

## BROOKLINE-NEWFANE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 16, 2010  
6:30 PM at the former Brookline Elementary School

### Draft Minutes

**Present:** Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden, April Wellman, Brookline; Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman, Ken McFadden, Pam Meihak, Brandy Pickering, Newfane.

**Members of the public and faculty/ staff:** Amy Jo Cable, recorder; Bruce Garrow, Newbrook Principal; Steven John, WCSU Superintendent.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS & AGENDA REVIEW:** Kim Friedman call the meeting to order at 6:36 PM. Kim added one item to the *Consent Agenda* (payment of VSBA dues) and asked the Board if there were any objections to anything that was on the *Consent Agenda* for this meeting. It was decided to move “Alternates to upcoming WCSU meeting(s)” from the *Consent Agenda* and place it under “**SHORT DISCUSSION ITEMS**” on the agenda. No other objections to the content of the *Consent Agenda* were stated.

### II. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

*What more could we be doing to inform community members of our work and get their input? What do members of the public have on their minds?*

- Members of the public and faculty/ staff: No members of the public were present.
- Kim Colligan, Brandy and Pam advised they were working out the mechanics of the e-mail newsletter. It was agreed to add a **TICKLER** every month to the board’s agenda under **INFORMATION-SHARING**: “What is it we need to be communicating to the public?” (ex. Information re. decisions made related to Act 146 and Act 153 along with budget information.)
- Kim Friedman added monthly newsletter as another standing item to the agenda. It was decided that a monthly newsletter piece would be a great time each month to be thinking strategically what it is the Board wants to be communicating. (To be placed under **INFORMATION-SHARING** on each upcoming agenda.)
- An additional standing item for the agenda was added under **INFORMATION-SHARING**: Correspondence.

### III. **COMPLETE REVIEW OF DRAFT GOVERNANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (BEGIN W/ 2C)**

*How can we operate most efficiently and effectively, with a focus on “going first” and “going last”?*

Board members referred to their copies of FY11 Governance Implementation Plan to discuss the components:

- (1) The Board endorsed moving towards issuance of contracts for part-time West River Transportation employees under the WCSU where possible and without undermining good labor practices.
- (2) Kim Friedman and Bruce Garrow proposed and it was agreed that the Board create an Ad Hoc Busing Committee to explore opportunities to increase efficiencies, energy conservation and cost savings. It was decided to have at least one meeting with Bruce, one board member, Frank Rucker, a representative from and at least one parent from each of the four towns that West River Transportation serves, including the parents that have come to the board about transportation for David McCormick and Jeremy Calaway. (sp? In particular. Concern was expressed by Lee Anne Parker that the Board does not get too involved in the operational issues that really should be the Principal's. Lee Anne also reminded the Board that busing is not the Board's issue except regarding efficiencies and cost. There were no objections from the Board in having one board member on the Ad Hoc Busing Committee to report back to the board as long as the board member kept his or her involvement limited to reporting back to the Board.

**TICKLER FOR THE RETREAT: Determine who will represent the Board on the Ad Hoc Busing Committee.**

- (3) It was agreed to move onto number four.
- (4) It was decided to put the discussion on hold since Kim Friedman has been working with Bruce Garrow and Steven John on coming up with an annual calendar. Kim asked board members if they had any suggestions for the annual calendar, otherwise, board members could discuss coming up with an annual calendar further at October's meeting. No suggestions were brought forth.

**TICKLER FOR OCTOBER BOARD MEETING: Review annual calendar**

- (5) Kim Friedman sent an email to each WCSU Board Chair regarding this board's desire to discuss opportunities for collaboration presented by Act 153. She has spoken with Wes Amenden, the Jamaica Board Chair, and Bruce Garrow spoke with Laura Hazard, Principal of the Jamaica Village School. Kim also advised that she has had many conversations with Emily Long, the Chair of the Leland & Gray School Board. It was decided at the recent WCSU Board meeting that four boards (L&G, Brookline, Newfane, Jamaica) will meet on Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 7 PM at Leland & Gray High School to explore the possibility of creating a Regional Educational District (RED) under Act 153 which is very consistent with the recommendations of the SU's Governance Committee and the proposal that failed to reach sufficient support at the January Governance Committee meeting. Kim Friedman advised that she can not be at the meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> since she

will be out of state for work, but Emily Long suggested that Kim write something which Brandy Pickering, as Vice-Chair, will read at the meeting on Kim Friedman's behalf. Kim also offered that the Board might suggest to Wes Amenden, the Chair of the Jamaica Village School Board and Emily Long, the Chair of the Leland & Gray School Board, how that conversation on the 28<sup>th</sup> gets structured. It was decided to discuss the structure toward the end of this meeting and forward those suggestions to Wes and Emily.

(6) See below.

