

**MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 1 MEETING HELD MAY 10, 2011 AT 6:00 PM IN THE MORSE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA. (NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Board. Such action, either to approve or amend and approve, is anticipated at the May 23, 2011 meeting).**

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**Members Present:** Tim Harkins, Chairperson; Julie Rice, Vice Chairperson; David Barber, Robin Buczkowski, Chet Garrison, Betsy Varian, Alan Walton; Student Representative Elizabeth Young; William C. Shuttleworth, Superintendent of Schools

**Members Absent:** Zack Shaw

**Others Present:** David Richards, Bud Solebello, Dean Emmerson, Ruth Moore, Debra Clark, Sally Brown, Joel Austin, Ellen Beal, Emily Thompson, Kari Babcock, Nancy Harriman, Peter Kahl, Ross Berkowitz, Pam Moody, Tom Soule, Sharon Brown, Seth Koenig, Alex Lear, and members of the RSU 1 community

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Harkins called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **RECOGNITION AND COMMENTS FROM CHAIR**

Chairperson Harkins thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. Mr. Harkins reported that the Board has had a number of meetings regarding the budget which is on the agenda for Board approval. The budget will then be presented to the public for their vote during a two-part validation process. The budget includes the elimination of some valued staff members and Mr. Harkins thanked them for their service to the district. Mr. Harkins asked that the members of the public who wish to speak during the public session limit their comments to two minutes.

### **ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA**

None

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

Woolwich resident Sharon Dohner shared her concerns about the district not making AYP and felt that cutting core positions is a mistake. Mrs. Dohner also addressed the growing special education budget with more one-on-one instruction and felt we should focus on keeping quality teachers.

Superintendent Shuttleworth explained that the increase in special education is due to the loss of stimulus money that was used to offset the cost of special education. The bottom line has not increased but our contribution has increased due to the loss of federal dollars. It is our responsibility to education all children. We do not send students out of district which saves on transportation costs. There have been an increased number of children who are identified because the state has terminated residential

programs. The reason that we are cutting some teaching positions is due to the fact that our class sizes are relatively low. We regret losing those teachers but we will still have class sizes that are reasonable.

Special Education Director Sharon Brown stated that we know as a society we have many children with many needs often a result of children growing up in poverty. Our responsibility is to take care of them and try to do it equitably. Mrs. Brown could not talk at great length regarding the types of needs due to the need for confidentiality.

Bath resident Ray Hutton inquired as to what the average class sizes are at high school. Morse High School Principal Kahl responded that right now we have an average of 17 and next year the class sizes are projected to be around 21-22. Morse will have 10 or fewer classes with less than 15 students. The average class size in the AP classes is 15-20 students. The students' schedules will be run next week.

Mr. Hutton also asked about the laptop program at the high school, what the cost of the program is and why we are providing students with laptops when most of the students have computers at home. Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that we are in the third year of the high school laptop program. We signed a contract two years ago with the state to purchase the Apple computers. Our middle school students have had them for 5 years. This is a highly advanced technology-driven world and we wanted to provide the same opportunities and platform at school for all students. Mr. Hutton stated that Apple products are not used in today's business so the student would need to relearn using a PC when entering the workplace. Technology Director Dean Emmerson stated that the laptops are a good value and provides the teaching staff with the same resources. Mr. Hutton asked who is responsible for care, breakage or misuse of the laptops. Mr. Emmerson responded that every family agrees to be financially responsible for them. Letters go home to the parents for their signature. Payment arrangements can be made if needed. A coverage program is also offered on a voluntary basis in the beginning of the school year.

Bath resident John Dever shared his concerns regarding cuts in the gifted/talented program. He stated that there is a perception that smart kids can take care of themselves; however, gifted and talented students have a higher dropout rate and more behavioral issues than typical students especially in younger grades. These students need to be challenged and interested in school. There should be no mandatory minimum spent on these kids who represent a valuable resource to our society. Mr. Dever urged the Board to try very hard to preserve these resources for our kids.

Superintendent Shuttleworth stated that we are reallocating how we are going to deliver the gifted and talented services next year and we are deeply committed to these students. The administrative responsibilities will be through central office next year so that our gifted/talented teacher can be 100% allocated to working with kids. This will also increase opportunities for differentiated instruction next year.

