

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, September 15, 2016
Final Minutes

Present: Dan Hayes, Katie Fiander, Steve Sullivan, members; Fred Steinberg, Chair; Jackie Mendonsa, Principal; Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Public Guests

A. Meeting Called to Order at 7:05 P.M.

B. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar

Dan pointed out that we should start considering Capital Planning requests. It's important to put all our needs out there for the town to see instead of padding school budgets to account for them.

There still isn't a clear plan for snow removal in case of heavy storms. In previous years, the Highway Department has called in extra vehicles and workers on an as-needed basis, and that seems to be what will happen this year as well. Fred will set up a time for Steve to meet with the Selectboard about this issue.

C. Warrants and Gifts

Dan inquired whether vendors ever run into trouble getting paid due to unsigned warrants, particularly during the summer. Aaron said not really, but agreed with Dan that SSC could do better signing early. They will notify each other via email

#307: \$69,382.41
#3003: \$16,365.70
#3004: \$5,302.05
#3005: \$12,176.91

D. Approval of Minutes from August 25, 2016.

Fred asked a clarifying question about a public comment recorded in these minutes.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2016 AS EMENDED. FRED SECONDED. MOTION PASSES (ONE ABSTENTION).

E. Public Comments and Announcements: None.

F. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. Family Handbook – Vote: Jackie said that there are no substantial changes to the Handbook but that she has not had time this week to prepare a copy for SSC approval. This review and vote will have to be delayed until the October meeting.
2. Sub Rates – Discuss Increase: Jennifer is proposing that all U#28 schools adopt the same sub rates so as not to create competition among the school district. The proposed increase is to \$90 / day for certified substitutes; the current rates vary among U#28 schools, but are creeping toward minimum wage. The line item would have to increase in the budget as well; currently, we're around \$21,000, and we should increase that by 10% or so to cover the proposed raises. It's a good year to make the leap if we're going to do this.

STEVE MOVED TO RAISE ALL THE SUBSTITUTE RATES BY \$10 PER DAY. FRED SECONDED. MOTION PASSES (ONE ABSTENTION).

G. Unfinished Business / Updates: None.

H. Policy Review

First Reading on:

1. ADDA-R – DCJIS Model CORI, ADDA – Background Checks MASC Version
2. IMD – Observation of Religious Holidays
3. JFBB – School Choice

On ADDA-R and ADDA, Dan questioned who has hiring authority for school nurses; it seems unclear in this policy. Jennifer will ask counsel for clarification. Dan added that we should look at CORI policy for hiring Superintendents as well.

Dan praised IMD for its flexibility and for capturing the educational culture at SES.

Vote to Delete:

1. IHA – E – Access to Equal Educational Opportunity in the Basic Instructional Program

DAN MOVED TO DELETE POLICY IHA – E ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

I. Reports

1. Principal's Report

Jackie reported that the track will hopefully be put in in October. We had a Welcome Back potluck picnic on September 9; it was very relaxed and fun with people picnicking on blankets. Fred, Katie, and Dan volunteered to speak before various groups at the upcoming Open House. The Art Residency application is coming up very soon as well (early October); Jackie would like to see a different kind of art form every year. So far we've had puppetry, poetry, dance, and storytelling. Hopefully we'll get the grant again this year, but there are also a lot of artists in the building, so perhaps we could tap into that talent.

Also, the percentage of SES students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is in the 40s, although the percentage that are direct certified is in the mid-30s. This is an increasing trend, and if we get in the 40s for direct certification, we'll qualify for free student lunch for all students, which is what EES and SRS have been able to do.

We're also analyzing data from the survey last year; one prominent item is communicating via blogs and other social media, and we've built that into PD time. We've enrolled a new 6th Grader and expect to enroll another soon. In terms of staffing, Jackie is looking into contracting out services as the search for a school psychologist continues.

Dan noted that CES has embarked on an endeavor to highlight Western Mass public schools, primarily through social media; it could help SES promote the quality of its offerings.

2. Superintendent's Report

Jennifer reported that over the summer, the Leadership Team attended a symposium on universal design for learning. It was a wonderful, engaging, and very active event. We're engaging in professional development with Chip Wood every other month around supporting the adult communities in our schools, which helps us serve our students. We had our Opening Day recently with exercises centered on our passion for education and reflection on where we've come.

3. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report

Steve reported that the chair has resigned from RSC, and that he's been contacted by another member about a letter that five members have written a letter to the Attorney General requesting help with the dysfunction in the committee. This was after RSC spent time with Dorothy Presser trying to restore trust so that the committee can function again. Nothing else to report otherwise.

Dan commented that Amherst is in a really tight spot right now; he lays the responsibility for this at the feet of the administration there. RSC certainly has to realize its role in working together, as well as restoring the balance of power between the RSC and the Superintendent.

SSC thanked Steve for his service on RSC.

4. Director of Finance and Operations Report

Aaron reported that we're trending over on salaries right now because of extra para needs; on the other hand, we have a good amount of circuit breaker money to offset that. One of the realities about circuit breaker is that after two years, it goes to the town. We have returned monies to the town in the past, but it's easier to return from the general fund than to do it with circuit breaker funds.

5. Union #28 Report – including Budget and Personnel

Dan reported the next JSC meeting is coming this Monday, September 19, at EES. The committee will be going over Jennifer's evaluation. Dan added it was difficult working with the variety of formats (physical copies, faxes, digital copies) and perhaps we can improve the collection process in the future. After Monday, Jennifer will be able to see all the raw data from the process.

DAN MOVED TO APPOINT FRED AND KATIE TO THE CONTRACT NEGOTIATION TEAM. STEVE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

6. CES Report

Dan related an event from a recent CES meeting where the board voted to keep a school open after it had been decided without board input to close it for financial reasons. He emphasized the importance of creating and supporting transparent and inclusive organizations like SSC and U#28.

An issue high on CES's priority list now is the charter school question. There's no transparency and no accountability to the community with charter schools.

FRED MOVED TO APPOINT DAN TO REPRESENT SSC AT THE CES ANNUAL CONFERENCE. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

J. Future Business

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, October 20, 2016, 6:30 P.M.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, October 20, 2016, 7 P.M.
- Budget and Personnel Committee – Monday, September 19, 2016 6:30 P.M. EES
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – Monday, September 19, 2016 6:30 P.M. EES
- Future agenda items

K. Adjournment: 8:50

KATIE MOVED TO ADJOURN. STEVE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.