

BROOKLINE-NEWFANE JOINT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 15, 2011

6:30 PM @ *NewBrook Elementary School*

Draft Minutes

Present: Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden, Somara Zwick, Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman, Ken McFadden, Pam Meihak, Brandy Pickering, *Board members*; Richard Berkfield, Executive Director of *Post Oil Solutions' Farm to School Program*; Emily Bullock, *NewBrook School Counselor*; Kristy Butynski, *parent*; Amy Jo Cable, *recorder*; Chris Pratt, *Newbrook Principal*; Steven John, *WCSU Superintendent*

- I. **CALL TO ORDER & REVIEW AGENDA:** Kim Friedman called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. Introductions took place. Kim Friedman asked if anyone wanted any changes or additions made to the agenda. Steven John requested that a discussion of E11 and E12, fraud and banking policies, be added to the agenda. Kristy Butynski asked to discuss her request for funding from the district for her youngest child to attend pre-K.
- II. **PRESENTATION BY RICHARD BERKFIELD REGARDING POST OIL SOLUTIONS' FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Goal: Learn enough about the program to be able to make an informed decision about whether or not to expand the program at NewBrook Elementary School.

- Kim Friedman explained that if the Board did decide to support the *NewBrook Elementary School's* participation in the program, it would have financial implications on the school's FY13 budget and the school's participation would begin in the 2011-2012 school year.
- Richard Berkfield gave a short presentation and distributed a brochure and flyer with information about the program which included the goal of the program to improve student nutrition, health and academic performance, while supporting the development of a strong community-based food system. He explained that to fully participate and have direct support in the program, the cost would be \$2,000 for the year.
- Brandy Pickering expressed her support of the program and asked what the \$2,000 buys in terms of services or supports. Richard explained that for the past two years, his organization has worked with the school for free and they hope to continue to do so. However, \$2,000 would permit the school to receive more direct support mostly in the form of capacity-building.

- Several board members express support for the program but were concerned about the amount of time the program would require from the school's teachers since they already had so much to do.
- Kim Friedman pointed out that there was enough interest and support from Board members to ask Chris Pratt to present the idea to the faculty/staff and ask if they would be interested in participating in the program.

TICKLER: Continue this discussion at the October Board meeting if Chris recommends instituting this program.

TASKS

- **CHRIS PRATT WILL COME IN OCTOBER WITH A RECOMMENDATION FROM HIMSELF AND HIS STAFF RE. THE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM.**
- **RICHARD BERKFIELD WILL CONTACT STEVEN TO DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR WCSU.**

III. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Goal: Use meetings as an opportunity to hear concerns, ideas and suggestions from the community

- Kristy Butynski requested that the Board to approve pre-k funding for her son, Ryder, to attend West Bee Preschool (Brattleboro).
- Kim Colligan advised that Lisa Harris (Rock River School) had planned on attending this meeting but was unable.
- Steven John noted that he did not receive a completed enrollment form prior to July 1, 2011 as required per "West B.'s" contract for Kristy's son Ryder. Kristy explained that she was not aware that an enrollment form was required and she did not recall receiving an enrollment form in the mail. Also, she did not recall ever completing an enrollment form for her two older children when they attended West Bee. Steven offered that perhaps West Bee had completed the enrollment form on behalf of Kristy's children in the past and that may be why she did not ever complete such a form.
- Dan Seiden moved to increase the number of three and four year olds who qualify for NewBrook Elementary School early education funds from twenty (20) to twenty-one (21) students. Pam Meihak seconded. It was decided to amend the motion to read "three and five year olds." A lengthy discussion followed which included concerns expressed by board members re. how to avoid situations similar to this in the future. i.e. pre-k registration notification to parents. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed.

TASK: SOMARA ZWICK WILL SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH CHRIS, STEVEN AND KRISTY BUTYNSKI TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE WAYS TO DO MORE OUTREACH TO PRE-K PROVIDERS AND THE PUBLIC.