Jackie Dwinal stated that she did not support a 2.5% increase in the budget. In addressing the online survey, Ms. Dwinal felt that it was hardly a correct representation of the community with only 699 votes. Ms. Dwinal questioned why the remedial classes are offered at the high school and not at the middle school and felt this indicated that there is trouble at the middle school and elementary schools. Ms. Dwinal did some research on the 4 x 4 schedule online and found some good things about it; however, she asked if the Board is aware of what subjects are being taught and when. The classes seem very

small and the schedule contains a lot of electives. Mrs. Dwinal questioned the 90 minute classes and stated that if kids were succeeding and meeting the state average she would feel different about the 4 x 4 schedule. Woolwich and West Bath Schools are doing much better than other schools in the district. Ms. Dwinal stated she would vote against on any increase in the budget.

Bath resident and Bath Middle School teacher Barbara Mills spoke in support of Option #2 to reinstate the home economics program at the middle school. Mrs. Mills stated that during the second year of the health coordinator grant we will be required to have a certified health teacher in place at the middle school. Instead of eliminating this position, Mrs. Mills asked the Board to be proactive and reinstate the program next year.

Superintendent Shuttleworth stated that the SHAPE committee has been working on the health curriculum for three years. The grant we have advocated for requires that we have health education provided during the second year of the grant. It does not have to be taught by a certified health educator.

Barbara Mills responded that, according to Jaki Ellis, the Maine CDC has confirmed that the school health coordinator must be certified in health in order to be teaching part of the curriculum and overseeing the program.

Bath resident and MHS English Department Chair Brian Stanton stated that he will be addressing the 4 x 4 schedule at a later time when we can look at things rationally and either fix it or eradicate it. Mr. Stanton stated that the district is losing a great teacher in Ashley Begin-Smith. He also questioned the impact area language in the contract as Mrs. Begin-Smith is certified to teach 7-12. The district currently has a probationary language arts teacher remaining in her position while we are losing someone certified to teach that position with more seniority.

Chairperson Harkins responded that the RIF issue is based on the seniority list agreed upon during the beginning of the school year. This list was verified by the teachers' union and central office.

Superintendent Shuttleworth stated that the SEA determined that the impact area for the high school would be 9-12 regardless of the certification. Unfortunately, this is the document we had to work with as we go through the RIF process. Mr. Shuttleworth encouraged members of the SEA to meet with union leadership when the contract is renegotiated to address this subject.

Bath resident and MHS teacher Tom Rackmales asked the questions "What is a good or a productive relationship with a superintendent and union leadership? Is it adversarial or collegial? Are there healthy disagreements? Healthy trust?" Mr. Rackmales reported that a few years ago Morse High School teachers agreed to take on an extra class. This was done with the understanding that we were keeping our class sizes low. Now that we have lost some excellent teachers, Mr. Rackmales asked whether we can consider going back to five classes. Mr. Rackmales stated that he can't support a budget that raises taxes and includes raises for teachers.

Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that the relationship between the superintendent, union, Board of Directors, and community is one of collegiality. We will continue to have a dialogue and disagreements while continuing to show respect. We should be grounded in the deep principles of what is in the best interest of our children and our children's parents. We need to continue to balance the needs of our children with the taxpayers'

ability to pay the taxes.

Sharon Dohner felt that it is reasonable to expect the main student body to have the same representation as the special education students, gifted and talented students or any other specialized group. Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that we are responsible for educating every child and the district has very few students receiving one-to-one instruction. The majority of the budget is allocated to our top students not those with special needs.

Bath resident Heidi Tucker spoke in support of Option 2 to keep the home economics program at the middle school. Mrs. Tucker also addressed the need to have a health teacher at the high school and middle school and asked if the grant also applies to the Woolwich School.

