

BROOKLINE-NEWFANE JOINT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, January 20, 2011
6:30 PM at *NewBrook Elementary School*

Draft Minutes

PRESENT: Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seiden, April Wellman, Brookline; Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman, Ken McFadden, Pam Meihak, Brandy Pickering, Newfane (Board members); Bruce Garrow, NewBrook Principal; Steven John, WCSU Superintendent; Sara and Indra Kilts (members of the public); Amy Jo Cable, recorder.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS & AGENDA REVIEW (INCLUDING CONSENT AGENDA):** Kim Friedman called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. No consent agenda.
- II. **COMMUNITY INPUT:** None.
- III. **MAKE DECISION RE. TUITION REQUEST:** Sarah Kilts asked the Board to approve her request for funds to pay for her daughter's tuition at the *Putney Central School* in Putney, Vermont. Sarah's request was presented to the board since the house she resides in, located at 34 Purple Mountain Road in Brookline, Vermont, is not maintained by the *Town of Brookline* road crews. Steven John pointed out that these types of decisions are usually made by the Board on a "case by case" basis and that he recommended that the Board approve Sarah's request for funds to pay for her daughter Indra's tuition at the *Putney Central Schools*. Brandy Pickering expressed some concerns about future requests for tuition from other residents of Brookline or Newfane and asked if Frank Rucker had defined under what circumstances tuition would be paid. A discussion followed. Kim Friedman advised that she and Bruce Garrow also supported Steven's recommendation, but she also stated that she was concerned that Sarah's landlord would continue to rent the house in question to families with school-aged children in the future, which would possibly result in more requests for funding for tuition. Lee Anne Parker expressed some concern about the Board setting a precedent if this request for tuition by Sarah was approved by the Board. Steven John advised that Frank Rucker had advised him that tuition has been paid in the past under similar circumstances. Ken McFadden stated that he also wanted to make sure that this was a "case by case" decision by the Board and that a precedence would not be set. A discussion followed. Kim Friedman moved, that in light of current circumstances, that the Board approves Sarah Kilts' request for tuition for her daughter, Indra, to attend Putney Central School as long as the family resides at 34 Purple Mountain Road in Brookline, Vermont. Ken McFadden gave his second. No further discussion. All were in favor. Motion passed. Steven John asked Sarah to please notify him as soon as possible if Indra no longer resided at 34 Purple Mountain Road or if she no longer

was attending Putney Central School so that the tuition payments could be terminated, since the tuition would be paid on a per diem basis.

- IV. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT:** Executive Session entered at 6:58 PM. Executive Session ended at 7:45 PM. No action was taken. Kim Friedman thanked Steven John on behalf of the Board for his leadership, his time, his patience and creativity resolving issues that have come up, respecting different views on the budget and ultimately respecting where the Board “landed.” Steven John expressed his pride in the Board’s work and expressed his appreciation with their patience with him also.

TASK: Kim Colligan will send Emily Long the Board’s Superintendent evaluation by Feb. 1st.

- V. **BROOKLINE BUILDING COMMITTEE:** Dan Seiden withdrew his proposal to make the former *Brookline Elementary School* building a community center. Dan explained that he had spoken with Bruce Garrow, Steven John and Frank Rucker and that they had pointed out that there is a building use policy already in place at NewBrook Elementary School as well as a policy governing use of the Pavilion at NewBrook, both of which are applicable to the Brookline School building as well. Bruce Garrow will continue to serve as the contact person. Steven John pointed out that at some time in the future the building could be used as a community center. A discussion followed in which Brandy Pickering pointed out that the Board had hoped the building would be used for educational purposes. Dan pointed out that the goal of the committee was for the committee members to look for people who would want to use the building for programs or classes. Dan agreed with Brandy, in that their goal is to try and find a group that will use the building for educational purposes that will benefit the communities’ children. The Board supported Dan’s recommendation’s regarding the building’s use.

Dan advised that the committee will not meet next month in February and that the next meeting will be Thursday, March 17, 2011 at 5: 30 PM at the *NewBrook Elementary School*.

Kim Friedman reminded Dan that the committee was tasked with recruiting more Newfane residents to the committee and that she felt that it was important to do so in terms of it feeling like a joint space for both Brookline and Newfane. Dan advised he will put that appeal for Newfane residents to join the committee in his article for the *NewBrook Elementary School’s* upcoming newsletter.

TASK: Dan will forward his article for the *NewBrook Elementary School’s* January newsletter to Bruce Garrow or Melanie by the end of the business day, Tuesday, January 25, 2011.

