

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, May 11, 2015
FINAL Minutes

Present: Dan Hayes, Katie Fiander, Fred Steinberg, Steve Sullivan, Sean Woodard-McNiff, members; Jackie Mendonsa, Principal; Bob Mahler, Superintendent; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent-to-be; Public Guests

A. Meeting Called to Order at 7:03 P.M.

B. Reorganization of the Committee

Bob called for interest in the role of Chair; Sean said he would be happy to continue.

DAN NOMINATED SEAN WOODARD-MCNIFF AS CHAIR. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of Secretary; Fred expressed interest.

DAN NOMINATED FRED STEINBERG AS SECRETARY. SEAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of U28 Representative; Dan expressed interest.

SEAN NOMINATED DAN HAYES AS U28 REPRESENTATIVE. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of U28 Representative; Katie expressed interest.

FRED NOMINATED KATIE FIANDER AS U28 REPRESENTATIVE. DAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of U28 Budget and Personnel Subcommittee Representative; Sean expressed interest.

DAN NOMINATED SEAN WOODARD-MCNIFF AS U28 BUDGET AND PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of Regional Middle and High School Committee Representative; Steve expressed interest.

DAN NOMINATED STEVE SULLIVAN AS REGIONAL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE. SEAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of Policy Subcommittee Representative; Katie expressed interest.

DAN NOMINATED KATIE FIANDER AND SEAN WOODARD-MCNIFF AS POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of Capital Planning Committee Representative; Fred expressed interest.

SEAN NOMINATED FRED STEINBERG AS CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE. DAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Sean called for interest in the role of Collaborative for Educational Services Representative; Dan expressed interest.

FRED NOMINATED DAN HAYES AS COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE. SEAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

C. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar: No discussion.

D. Warrants and Gifts

Warrants signed:

#4008: \$2,092.17

Sean inquired as to funds from the Book Fair; Jackie clarified that the "funds" are actually credits used to purchase Scholastic materials.

Jackie also reported that an SES parent was able to get Lowe's to donate two colorful Adirondack chairs, so far much-used and much-loved. SES also got a Moose Crossing sign from a secret admirer.

E. Approval of Minutes from April 16, 2015

No emendations.

DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2015. SEAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

F. Public Comments and Announcements: No comments.

G. New Business / Discussion Items

1. Shutesbury School Committee Google Account

Dan explained that several years ago, Michael DeChiara created a Google Groups account for the SSC that allows group emails to be accessed publicly, in the spirit of

transparency. However, there is a problem with the account's functionality now and Dan questioned the need for its ongoing use. Jackie noted that SES is switching over to Gmail, thus lifting previous limitations on account quotas; the SSC could simply be assigned new Gmail accounts exclusively for SSC business once this transition is complete. In the meantime, BettyLou will continue to communicate with the committee via personal emails.

2. School Choice Voice

Bob explained that every year, the committee must vote on participating in School Choice. Sean said he was completely opposed to the program due to the financial complications it can create for districts. Dan asked whether there were even seats available; Jackie responded that there is a projected longer-term decline in enrollment, but SES would likely not need School Choice next year.

DAN MOVED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL CHOICE FOR SES DURING AY15-16. SEAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

H. Unfinished Business / Updates

1. Academic Calendar 2015-2016

Bob reported that while staff feel the October Curriculum Day is well placed, the March day is not. If the March day was moved to May 6, it could play a much more positive role in the professional development calendar; on the other hand, doing so would mean a straight run from the February break to the one in April. He's proposing this change to all the school committees.

SEAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR AS AMENDED. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

I. Policy Review

First Reading on:

KJ - Advertising in Schools

Dan asked if Jackie felt comfortable with the policy as written; she said yes, much more comfortable.

J. Reports

1. Principal's Report

Jackie reported that we remain sturdy at 157 students, though there is word that five children might be moving out of town. The Spaghetti Supper and Silent Auction on

May 8 was AMAZING, especially seeing how many community people make this event happen. Around \$5,000 was raised for the school. This was one of the highlights of my year. Also, I want to acknowledge Susie Mosher and Sally Fairfield as well as Steve Sullivan for working with SES student council to organize a school-wide clean up day May 1. Sean added that he appreciated the acknowledgment at Town Meeting of the kids who participated.

