

RSU # 12  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS (REGULAR) MEETING  
Thursday, October 10, 2019, @ 6:30 PM  
**Chelsea Elementary School**

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Flag Salute

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Rick Cote led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance: Abby Manahan, Ralph Hilton, Richard Cote, Michael Lemelin, Alpha Williams, Will Sugg, Russell Gates, Frank Hample, Richard DeVries, Susan Stires, Christine LaPado-Breglia, Stephen Smith, Lynette Conroy, Monique Crummett

Absent: Sandra Devaney, Gerard Nault, Kimberly Hutchinson (E)

2. Focus on Learning: Fitness for Life

Mrs. Peterson, PE teacher from Chelsea School gave a presentation regarding the Fitness for Life program.

3. Public Comment: (10 min): *Public Comment at School Board meetings is to be restricted to items on the agenda. Comments regarding individuals or personnel matters are not appropriate for the public session. Those wishing to speak should so indicate on the Public Comment Sign-in Sheet.*

No public comment.

4. Adjustments and Consent Agenda (20 min)

Note: Items may be removed from the Consent Agenda on the request of any one member; items not removed may be adopted by general consent without debate. Removed items may be scheduled for consideration immediately after the Consent agenda or placed on the agenda at the discretion of the board. [Action]

Consent Agenda items:

- a. Approve the Minutes of the previous meeting as distributed
- b. Superintendent's Report as distributed
- c. Approve the Committee Minutes as distributed

- i. Richard made a motion to remove the Facilities Minutes: He discussed the feasibility study for the solar farms and the heat pumps and energy recovery units. He has received the final quote which is under \$100,000 that would cover heat pumps at Whitefield and Palermo. Somerville was removed to keep the cost under \$100,000. He would like to move forward as quickly as possible as he used a CO2 monitor during a meeting and the readings indicated that we are pumping too much air in and that we will need monitors in the systems. He made a motion that a CO2 monitor be purchased for \$300.00 to monitor spaces where the heat pumps are going to be installed and give us a baseline.

Monique Crummett asked if there was any chance of getting a monitor donated to the RSU. It can be asked, but Richard DeVries said we are already being given a break on the price. Deb Taylor can research this a

bit further to see if there are any other options. Mr. Tuttle also explained to the board that the budget is done, so the board needs to be aware that the money has to come from somewhere in the existing budget.

Frank Hample - 2nd

Motion passes 11-0-3 (3 Abstained - Steve Smith, Monique Crummett, Michael Lemelin)

- d. Accept the Personnel Report
- e. Accept the Policies as distributed:
  - i. KA - Civility Policy - First Reading - removed

Mr. Tuttle explained that this is a brand new policy, not an update of an existing policy.

1st - Monique Crummett 2nd - Lynnette Conroy

Motion passes 14-0-0

5. Old Business (30min)

a. Solar Energy - [Informational]

- i. Motion made to include Tony Marple in discussion

1st - Christine LaPado-Breglia, 2nd - Monique Crummett

Motion passes 13-0-1 (Ralph Hilton abstained)

- b. Discussion about solar energy - Richard DeVries has been working on this since June and the next step will be to go to the Selectboard. In order to have a community solar farm you have to form an LLC or corporation with the towns in the RSU. Mr. Marple commented that our solar farm can be part of a larger solar farm and mentioned farms with excess space. Stephen Smith asked what authority the RSU had to create a company to do the solar farm and participate. Mr. Tuttle said that he could consult an attorney to find out how, but the understanding is that it can be done. Michael Lemelin asked about the maintenance cost over the next 30 years, which will be about \$3200 per year after the buyout, which would occur in year seven if the RSU chooses to do so at that time. The farm would need approximately four acres and would need a security fence around it, which is part of the installation fee. When asked about sites, Mr. Marple commented that a site in Whitefield is an option. The lease costs would be about \$2000 per year per acre. Stephen Smith commented that solar farms can be an eyesore to a community. Michael Lemelin asked about a warranty if something were to go wrong; Mr. DeVries said that it would be 20 years. Mr. Marple commented that most solar farms are built near landfills as the land cannot generally be used for anything else. Susan Stires asked about the roofs of the schools, but it doubles the cost of installation. Abby Manahan asked what would happen in the future if one of the schools were to leave the RSU; it would be part of the cost of leaving the RSU. Mr. DeVries encouraged people to contact their senator and representatives to extend the federal rebates as the percentage would drop and extending it would help us as well as others in the state, but Stephen Smith felt that would open up too many other challenges. Ralph Hilton said the only one that could put a bill in would be the governor.