## **STAFF REPORT**

None

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Superintendent Shuttleworth was asked to update the Board on the progress of the Math Curriculum Committee. Mr. Shuttleworth reported that the committee consists of administrators, teachers and parents. Each member of the committee has a goal to visit a school of their choice that they consider to be high performing by May 20<sup>th</sup>. The committee will meet again to build an action plan that will be a blueprint for work done in RSU 1 next year. Board member Robin Buczkowski volunteered to serve on the committee as a Board representative.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Shuttleworth thanked the public for participating in the budget process and acknowledged the administrators, Ruth Moore and Debra Clark for their incredible work on this budget. Mr. Shuttleworth also thanked the Board for their selfless work and acknowledged his deep appreciation and respect for their work.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **APPROVE 2011-2012 RSU 1 SCHOOL BUDGET**

Superintendent Shuttleworth reported that as requested at the last budget meeting two options were presented to the Board. Option 1 retains the home economics program and eliminates a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher at Dike-Newell School. Option 2 retains the elementary teacher position and eliminates the home economics program at Bath Middle School. Mr. Shuttleworth explained that in order to restore home economics at the middle school a teaching position at the elementary level would need to be cut. This would be a position vacated by a retirement and not filled; however, it doesn't necessarily have to be a position at Dike-Newell but would be a position that would least impact class enrollment.

Dike-Newell School Principal Sally Brown reported that if a teacher is removed from Dike-Newell there would be 23 students in each 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class. Mrs. Brown urged the Board

to keep the position in order to maintain the good instruction in their classrooms.

Board member Varian inquired about the health grant and how that impacts the budget. Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that it does not affect the budget. The intent is to bring together everything we have been working on as far as health education is concerned and have one person oversee the program and curriculum. The elimination of the home economics program would not impact the grant.

Board member Buczkowski asked whether home economics will be offered in the new Woolwich School. Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that home economics has not been a part of the curriculum in Woolwich. If the program was offered it would require us to renovate space in the new school to accommodate the program. The school health coordinator will be shared throughout the district in grades K-12.

Board member Walton felt that it is important to keep the home economics program through next year until something is in place to replace it. Eliminating the program will be a step backwards and Mr. Walton would like to see the district move forward.

Superintendent Shuttleworth stated that the home economics teacher's curriculum included making good healthy choices. If the program was eliminated, we would take a look at those pieces of curriculum and assign them to other specialists in the middle school. The person we hire as our school health curriculum may also be able to meet those needs.

Board member Garrison asked if parents could opt out of sending their children to Dike-Newell due to large class sizes. Superintendent Shuttleworth responded that RSU 1 offers school choice which would allow parents to request another school that has smaller class sizes. Mr. Shuttleworth provided the Board with a list of the anticipated class sizes for each school next year which reflects filling all three elementary positions vacated by retirements.

Board member Buczkowski felt it is more important to replace all the teachers in the elementary school for our younger students. Mrs. Buczkowski stated that her children attended Woolwich Central School and did not have home economics as part of the curriculum. Mrs. Buczkowski supports the home economics program but felt the students at Dike-Newell would be better served by filling all vacant positions.

Board member Garrison read a statement that expressed the concerns he has heard from his constituents about paying more taxes. Mr. Garrison stated that we cannot continue to put the complete burden on the backs of people who cannot afford to pay higher taxes. Mr. Garrison felt that because the budget does not reflect shared sacrifice he cannot in good conscience vote in favor of the budget.

Chairperson Harkins stated that the Board charged the Superintendent to develop a budget with a certain dollar figure. The cuts have been difficult; however, the Board is now obligated to vote on a budget. The Board has a good handle on the budget and trusts the administrators who provided us with the budget. Mr. Harkins stated that we have talked over and over about shared sacrifice and expectations and wants from the Board. It is time to move on and make the community whole. The Board has to be able to make a decision on the budget and vote on it in order to present it to the community on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**MOTION:** Barber

**SECOND:** Buczkowski

**VOTE:** Board (5-2)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Accept Option 1 with the 2.5% target and the elimination of the home economics program.

