

APPROVE/AMEND MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2017

MOTION: August

SECOND: Walton

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

TO: Approve the minutes of April 11, 2017 as written.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

The agenda was adjusted to include:

- Item 14.1A – Resignations/Retirements
- Item 13.1A – Food Service Report – moved to the May Board meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

PUBLIC FORUM – FY 2018 SCHOOL BUDGET

Superintendent Manuel reported that the Finance Committee asked the administrators to look into cutting approximately \$100,000 from the proposed budget in order to be sensitive to the local taxpayers in our communities. The administrators came up with a reduction of \$113,000 that included the removal of two special education tuitions in hopes that the new regional program will allow us to see this savings and a savings of around \$18,000 from Anthem.

The proposed budget now shows an increase of 2.53% as opposed to the 2.92% increase in the previous proposal. The local share of the budget went from 4.53% to 3.88%. The breakdown per community is as follows:

Arrowsic 7.16% (previously 7.65%)
Bath 3.73% (previously 4.43%)
Phippsburg 3.38% (previously 3.86%)
Woolwich 4.24% (previously 4.9%)

Vice Chairperson August reported that the Finance Committee discussed paying down the Food Service budget deficit. Administration presented a strong argument to pay down debt as quickly as possible as it will only get worse if we not address this now. The consensus of the committee was to accept the recommendation of the administration. Although the committee did ask administration to cut some of the budget, Mr. August reminded the public that the budget still shows an increase from year to year and the Board is very invested in the education of our students in the RSU.

Superintendent Manuel reported that he is working with four other districts on a Regional Special Education program which will be in place for next year. Dr. Manuel is hopeful that it will be a good fit for some of our students that are currently in out-of-district placements so they can come back and receive the services appropriate for them.

PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING UPDATE

Assistant Superintendent Judy Harvey reported that the Morse High School faculty is busy getting ready for the freshman that are entering in the fall which will include some work over the summer. Ms. Harvey worked with the departments at Morse to have the assessments that they give within the course contain the same indicators that are needed to pass the standard. This would mean that if a student passes the assessment the student will also pass the course and meet the standards. Policy IKF-Graduation Requirements will be reviewed by the Policy Committee later this week and will be on the agenda for the Board to review next month.

MHS BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

Superintendent Manuel reported that there were 104 people in attendance at Bath Middle School for the straw poll vote on Tuesday, April 11th. All 104 members of the RSU 1 community voted in favor with moving forward with the site for the new high school. Dr. Manuel recognized those that served on the Morse Communication Committee including Lorna Ryan, David Flaherty, Kara Thelen, Nancy Riggs and Deb Keller and thanked them for their efforts. We are hopeful that we can continue to have this participation as we go through the design phase of the project. From now on we will be combining all three committees together to have just one meeting on Thursdays at 11:00. We will also be able to review sketches of the exterior of the school and interior prints to in draft form during this meeting. We are scheduled to go to Augusta twice this week to prepare for the May 10th meeting in order to get state approval for the site.

FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Vice Chairperson August reported that the Finance Committee feels very good about the proposed budget and is scheduled to meet again on May 4th. The second reading of the budget will take place on May 8th at 6:00 pm in the Bath Middle School cafeteria. The Board will vote on the budget and sign the warrants during this meeting. Mr. August invited anyone that has questions or concerns about the budget to try to make the Finance Committee meeting next week.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Board member Ensel reported that after getting some feedback and talking to staff at the different schools the committee members have been conducting some extensive staff interviews. The committee will meet again this week and will begin to divide things into short and long-term recommendations. Mr. Ensel met with Technology Director Dean Emmerson and had a good conversation about technology and what we can do to better utilized technology in the district.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Manuel reported on the following:

- BRCTC Instructor Ruthanne Harrison received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture for School Teachers. This grant will allow her to go to Chicago in July for a week-long program sponsored by the Chicago Architecture Foundation of the American Skyscraper. The program will bring 72 teachers from around the country together to explore a series of themes around skyscraper architecture and history. Ms. Harrison's goal is to bring this information back to the classroom and communities.
- Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG) sent 15 students to compete at the Career Development Conference in March. JMG teacher Maria Morris reported that the students were respectful, responsible and attentive during the competition. Morse was well represented with several first and second place finishes.
- The Portland Press Herald had an article about the Lerner Foundation and grants they have given to community organizations as well as school districts. RSU 1 was one of those recipients and we will receive a six-year \$600,000 grant. This is a program to deal with aspirations of middle school students and following them through high school. Our community partner that was awarded this grant was Chewonki which is great because we already have a partnership with them.
- We were awarded \$518,000 for the Regional Special Education Program and will have a planning meeting next week with four other districts. The focus of the meeting will be on high school students that need more support. The behavior program will be located at Wiscasset High School.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Business Manager Debra Clark provided the Board with the Financial Report for the month ending March 31, 2017. Currently 65% of the budget has been spent which is in line with the 67% spent last year at this time. The Special Education tuition line continues to be a little bit of concern. The district has received 74% of the projected revenues which compares to 76% last year. We have completed all the requirements for the Woolwich refunding and the bonds will go for sale in early May. We will see a little bit of savings next year but because we won't have the sale of the bond completed until after this budget is finalized the state will need to adjust the subsidy next year.

REVIEW OF 2016-2017 BOARD GOALS

Board member Ritch-Smith highlighted the ways in which the Board is addressing this year's goals. The effort to improve communication throughout the community is being discussed through the Communication Committee. The construction project is on schedule and has community support as shown by the straw poll vote this month. The district is moving forward with proficiency-based education and the steam initiative as described in Goal #3. The Board continues to work on the food service program which will remain one of our goals for next year.

WEST BATH DISCUSSION

Chairperson Harkins stated that the Board began this discussion last month and decided to continue and finalize this discussion during tonight's meeting. The Board received an email from Superintendent Manuel which detailed the costs associated with this request.

Superintendent Manuel reported that to our knowledge there are five siblings that over a period of time would like to go to West Bath School. Dr. Manuel was asked to look into what the financial impact would be on the district. If all five students attended West Bath School next year, the district would lose roughly \$22,000. This would also impact each RSU 1 community because the cost sharing formula is based on where our students reside. If these students were to remain at West Bath School for the full six years, the district would stand to lose approximately \$130,000 over time. Dr. Manuel stated that the unknown factor in this request would be whether there would be more siblings in the future that would also want to attend West Bath School.

Vice Chairperson August expressed his concerns with this request and stated that if we were to consider continuing the practice of sending siblings to West Bath School then we would have to look at the need to renegotiate the agreement with West Bath.

Chairperson Harkins stated that the Board recognizes that there is a continuity issue which impacts the families as discussed last month. The Board realizes the importance of continuity which was a part of the discussion when looking at combining Dike-Newell School and Fisher-Mitchell School. As a result, we decided, as a district, that it is in our best interest to keep the school districts separate and focus on making the transitions better for our students. The sentiment of the Board is that we respect the agreement, we know the financial impact it has on the district, and that we leave it to the individual families to pursue the options that they may have and rely on the Superintendent's decision.

PROBATIONARY TEACHERS

MOTION: August

SECOND: Perkins

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

TO: Approve the list of the probationary teachers moving from Probationary I to II, Probationary II to III and Probationary III to Continuing Contract as presented.