Stephen Smith pointed out that we are in the education business not the power business and feels there are still many questions about the costs.

c. New Business (60min)

d. Wellness Committee Goals - [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle explained that our wellness committee initiative began two years ago. We have a district committee that meets monthly and the schools also have wellness teams. The two goals are to educate and encourage our students around a plant based diet and to work with our staff to encourage healthy lifestyles. The hiring of Mike Flynn, our Director of Nutrition, has been beneficial to the district as far as educating and generating more revenue, which has happened.

Anthony Anderson gave a presentation to the board explaining the benefits of a plant based diet and how to incorporate that into our schools. A handout was given to the board with many resources as well.

Richard DeVries commented that part of the reason the board is interested in the plant based diet is that it will promote better learning. Pat Metta commented that the breakfast program and the healthy lunch has been beneficial as far as student attention but it will be a little while before we see how that translates into grades. Will Sugg commended Anthony for bringing his enthusiasm and knowledge to the RSU. Anthony recommended a Netflix documentary called Game Changers. Mike Flynn shared that the nutrition team will speak at the staff workshop tomorrow and will discuss how they will meet a second grader in one of our schools who is requesting more vegetarian options.

e. Afterschool snack Program - [Possible Action]

Mr. Tuttle said that there was legislation passed last spring that says we need to have an after school snack program unless we opt out. We have one after school snack program in the district at Chelsea because they have a Boys and Girls club. The legislation is requiring that we offer this in all of the schools, but we do not have students that stay in the other schools in the afternoon that would eat the food so we would lose money. He and Mike Flynn are recommending that we opt out of the program.

The motion is to opt out of the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program at Windsor, Whitefield, Palermo, and Somerville

1st - Ralph Hilton 2nd - Richard DeVries

Motion passes 13-0-1 (Frank Hample abstained)

f. Bullying Prevention Month - [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle wanted to bring this to the board's attention and let them know what the schools have been doing. There is a timeline of progress that was handed out regarding PBIS that highlighted some of the work that has been going on, including district behavior programs, a behavior specialist, shifting the focus of punishment and rewarding good behavior, training, student support specialists, social workers, climate surveys, restorative practices and the school board Anti-bullying committee. We have currently been implementing Second Step, a researched based

social curriculum and we have a Bullying Prevention Program called Stop, Walk and Talk. Last year, Palermo school was featured on the front page of the KJ for their work with PBIS.

Lynette Conroy asked about the recess vs. motor break and how it was going in the schools. Mr. Tuttle said the more structured motor break gets the students moving and reduces behavior incidents. Mr. DeBlois commented that students were using recess time to stay inside in various classrooms rather than go outside. The structured breaks have helped the students get more physically active. Lynette Conroy was concerned about the loss of social time/interaction. Mr. DeBlois said that lunches are smaller and allow for more conversation.

g. Educational Acronyms - [Informational]

h. Student Count - [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle provided a handout with student count and class size policies as information to have a discussion about the population in our schools. Palermo has small class sizes in kindergarten and first grade, but larger numbers in the upper grades. Windsor class sizes are larger for kindergarten and first grade (last year another teacher was added, but the position was eliminated this year as it was felt it was not needed). Whitefield is holding steady with their population, Chelsea has increased. Mr. Tuttle commented that there is an idea to run a bus through Somerville that would allow the residents a choice between Windsor and Palermo. (Parents currently have to transport to Palermo if they choose to go there.) Last year, Whitefield had a first grade class of 21 students but nothing was done by the board. He and Deb Taylor are looking into using a grant called the Title 2A which can be used for class size reduction or professional development. We currently use all of it for class size reduction.

