

NORWICH BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 6, 2008  
7:00 PM, MARION CROSS SCHOOL

Minutes

Present: Board members Addante, Callaghan, French, Sachsse; Administrators Gersen, Aubin, Roberts, Kelley. 1 public attended. Recorded by R. Lohr

1. Call to order – Chair Becky French called the meeting to order at 7:05 and welcomed new Principal Linda Kelley.

2. Approval of Minutes

**Linda Addante moved and Carey Callaghan seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 4, as submitted with changes. The motion passed unanimously.** The change on the meeting minutes was in item 5A spelling for “LEEEP.”

3. Communications and Reports

a) Report of Chair

Chair Becky French announced that the next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3, 7:00 PM at the Marion Cross School Library. The Chair announced the need to create a Negotiations Committee. Linda Addante and Carey Callaghan volunteered to serve on this committee.

A communication had been received from the town Finance Committee suggesting that the School Board stay below the budget penalty threshold and that new faculty hires would preferably be entry level teachers to save on salaries. The Board discussed hiring experienced faculty and prefers to take into account the best person available for the open positions along with trying to keep the salary levels as low as possible.

b) Reports of Administrators

**Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Gersen announced that the school district will need to focus on cost containment due to the increase in fuel prices. The staff will be looking at accounts that are under spent. A directive on the issue has already been sent to the school staff.

The SAU 70 Web site will be enhanced so that it can be more easily accessed by residents, who do not have high speed Internet service. The Superintendent also announced that Carol Edwards has been hired as the new administrative assistant, and she will begin working next week.

**Assistant Superintendent’s Report**

Assistant Superintendent Aubin said that the transportation study is underway and it will also look at bus route efficiencies. A budget timeline document in the Board packet was cited. It was suggested that a Norwich Budget Committee meeting could be held prior to September 3 and that the faculty should be incorporated into the early part of the budget timeline, too. Mr. Aubin also announced that he is presently closing the books on the past school year and there is about a \$50,000 surplus, which is about one third of the original projected surplus. A positive note was that the Dresden budget surplus will be better than expected and that will be incorporated in the Norwich budget.

## **Principal's Report**

Principal Kelley submitted a written report and highlighted the improved enrollment, which is now expected to be at least 298 plus there have been five serious additional inquiries. The Principal has been meeting with the faculty individually.

### **4. Business Requiring Discussion**

The Board discussed various policies that were going to be eliminated or revised. The first step was to organize the policies and then to find gaps. An Administrative Procedure Manual and a Personnel Management Manual would be created. Revising the policies would take time and it was estimated that the Board could complete the process by February. Some of the policies were superseded by contract. The Board discussed the difference between policy and procedure, and the difference between the various school district policies, and the two states.

The Board discussed rescinding Policy EGAC-2 regarding the non-union health insurance program and it will vote on this action at the September Board meeting. The Board understood that existing health insurance agreements would continue and that new hires after the vote for rescinding the policy would have to cover a portion of their premiums.

The new Policy IMB on Animal Dissection had a first reading as did the new Policy IHBEA related to ESOL (English as a Second Language) stipulations.

The Board also discussed a draft of the new policy IIB regarding special education evaluation, which has been overhauled. It was suggested that the staff set up Web site links to other useful sites that could be helpful to families that are involved with special education. It was expected that the first reading of this policy will be at the September meeting.

### **5. Future Agenda**

It was suggested that the School Board appeal to the powers-that-be regarding the Norwich corridor project related to the trees in front of the school . It was recommended that the town manager and select board delay the work on the Norwich corridor while the town considers ways to save the above mentioned trees that are used for the LEEEP classes. Chair Becky French will draft a letter to the town requesting more information about the corridor project.

### **6. Business Requiring Action**

Special education teacher Bo Hall was granted a one year leave of absence and Janice McGuire was nominated and elected to take her place during the summer via email/telephone.

**Linda Addante moved and Carey Callaghan seconded a motion to appoint Janice McGuire to a one-year part time special education teacher at an annual pro-rated salary of \$49,718.20. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **7. Adjournment**

**Mary Sachsse moved and Linda Addante seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM. The motion passed unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.