TICKLER: RE-CONSIDER SCHOOL'S FY13 EARLY EDUCATION INVESTMENT IN LIGHT OF HIGHER-THAN-ANTICIPATED PRE-K ENROLLMENT

IV. HOW ARE WE DOING?

Goal: Continue to review desired student outcomes, assess progress towards those outcomes and make course corrections where necessary

1. Superintendent's Report

- Steven John gave a brief overview of his report to the Board which included information on special school circumstances, due to damage to our area from hurricane *Irene*. Steven pointed out that our posted calendar contains no snow days this year and any snow days will have to be added in June. A brief discussion followed where Ken McFadden suggested adding an extra half an hour to each school day instead of adding snow days to the end of the calendar year. No action was taken.
- Steven John pointed out that his report showed that Ellen Roffman will be the *NewBrook School 21st Century After-School Enrichment Site Coordinator*. Kim Friedman expressed, on the Board's behalf, appreciation and support of Ellen's new position.
- A discussion re. early education funding for FY12 followed after Steven advised that he and Chris Pratt had no recommendation to re-allocate other funds at this time for early education.
- Kim Friedman moved to take no action to increase the early education allocation in the approved FY12 budget. Lee Anne Parker seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed.
- It was agreed, that in order to save paper, everyone would bring their own copy of the agenda to each Joint Board meeting. Steven John pointed out that the agendas can be obtained from the WCSU website (www.windhamcentral.org) if anyone does not receive the agenda via e-mail.
- Kim Friedman moved that Central Office award the Irving Oil bid for NewBrook Elementary School at \$3.349/gallon for the time period September 15, 2011, through August 12, 2012. Pam Meihak seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed.
- A brief discussion re. the recent *WCSU Retreat* took place, where Brandy Pickering expressed that she felt there was a lot lacking in Laura Soares' presentation at the retreat. Lee Anne Parker and Kim Friedman agreed; the discussion continued around how the Board could obtain further professional development.
- Kim Friedman asked which board members would be able to attend the upcoming WCSU Board meeting on October 26th at the *Jamaica Village*

Elementary School so that she could establish there would be a quorum. (6:30 PM, Executive Committee, 7 PM, Full WCSU Board).

- Confirmed:
 - Kim Friedman and Pam Meihak will attend for Newfane.
 - Lee Anne Parker will attend for Brookline.
- TBD: Kim Colligan (available if need be), Ken McFadden, Dan Seiden, Somara Zwick
- Unable to attend: Brandy Pickering

TASK: KIM FRIEDMAN WILL CHECK BACK WITH KIM COLLIGAN AND KEN MCFADDEN TO SEE IF THEY WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE UPCOMING WCSU FULL BOARD MEETING ON OCTOBER 26Th.

2. Principal's Report

- Board members advised that they had not received Chris Pratt's report prior to the meeting via e-mail as was the custom. Steven John pointed out that may have been his error and asked Chris to send his report out via e-mail the next day to board members. Chris distributed several copies of his report he did have on hand at the meeting.
- Chris discussed briefly the PBIS (Positive Behavior In School) Grant he hoped to obtain for the school.
- Kim Friedman thanked Chris for posting notices in the surrounding towns re. the delay in the starting date of school due to the damage in our area from hurricane *Irene*.
- Chris briefly talked about the school's website and advised that he updates it at least twice a day during a school day. A discussion followed re. getting professional help to further develop and enhance the school's website. No action was taken.
- Kim Friedman expressed her appreciation that Chris was outside the school each school day from 8 AM until 8:30 AM greeting the students.

V. BROOKLINE SCHOOL

- Chris reviewed documents he created re. use of the building.
- A lengthy discussion took place re. the use and cost of maintaining the former *Brookline Elementary School* building. Chris advised that at this time it was costing an average of seventy-nine dollars a day to maintain the Brookline building with heat and electricity. Steven John advised Board members to direct any questions from the public re. the cost of maintaining the Brookline building to Chris Pratt. No action taken. Lee Anne Parker gave Chris Pratt an extra key she had to the *Brookline School* building.
- A brief discussion occurred regarding use of the building beyond an after-school program. No action was taken.

TASK: CHRIS PRATT WILL SEND OUT A REQUEST BY THIS FRIDAY TO BOARD MEMBERS, VIA E-MAIL, FOR THEIR SUGGESTIONS RE. ANY CHANGES THEY MAY THINK WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE PROCEDURES, FEES AND FORMS USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FORMER BROOKLINE SCHOOL BUILDING. DEADLINE FOR GETTING FEEDBACK TO CHRIS IS SEPT. 22nd.

TICKLER: HAVE A BROADER CONVERSATION IN OCTOBER RE. THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL BUILDING AS IT RELATES TO THE FY13 SCHOOL BUDGET. SHOULD THE SCHOOL BOARD DIVEST OF THE BUILDING?

