discussion: Terri asked if the budget was frozen, Dennis said no.

**7.0 NEW BUSINESS:** Approve Superintendent's Contract

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve the Superintendent's 3-year contract

Seconded: by Ed Rabasco

Vote: Motion passes. All in favor except Tina Love and Yvette Murray, who  
were opposed.

Motion: by Yvette Murray to amend to change to a 2-year contract

Seconded: by Tina Love

Vote: 2–12 Motion fails. Tina Love and Yvette Murray in favor, all others opposed.

Tina explained she supports a two–year contract. Sue Callahan suggested we could revise the evaluation process and still keep the three–year contract. Sue thanked Dennis and stated she feels a 3–year contract is a vote of confidence. Ed Rabasco, Carl Beckett and Mary Ella Jones voiced agreement.

## **8.0 POLICIES: Policies – 1<sup>st</sup> & Final Reading**

ADC – Tobacco Use & Possession

IJOC – Volunteers

IJOC–R – Application of School Volunteer

Volunteer Handbook

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve the first and final reading of the above policies pending suggested revisions

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Unanimous

- Darren Carter explained the process of revising the policies as part of the Health & Wellness plan for the district.
- Dennis explained we are updating the policies from School Union 29 to RSU16 and making changes as needed. The policy committee is working on this with Ed Rabasco as Chair.
- Jeanne asked if staff could go to their vehicles and smoke. Darren explained that there is no smoking on school property. Sue Callahan wants to be sure bus drivers don't step off the property to smoke. Carl asked about Adult Ed students smoking and if it would stop them from attending since they can't smoke. Dennis said there is no smoking on school property. If a student walks off the property to smoke we would speak to them about it. Jenny Rose explained that they have asked people to drive away from school grounds if they have to smoke. Tina Love asked what staff do if they want to smoke? Dennis said staff members will leave the property if they need to smoke.
- Darren explained they just received Tobacco Free School Zone sign kits to put up at all of the schools from the state.

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

### **A–team Reports**

- Administrative reports were included in the packet.
- Terri Arsenault asked about the Spanish Class at Elm Street School. Ell Fanus organized the class as an after school activity. The hope is to expand it to Minot and PCS. Angie Taylor reported that Ell Fanus has been amazing with the programs she is doing. She is the GaTe District Wide teacher.
- Tina Love asked what the BAGs under Technology are. They are a group of people reading Better Answers working with 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders. They have created a blog and are going into classrooms.
- Sue asked about the mold issue in Minot. Arthur Reed said all the mold tests came back negative. The rug was replaced and the smell went away. The kids have lost some library time though this process.

Gina Moulton worked in classrooms and the computer lab in the interim.

- Cari Medd reported that they are still counting the funds raised in the Penny Wars. The funds will be donated for heating fuel and given to the three towns based on the percentage of kids from each town.

## 10.0 REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD:

Sub-Committees:

- Budget Committee – Terri – They met briefly to talk about re-allocating instead of cutting. They decided we need to get into our vision for the district, what we want the focus to be on and funnel money to those places. Dennis is collecting all the budgets from administrators and proposed Tuesday, Jan 24<sup>th</sup> as the first budget committee meeting at 6 PM at Elm Street School. Carl asked if there was a plan to involve the town selectmen and budget committees, Terri said there are designated representatives for each town.
- Curriculum Committee – Jenny Cyr was introduced and is taking over on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Facilities Committee – No update.
- Negotiations Committee – Ongoing.
- Policy Committee – Nothing new to report, will schedule next meeting tonight.
- Public Relations Committee – Joe said there is not a lot to report. They are waiting until after the Wednesday MSM training session workshop and will go from there.

Report of the Superintendent – Dennis Duquette

- Dennis said Maine School Management would be here Wednesday night to work with our school board. They will talk about how to continue to function as a positive team and what your roles are individually and as a group. Also use of email, social media, looking professional in discussions, etc. We are reorganizing the library to better facilitate the meetings and enhance participation. The workshop will be at 6:30 PM to 8PM here in the PRHS Library.
- Reminder – We have 7 members of the school board up for re-election. Yvette Murray, Tina Love, Melissa Hodgkin, Carl Beckett, Scott Sawyer, Jeanne Manley and Jennifer Boenig.
- Athletic Fees: A year and a half ago during the budget process we agreed we would charge user fees for athletics. We have raised \$17,000 to date from grades 7-12. The money is held in the activity account at the high school. Don King was ready to put the money in the general fund. Dennis is recommending we put the money into the district technology department. If it goes into the general fund, it will get generally disbursed. He referred to the minutes from the meeting a year and a half ago about what we would do with the money. It would pay for the trainer and nothing else was specified, it was for the budget. We thought we would take in about \$10,000. Dennis felt targeting the technology would be the most effective use of the money.
- Scott asked what other schools are doing with this money. Dennis said some are funding athletics and some are putting into the general fund.
- Terri brought up that when we got the lights for the field everyone thought it was paid for by fundraising then found out some was taken from the budget. Dennis

explained that the balance on the lights from the budget is \$2,500. Terri would like \$2,500 of the athletic fees to go back in to replace the money taken out of the budget.