There are many personnel changes:

- Parmatma Khalsa, a 5/6 para-educator, is taking over for April in Grade 3.
- Lindsay Turgeon will replace Mr. Khalsa for the rest of the year; she has been a full-time student intern since January.
- Jericho Fellows will replace Sarah Willis for the rest of the year.
- Meghan Chisholm will replace Jericho as a Kindergarten para-educator; she has been a full-time student intern since January as well.
- An search committee will interview candidates for open 5/6 positions next week; finalists will be asked to conduct a model lesson for the committee.
- Sarah Willis has asked for a year-long leave of absence to remain with her baby.
- April Cannon has asked for a 6-week unpaid family leave of absence for the beginning of FY16.
- Postings for 10-hr/week office help and .5 Academic Support/Essential Skills are forthcoming.

The committee praised Sarah and indicated their support for her request; the decision to approve rests with the Superintendent. Dan praised Jackie's hiring process as well as her communicativeness about personnel changes. The committee also praised April and supported her request. The office help position is essential since, as Bob said, the amount of information the school must provide to the state is outrageous. Sean added that such reporting work is best done without the distractions of typical office work.

This week, Grade 5 is completing the Science MCAS. After discussions with teachers, Jackie concluded that the two-week testing window for PARCC was exhausting for everyone, and we will try a one-week window (including morning and afternoon sessions) for the remaining PARCC tests in May.

There are 50 survey responses in to School Council. Tomorrow's meeting is a forum to discuss the organization of the 5/6 classrooms; staff and families are invited to share thoughts on the combined classrooms, as Jackie is considering splitting them into their respective grades. This possibility has to do with the incoming Common Core standards for each grade, which add a complicating layer to the already challenging dynamics of managing a range of individual learning styles as well as

different social and academic needs for each grade. Jackie added that she is working on the SIP for FY 16.

Steve reported that the Highway Department considers the parking lot the responsibility of the school. Dan commented that the town departments should be working more closely together, and he will make this suggestion to the Selectboard when he goes to discuss the issue of rooftop snow removal and parking lot plowing. Jackie responded that whatever is decided needs to be communicated to her so she knows what she has to do to manage the snow, ice, busloads of kids, etc. Bob suggested that the FY 17 budget include a line for snow removal; it might cost several thousand just to clear the roof, and it would be hard to find that kind of cash in a crunch. Dan responded that he thinks it's the town's responsibility to have money for snow removal, but again, the town committees need to work more closely and more holistically on these kinds of issues. Jackie promised her support for Dan's efforts.

As for building improvements, Jackie reported that stove, warmer and carpets are all approved and will be installed this summer.

Sean thanked Jackie for attending Town Meeting; he thinks it is important for the Principal to be visible in this way.

2. Superintendent's Report

Bob noted that Ben Rubin at Erving Elementary School was the first U28 teacher to be recognized for the new Pioneer Valley Teaching Award from the Grinspoon Foundation. The U28 nomination will pass from school to school yearly.

We have also been applying for MAKER Lab money; Lowe's said yes to Swift River School, but no to SES, for reasons unknown.

3. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report

Steve reported that the finances of regionalization were discussed at the last meeting. Under both assessment schemes, Shutesbury will pay more. There is also a snag with Medicare funds that would wipe out the financial benefit of regionalization. On May 20, the committee will discuss governance.

4. Review of Expenditure Report

Bob said any adjustments of line items will occur at the next meeting; Matthew will be in attendance to explain these so the committee can vote to approve them. Sean noted that the electric bill was the only real standout at this point.

There was some discussion of energy suppliers in the area, as well as bemusement over roller coaster power rates.

5. Union #28 Report – including Budget and Personnel

Dan said there were no new decisions made, but previous decisions made were reaffirmed. The Director of Finance position is close to being finalized and the search to fill this position will be going forward.

6. CES Report

Dan said that the CES is undertaking the evaluation of the outgoing Executive Director; this process is exciting because of its structure, including an anonymous 360 exchange of feedback. Getting information from staff and using that to help evaluate the Executive Director worked very well and can be used to make the whole process much more successful. He would like to have U28 look at this process for evaluating the Superintendent. Bob noted that the Superintendent evaluation needs to be pushed back to March or April; May or June is simply too late for the Superintendent to make use of the evaluation.

K. Future Business

1. Shutesbury School Committee – Wednesday, June 17, 2015 7 P.M.
2. Budget and Personnel Committee – Wednesday, May 20, 2015 6 P.M. SRS
3. Union #28 Joint Supervisory – Wednesday, May 20, 2015 7 P.M. SRS
4. Future agenda items

L. Executive Session

DAN MOVED TO ADJOURN AND ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS, NOT TO REENTER PUBLIC SESSION. FRED SECONDED. ROLL CALL ALL AYES.