- Share ideas with Chris Pratt re. ways to acknowledge closing of Brookline School (goal: find a community-centered way to more formally bring closure to this chapter in the life of Brookline)
 - A lengthy discussion ensued where Chris Pratt and several others agreed that more closure was needed for the school's staff and students. It was agreed to celebrate in some way what now exists (the *NewBrook School*) rather than mourn what no longer exists (the *Brookline School*).
 - Ken McFadden pointed out that he came to the school and welcomed back each member of the staff this year and asked if other Board members had also welcomed back the staff this year. A discussion followed re. how the Board could welcome back the staff of the school each year. No action taken. Kim Friedman asked Steven John and Chris Pratt if they could have a discussion sometime with the Board re. best practice interaction of board members with staff when in the school building.

TICKLER: DISCUSS BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATION AT THE RETREAT

VI. DISCUSS WAYS TO ATTRACT MORE STUDENTS IN FY13: WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S NICHE?

Goal: Counter-act dropping enrollment and avoid further cuts in services or staff by increasing enrollment

- A discussion followed where it was agreed to let Steven John and Chris Pratt decide how or if to pursue ways to attract more students.

TICKLER: DISCUSS POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S WEB SITE.

VII. SHORT ITEMS

1. Regional Education District (RED) Committee Update

- Lee Anne Parker and Somara Zwick led a discussion re. the most recent meeting which they both attended. Somara asked about Board members' concerns re. forming a RED and what forming a RED means to Board members. She also suggested that these types of questions should be brought to the next RED meeting. Steven John pointed out that he believes that one question that will be raised at the next RED meeting concerns whether the Articles of Agreement can permit towns to preserve the right to vote on the closing of their schools.

TASK: LEE ANNE PARKER WILL SEND AN E-MAIL TO BOARD MEMBERS ASKING THEM TO FORWARD HER ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE RE. THE POSSIBLE FORMATION OF A RED.

2. Re-schedule School Board retreat (hold prior to October Board meeting)

- It was agreed to re-schedule the Joint School Board retreat to Tuesday, October 18, 2011 from 5 PM until 8 PM instead of 9 PM. Location: NewBrook Elementary School. Bring your own dinner.

TICKLER: REVIEW TWO POLICIES, E11 AND E12, FRAUD AND BANKING POLICIES AT OCTOBER MEETING

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

- Steven John presented a letter from a family renting a home on Putney Mountain. He explained that the family is unable to get to the *NewBrook School* bus stop at the bottom of their hill since the town of Brookline does not maintain (snow plow) their road in the winter. Therefore, their child needs to attend the *Putney School* and has requested that NewBrook Elementary School pay tuition to the *Putney School* for their child. Steven pointed out that the road in question is posted as a "seasonal road" and that the Board had a request prior to this from another family that previously rented this house.
- Kim Friedman moved to direct the administration to review the school's transportation policy and come to the Board with a recommendation at its October meeting. Pam Meihak seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed.
- Kim Friedman moved that the Board take no action at this time on the parent request for tuition to *Putney Central School*. Lee Anne Parker seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. Kim Friedman, Kim Colligan, Lee Anne Parker, Pam Meihak, Brandy Pickering and Somara Zwick voted in favor. Dan Seiden opposed the motion. Motion passed.

TASK: STEVEN JOHN WILL FOLLOW UP, PER ABOVE, WITH THE FAMILY

**TICKLER: CONSIDER THE ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING
TRANSPORTATION POLICY AT OCTOBER MEETING**

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

August 18, 2011, Joint School Board meeting minutes: Kim Friedman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Brandy Pickering seconded. Ken McFadden requested a change to the minutes: The minutes reflected that the Joint Board retreat would be cancelled due to hurricane Irene damage in our area, but Ken pointed out that the hurricane occurred after the Board's August 18th meeting and that addition to the minutes by Kim Friedman should not have been made since only events from that night's meeting should be reflected in the minutes. It was agreed to adopt the Consent Agenda with the correction to the minutes as requested by Ken McFadden. Kim Friedman called for a vote. Kim Colligan, Pam Meihak and Dan Seiden abstained since they were not at the meeting on August 18th. All others were in favor. Motion passed.

ADJOURN: Kim Friedman moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:10 PM. Pam Meihak gave her second. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

Upcoming Meetings:

- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **October 5**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- *Brookline-Newfane Joint School Board **Retreat**, Tuesday, **October 18**, 2011, 5 PM – 8 PM., at NewBrook Elementary School. **Bring your own meal.***
- ***WCSU Board Executive Committee meeting, 6:30 PM** on Wednesday, **October 26**, 2011 at Jamaica Village Elementary School. WCSU **Full Board** meeting will follow at **7:00 PM.***
- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **November 2**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **December 14**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **January 4**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*