(7) It was agreed that #5, #6 and #7 were inter-related due to the upcoming meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> with Jamaica and Leland & Gray representatives.

**TICKLER: Revisit discussion of the *FY11 Governance Implementation Plan* in 6 months. (February)**

Kim Friedman advised she will update *FY11 Governance Implementation Plan* and send it out to everyone present at tonight's meeting.

#### **IV. DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY ACT 153**

How should we use our time at the Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> meeting (L&G, 7 PM) with the L&G and Jamaica School Boards? Kim Friedman asked for volunteers to attend this meeting. Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden, and April Wellman volunteered to represent Brookline. Kim Colligan, Pam Meihak and Brandy Pickering volunteered to represent Newfane. It was agreed to recommend there be a facilitator at the meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> who is not a board member. Kim Friedman pointed out that it is very significant that we have gotten to the point where there are four school districts that are even interested in having that conversation (re.RED).

#### **V. SHORT DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Brookline land use: Kim Friedman thanked the Brookline Board members, along with Bruce Garrow and Steven John, for their work on preparing a proposal that would address the concerns of the church (*Historic Brookline Preservation Group*) and the town of Brookline. April Wellman advised the Board that the church building which is located next to the former *Brookline Elementary School* is partially located on school property and members of the church are asking the school to deed them school property so that their entire church will be on church property and also so there will be room to install a septic system for the church. Lee Anne Parker pointed out that the church had deeded the school its property with a 99 year lease and the church is currently using water from the school's well. The total amount of land the church is requesting is approximately ½ acre, Lee Anne advised. Lee Anne explained that the mistake of drawing the property line through the church building was made many years ago. Lee Anne also pointed out that church members are proposing to give the school the 99 year lease property in exchange for the approximate ½ acre they are requesting. Lee Anne stated that

she believes that most everyone in the community of Brookline is in agreement that this is the right thing to do. Steven John advised that the church has had an informal title search done and now a survey would need to be completed by the church and the total amount of land the church would then own would be approximately an acre. Steven also advised the Board to secure legal council regarding the transfer of this (re. title insurance). Steven also pointed out that he advised church members they would need to show the school trail on any survey which they have done and that it should be topographical also. Kim Friedman asked Steven and Bruce if the legal fees that we incur would come out of the Legal Services line item in the budget. Steven advised that it could come out of there. Lee Anne Parker moved that the Board is in support conceptually that the Historic Brookline Church Preservation Group exchange the 99 year leased property currently held by the church group for .55 plus or minus acres of land currently owned by the Brookline School District. The property surrounding the church to ultimately become approximately 116 feet by 150 feet. Brandy Pickering gave her second. Discussion regarding the 99 year lease followed. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed. Kim again thanked Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden, April Wellman, Bruce Garrow and Steven John for doing so much work on this before tonight's meeting.

- b. Faculty/staff participation at Board retreat: How and when should we include staff/faculty? A discussion followed. It was decided that the NewBrook Elementary teachers would not be invited to the retreat, but Bruce Garrow would be inviting input from his staff.

**TASK: Kim Friedman will follow up with David Parker regarding the upcoming retreat.**

- c. Principal's attendance at Brookline & Newfane school district board meetings: When both school districts need to meet, how can we schedule the meetings so the Principal can attend both while keeping meetings to a minimum? Kim Friedman proposed that when both the Brookline School Board and the Newfane School Board needed to meet individually, that there would be one board meeting from 5:30 to 6:00 PM and one board meeting from 6:00 to 6:30 PM, and the boards could alternate which time slot they had. Kim also suggested we could make those nights a potluck dinner. Kim pointed out that these types of meetings would be rare and planned in advance. All were in favor.
- d. Upcoming Windham Central meetings and representation. (The Vice-Chair can now fill in for the Chair at these meetings.)
  - o Wednesday, September 22, 2010  
WCSU Negotiation Council  
7 PM at *Dover Elementary School*  
Kim Friedman can attend.

April Wellman alternate.

- Wednesday, October 6, 2010  
WCSU Policy Committee  
Re: Class Size Policies  
7 PM at WCSU Office  
Ken McFadden can attend.
  
- Wednesday, October 27, 2010  
Executive Committee: Compensation for FY12  
7 PM at *Newbrook Elementary School*  
Kim Friedman can attend.  
April Wellman alternate.
  
- Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
WCSU Board of Directors: Superintendent's Budget vote.  
Approve the WCSU's C4C report to DOE re: proposed FY12 budgets.  
Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman and Pam Meihak need to attend to represent Newfane. Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden and April Wellman need to attend to represent Brookline. All can attend.  
7 PM at location TBA.

## VI. INFORMATION-SHARING

What are the highlights of activities? Is there anything to add to the reports?  
Are there any questions about the reports?