### **APPROVE AND SIGN VOTES TO BE ADOPTED FOR WARRANTS**

Superintendent Shuttleworth read the following votes to be accepted by the Board:

**VOTED:** That the warrant for the Regional School Unit Budget Meeting presented to the meeting be and is hereby approved and that a Regional School Unit budget meeting be and is hereby called for May 31, 2011 for the purpose of voting on the annual budget for the Regional School Unit for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

**FURTHER VOTED:** That the Warrant and Notice of Election for the Regional School Unit Budget Validation Referendum presented to the meeting be and is hereby approved, and that a Regional School Unit budget validation referendum be and is hereby called for June 7, 2011 for the purpose of approving the budget adopted at the Regional School Unit budget meeting for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

**FURTHER VOTED:** That the form of Notice of Amounts Adopted at Budget Meeting presented to this meeting be and is hereby approved, and that the Secretary of the Regional School Unit is hereby authorized and directed to complete said Notice by adding the amounts approved by the voters for each expenditure category and the total school budget summary expenditure amount, all in accordance with the Regional School Unit budget meeting on May 31, 2011, and to cause copies of said notice, as completed, to be delivered to the municipal clerks of each municipality of the Regional School Unit for posting at the polling places for the June 7, 2011 Regional School Unit budget validation referendum.

**MOTION:** Rice

**SECOND:** Barber

**VOTE:** Board (7-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Accept language as written regarding the warrants related to the budget meeting and budget validation referendum.

### **PERSONNEL ITEMS**

#### Teachers Probationary I:

Upon the recommendation and nomination of the Superintendent of Schools and pursuant to 20-A, MRSA §13201 and subject to proper certification to elect Julia Simmons to a first year probationary contract for the 2011-2012 school year.

**MOTION:** Walton

**SECOND:** Rice

**VOTE:** Board (6-0)\*  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Accept the nomination of Julia Simmons as recommended by the Superintendent.  
\*(Mr. Garrison had to step away during this vote.)

Teachers Probationary 2:

Upon the recommendation and nomination of the Superintendent of Schools and pursuant to 20-A, MRSA § 13201 and subject to proper certification to elect the following teachers to a second year probationary contract for the 2011-2012 school year.

- Rebecca Deschaine
- Jennifer Galasso
- Sarah Keezing
- Amy Otis
- Paul White
- George McGinty
- Valerie Boubel
- Jennifer Benn

**MOTION:** Varian

**SECOND:** Rice

**VOTE:** Board (7-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Accept the nominations as recommended by the Superintendent.

Teachers 1<sup>st</sup> Continuing Contract:

Upon the recommendation and nomination of the Superintendent of Schools and pursuant to 20-A, MRSA §13201 and subject to proper certification to elect the following teachers to continuing contracts for the 2011-2012 school year.

- Beverly Gilbert
- Emily Dittman
- David Minott
- Steve Vachon
- Lisa Gastonguay
- Kathryn Wetzel-Young
- Katrina Barter
- Brent Luchies
- Tammy Baxter
- Jacqueline Aines
- Helen Lanoue
- Amber Snell
- Sabrina Vasoll
- Courtney Culley

**MOTION:** Garrison

**SECOND:** Buczkowski

**VOTE:** Board (7-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Accept the nominations as recommended by the Superintendent.

**MOTION:** Garrison

**SECOND:** Harkins

**VOTE:** Board (7-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Approve termination of the following teacher contracts in connection with the elimination of their positions due to changes in State and local fiscal conditions:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Teacher Name</u>
English Teacher	Ashley Begin-Smith
Social Studies Teacher	Justin Voldman
World Languages Teacher	Timothy Powers

Superintendent Shuttleworth thanked the teachers for their service and wished them the best. Vice Chairperson Rice stated that the district is losing some tremendous teachers and expressed her sadness in having to cut their positions. The Board echoed her sentiments.

### **APPROVE OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP REQUEST**

**MOTION:** Garrison

**SECOND:** Walton

**VOTE:** Board (7-0)  
Students (1-0)

**TO:** Approve the out-of-state field trip request to allow the Odyssey of the Mind students to attend the World Finals in Maryland.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Bath resident Ray Hutton suggested that the Board look into acquiring more microphones in order to help the meeting go smoother without having to share one microphone.

### **NEXT MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS**

- Next RSU 1 Board meeting; Monday, May 23, 2011, Phippsburg Elementary School – 6:00 PM
- Public Budget Vote; Tuesday, May 31, 2011, Bath Middle School gymnasium – 6:00 PM
- Budget Referendum Validation Vote; Tuesday, June 7, 2011

### **ADJOURN**

Chairperson Harkins adjourned the meeting at 7:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Shuttleworth  
Secretary