Richard DeVries asked if there was an ed tech in the K/1 classes. Mr. Tuttle said there is a prek ed tech who goes to K/1 to help when she has free time during the day and there are special ed students in the classrooms who have ed techs that are also in the classroom.

Rick Cote said this was an issue with the budget committee and that they need to keep an eye on it.

Mr. Tuttle's recommendation was that the board should wait to see if the numbers change as people move in and out quite often as well as to find out the final high school count to do some estimates to see if there would be any budget money available.

Monique Crummett asked if volunteers are allowed in the classrooms. Mr. Tuttle said that problem is that volunteers can commit but easily cancel. A solid volunteer could be helpful. Heather Wilson would like to see a full time ed tech added as there is great need and the class sizes in kindergarten and first grade also impact other areas of the school. Will Sugg asked if there were students in lower grades where families could be asked to consider Palermo as an option. He did an evaluation of the facilities constraints of Palermo several years ago and that should be considered. Mr. Tuttle said the classrooms for grades 5-8 are small in comparison to other classrooms in the district.

Monique Crummett asked if Debra Demos could offer input. Ms. Demos, President of the Teachers Association and first grade teacher at Windsor, commented that it is difficult with such large class sizes, and teaching different levels of students. It can be done, but it would be beneficial to have more help.

Michael Lemelin asked if the difficulty was due to students with special needs or the different levels to teach. Ms. Demos said there are a lot of contributing factors that added to the difficulty. Mr. Lemelin asked if the larger class sizes applied to all grade levels or just some of them. Mrs. Wilson let him know which class sizes were higher.

Susan Stires felt that two ed techs were needed, one for kindergarten and one for first grade.

Ralph Hilton recommended waiting until next month, after we get the high school budget tuition costs. Another board member felt it was too long to wait.

Monique Crummett added that, if money were not to be considered, but education is considered first, then we need to add help now.

Richard DeVries commented that Chelsea School is closer to Windsor and should be considered for space for students as well. Another board member commented that it should be a priority that siblings stay in the same school and that should be taken into consideration before moving any students to other schools.

Motion to hire one Ed Tech for Kindergarten and First Grade at Windsor School  
1st - Monique Crummett 2nd - Lynette Conroy

Motion passes 12-1-1 (Christine LaPado-Breglia abstained)

Stephen Smith asked about the cost. Mr. Tuttle said an Ed Tech would cost approximately \$35,000 between salary and benefits. It could be a prorated cost depending on how long it takes to hire someone. The grant money will need to be checked into for use for this if it is available, which will most likely decimate funds for professional development needs for the school year. If the motion fails, Mr. Tuttle said he would look into it and bring estimates of costs back to the board next month.

Russell Gates asked about the bus loans that are being retired, but they do not expire until next budget cycle.

Richard DeVries said that Larry Dancer should be congratulated for getting a contract for propane and fuel oil at a lower cost this year compared to last. If this year runs the same this year as last year, we will be saving around \$20,000.

i. Budget Timeline - [Action]

Richard DeVries moved that we accept the Budget Timeline. Mr. Tuttle action did not need to be taken tonight as many are seeing it for the first time and may have suggestions. The budget process is starting now, about six weeks earlier per request of school administrators. Mr. DeVries withdrew his motion.

Mr. Tuttle encouraged the board members to read it over and action can be taken next month.

Will Sugg commented that Mr. Tuttle's work visiting all of the town selectboards is very much appreciated.

Ralph Hilton said the Alna town meeting is in March and suggested that the budget presentation is done before that meeting. Mr. Tuttle is hoping that the subsidy report will be released the first week of February.

6. Executive Session: Enter Executive Session Pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (D) Negotiations
7. Executive Session: Enter Executive Session Pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter
8. Adjourn 9:15pm