### i. Reports

#### i. Superintendent

**TASK: Steven John and Frank Rucker to generate a budget for the Board that has no cuts (rough figures). This will be the starting point for the October discussion.**

#### ii. NewBrook Principal

a. Bruce Garrow discussed how the *Newbrook Elementary School* is not a high school bus stop. This created a problem for parents who have children attending both schools. Bruce explained that he created a contract where the parent and child have to sign with two rules:

1. Students need to be picked up no later than 3:10 PM.
2. Students need to follow the school rules of

appropriate and respectful behavior.

Bruce pointed out that if the rules were not adhered to there would be no opportunities for discussion (zero tolerance) and the student(s) in question would not be permitted to get off the bus at the *Newbrook Elementary School*.

b. Dan Seiden asked Bruce about the period of time students spend riding the bus to the *Newbrook Elementary School*. Bruce advised that it varies, but when everything is on schedule, the ride should not be longer than 35 minutes (one way). Bruce requested feedback from community members regarding the busing of their children if they are experiencing any problems, especially since the school now has full time kindergarten and young students are riding the bus for the very first time.

- ii. Report from *Brookline Bldg. Use Committee* re. membership & meeting schedule: Dan Seiden reported that he has recruited the following volunteers for this committee: Ken McFadden, Cynthia Nau, Helen Samuels, Barkley Ward, and Doug Wellman. Steven John also advised that Frank Rucker would be available as a financial consultant/advisor. Dan expressed that he hoped this group would perform a collective inquiry for uses for the former Brookline Elementary School building. Dan advised that the committee would now move forward by setting a meeting date and then share information from that meeting with the Board and the community.

Dan requested direction from the Board on two points:

- What are we going to do with the building while it is still under Board control?
- Ideas for the building should we decide to divest.

Steven John reminded the Board that we needed to start with the idea that the building would be used for educational purposes. Dan pointed out that he would like to have all ideas on the table since he wants his town to thrive. All agreed that all ideas on the table was a good approach to start off with. It was decided that if anyone is interested in joining this committee they should contact Ken McFadden or Dan Seiden. Kim Friedman thanked Ken and Dan for all their work on this.

- iii. Monthly newsletter: Underway for September.
- iv. Correspondence: Brandy Pickering advised that information about volunteers needed for the *Brookline Building Use Committee* will be included in the Board's September newsletter. Steven John had good news. He advised that under the *Patient Protection Affordability Act of 2010* extends dependency healthcare coverage for eligible children

through the age of 26 and this has also been extended on *Northeast Delta Dental*.

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Approve August minutes
- b. Warn *Truancy Policy F25*
- c. Pay our VSBA dues

Kim Friedman moved that we adopt the Consent Agenda which includes approving the August minutes, warning *Truancy Policy F25* and approving payment of the VSBA annual dues for this academic year. Kim Colligan gave her second. All approved. Motion passed. Kim Friedman advised that there was no increase in the amount of dues required from last year. Kim Friedman thanked Ken McFadden for his work on policies. Kim went on to say that Ken is doing a great job and our Board is well represented by him.

**TASK: Lee Anne Parker will contact Frank Rucker to let him know that the Board approved payment of the annual dues.**

**VIII. NEXT MEETING (OCTOBER 21)**

*How do we maintain our commitment to providing a quality education in a fiscally responsible way?*

- a. Discuss class size policy (required discussion): Ken McFadden will lead the Board in the discussion.

**TASK: Ken McFadden will report to the Board re. the Policy Committee meeting that will take place on October 6, 2010.**

- b. Begin FY12 budget discussion: starting point will be a “no cuts” budget that Frank Rucker and/or Steven John will bring to our meeting.
  1. Discuss Board’s position on Challenges for Change targeted reductions for FY12 budget
  2. Early education: re-calculate Act 62 cap → Can we count any more children? (This would allow for additional contracts.)

**TASK: Steven John ask Frank Rucker if he could re-calculate the cap based on numerous ways that exist to calculate the cap for Brookline and Newfane combined for our October board meeting.**

**TASK: Ken McFadden will forward Brandy information regarding the Policy Committee meeting to her as soon as possible since she will not be able to attend the October Board meeting and would like to forward any thoughts regarding that meeting to Kim Friedman prior to the October board meeting if she has anything to add.**

3. Approve the *Truancy Policy F25* that we warned tonight as part of the upcoming *Consent Agenda*.

**ADJOURN:** Ken McFadden moved that the meeting be adjourned. Dan Seiden gave his second. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:03 P.M.

**Next meeting of the *Brookline-Newfane Joint Board*: 6:30 PM, Thursday, October 21, 2010 at the *NewBrook Elementary School* in Newfane.  
Individual boards meet at 6:00 PM as needed.**