- Terri pointed out that the current policy is to allow the Superintendent to move funds around as he sees the need.
- Ed asked if there is anything that got cut in the co-curricular budget. Any clubs or sports? Dennis said no and we find ways to fund programs if kids ask for them. Joe asked what the minutes said we were going to use it for. Dennis said it was to make sure we were able to maintain the athletic trainer. It could pay for the AT if we were going to cut that position.
- Ed Rabasco, as a parent who has a child who does athletics, parents think the money is for athletics, that they are paying an athletic participation fee to subsidize sports.
- Cari Medd said that she and Don King have talked about this in depth. There was never an idea to grow the athletic department budget. If it all goes back to athletics and grows the program and we don't collect the same amount or enough fees next year, we will have lost the budgeted money and end up with not enough to cover existing programs. It would not give an accurate picture of program costs.
- Carl said the year prior we had cut freshmen basketball. Those teams were cut for one year. Dennis said now if there are enough kids we have the freshman teams.
- Ed said he doesn't want this to drag on, deciding what to do with this money. If the AD says it can go to the general fund and Dennis explained what he would do with it if he didn't bring it to us, then we are going to micro-manage how we are going to spend that \$17,000. He would prefer to have the Superintendent make the decision and support that.
- Tina asked about the Athletic Trainer. She is not always there at all events. She has been at events where there were no ice packs in the emergency kits or no wraps to wrap an injury. There are some opportunities to improve these things within the athletic program.
- Joe asked if this passes the straight face test, as we are trying to earn the public's trust. It doesn't pass the straight face test for him.
- Jen Boenig asked where he would like to see the technology money spent. Linda Chaisson, District Technology Coordinator, explained some of the technology needs for the district schools. Minot and Elm Street are using very old equipment; the equipment at PCS is aging, as well. We are doing the students a disservice and we need to upgrade. We are slowly working on that each year through the budget process.
- Jeanne Manley said that because the money was raised within the athletic department, it should stay there. We have a lot of difficult perceptions; it would be really nice if we could show a significant way of it being used for athletics.
- Tina Love asked if the technology budget is separate from the regular budget. Linda explained that the technology budget is put together separately, but it is woven into the budget at each school. Tina asked if athletics have any suggestions for the money. Dennis said he talked with Don King and Don thought the money would go right into the general fund. He has done wonders with the athletic budget.

- Terri said that as a parent of kids who do sports, she never thought it was just for sports. It was not our intent to expand or grow athletics. She would like to go with Dennis's recommendation; if not, then scale back on the fee.
- Carl said he doesn't see why we don't put the money in next year's athletic budget so we don't have to budget so much for next year. Dennis said these fees are from 7-12 for a year and a half. He thinks this recommendation is the best use of the money to best service our students.
- Sue added that as a parent who pays these fees, she pays them so my child can have these opportunities (athletics). She agrees the money should go for technology, but there are people out there who would not understand that move.
- Scott Tiner - Would love to see technology budget doubled. Cutting our budget is going to make us kick ourselves. Should we buy technology that we then can't support? Is there a one time capital investment we could make such as security cameras? Terri said if we currently have a need we are not meeting, why would we buy something new instead of take care of the existing need?
- Jeanne said she thinks that Dennis knows where the biggest need is in terms of priority. Is there a way we could get the perspective of the people in our communities? Create a proposal for how the money will be spent? We have lights, support technology, concussion assessment, etc.
- Dennis agreed perception is everything and the school board needs to lead this school district forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Tina Love reiterated the straight face test.

Motion: by Terri Arsenault that \$2,500 of the \$17,000 in athletic fees goes to lights and balance spent to support technology budget.

Seconded: by Carl Beckett

Vote: Motion failed. See weighted vote tally sheet.

Motion: by Scott Tiner for the budget committee to come up with a policy establishing a way to allocate athletic and other fees collected and not spend this \$17,000 until that policy is developed.

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: Unanimous (as amended below)

Motion: by Ed Rabasco to have it be the policy committee not budget committee that develops this policy

Seconded: by Scott Tiner

Vote: Unanimous

### **Dennis/MS Laptops**

Ayesha Farag-Davis, Middle School Principal, has suspended sending the laptops home for the month of January. We have had physical abuse issues and abuse and inappropriate use at home. We are collecting some data. It is not mandated we send laptops home, it is suggested by the state.

Ayesha said in the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, there were incidents that showed her we need to take a look and review how the computers are being used

and invite the attention of parents, the community and the board to examine how the technology is being used and examine the repair data. She will report on these findings in February. We need to share what we know. Jen Boenig asked about the Internet filter at home. Ayesha explained that there is no filter at home provided by the school, there is a filter at school.

### **Dennis: Vision**

When we became RSU #16, we had a vision and a goal to create one school budget and come together. We did it so well, that it actually harmed our school district. It has been difficult to get anything back. We don't have a strong mission or vision about where we want our school district to go. We need a strategic vision for our district to do justice for our three towns. The community is counting on us to guide them, make the hard decisions and move everything forward. The challenges they face if we don't give them the tools that they need, are enormous.

Dennis handed out the book, Inevitable, for school board members to read. This book offers a vision and direction, which is what we need to take as a school district. Most of the state is reading this book, including the DOE. We need to develop something that is going to take our school district and stand it upside down. He provided a chapter outline of the book.

On Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6 PM at ELHS, the Auburn School Department is sponsoring a workshop on this book. The author will be there. Dennis asked if the school board could attend the meeting. We want to come up with a strategic vision involving the whole community. Dennis has emailed the author of the book to see what the cost would be for her to come and help the school board develop the strategic vision.

❖ New Support Staff Hire: Leigh Culkin, Ed Tech II, WMS

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

**12.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**13.0 REMINDER:**

**14.0 ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to adjourn at 8:43PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Duquette