VI. HOW ARE WE DOING? (TRACKING PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES)

a. Questions for Superintendent based on his report

- Steven John read a letter of resignation to the Board from Bruce Garrow . The letter indicated that Bruce will resign as principal of the *NewBrook Elementary School* effective July 1, 2011. Bruce expressed in his letter to the Board that he has enjoyed his fourteen years as principal of this school and has especially enjoyed the opportunity to help in melding the school teams of Newfane and Brookline schools into a new NewBrook team this year. Steven went on to read that it was with much difficulty that Bruce made this decision but that Bruce was also looking forward to the new chapter that awaits him in the next phase of his life. Kim Friedman added, that in the report that she wrote for the *Newfane Town Report*, she expressed her feelings about Bruce's decision and read that portion of the report to Board members: "After fourteen years as principal of *Newfane/NewBrook Elementary School*, Bruce Garrow will be retiring at the end of this school year. The school board is extremely grateful to him for his leadership, commitment to public education, creativity, steadfastness and genuine affection for the students who have passed through the school. He will be sorely missed. We wish Bruce well in any endeavor he decides to undertake. His voice and words of wisdom will be heard in the halls long after his departure."
- Steven advised that the *Career Center* is contemplating shifting its start time for the high school (*Leland and Gray Union High School*) since many people feel that it is appropriate in meeting the developmental needs of students. Steven explained that the *Career Center* was considering a later start time for high school students each day. Steven advised that instead of the current start time of 7:45 AM, the *Career Center* was considering a start time of 8:45 AM for high school students with perhaps a start time of 7:45 AM for the elementary schools in our supervisory union. Steven pointed out that the earliest the change would take place, if it takes place, would be this fall. Steven went on to discuss briefly some research that supported a later daily start time for high school students. Steven also pointed out that he believes there are tremendous advantages in terms of potential for greater efficiency in our transportation system, but that this change is not motivated by transportation and that the *Career Center* is trying to be responsive to students needs. Steven pointed out that some students in Dover get on a bus as early as 6:15 AM in order to get to the *Career Center* each school day. Steven also requested feedback from the Board and members of the public so that he could be aware of any concerns since this time shift would probably occur.

A discussion followed with several Board members expressing concerns about this possible change in start time for high school and elementary students. Many of the concerns were related to child care for young

students after school where parents relied on their older children to be home after school to care for their younger siblings, since a later start time would result in high school students getting home later in the day each day, but elementary children getting home earlier each day. Concerns were also expressed about a possible later start time each day for after school activities, including sports.

TICKLER (FEBRUARY): Discuss possible change in school's start time

- b. Questions for Principal based on his report: Steven John apologized for not forwarding Bruce's report to Board members prior to this meeting and advised he would forward that report tonight. Bruce advised that there was a Science and Social Studies workshop that he was going to report on to the Board, but the workshop was postponed due to inclement weather and he was going to try and re-schedule the workshop.
 - o Kim Friedman advised that in preparation for the Board's February meeting, Bruce would take the Board's "Getting It Right" document, where a status column at the end has been added, and go through all 17 student outcomes and summarize where the Board is, on each of those. Kim explained this would serve as a starting point for the Board's conversation in February regarding "Getting It Right."

VII. SHORT ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

TASK: Pam Meihak will write the February article for the *NewBrook Elementary School's* newsletter and will interview Bruce Garrow about his experience as principal of the school for the past fourteen years.

- a. Kim Friedman, Brandy Pickering and Pam Meihak will represent Newfane and Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seidan and April Wellman will represent Brookline at the upcoming WCSU meeting on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 7 PM (location TBA).
- b. Approve 12/20/10 & 1/11/11 meeting minutes: Kim Friedman will send future agendas and minutes to both e-mail addresses for Lee Anne Parker and will send agendas to Amy Jo Cable in Word format.

TASK: Kim Friedman send out the minutes, with one correction in the 12/20/10 draft minutes, on page 5, under WCSU alternates: Kim Colligan advised that she will not be attending the WCSU meeting on March 30, 2011 as indicated in the 12/20/10 draft minutes, but instead, Brandy Pickering will attend, along with Kim Friedman, Pam Meihak, Lee Anne Parker, Dan Seidan, and April Wellman.

- c. Land use update: Brandy Pickering advised that NewBrook Elementary School's Land Use Committee applied for a grant from the *Four Winds Nature Institute* and received \$500.00 which will be used to place kiosks and signs along the nature trails behind the school. Brandy also pointed out that *WW Building Supply* in Newfane donated some supplies for the nature trails. Kim Friedman asked Brandy to pass along the Board's appreciation to the *Four Winds Nature Institute* and also *WW Building Supply*.

TASK: Brandy Pickering let both *Four Winds Nature Institute* and *WW Building Supply* know of the Board's appreciation for their generous gifts for the nature trails at the former *Brookline Elementary School* building.

VIII. INFORMATION –SHARING

- a. Correspondence: Steven John advised that the Brookline-Newfane Joint School Board letter to Brookline and Newfane residents regarding the proposed FY12 budget will be mailed out tomorrow. Kim Friedman handed out a copy of the letter and explained that it was scheduled to be mailed out two weeks ago, but due the late release of figures from the *Department of Education* it was delayed so that the most up-to-date information could be included in the letter.
- b. A short discussion ensued regarding the upcoming informational meeting on Monday, January 24, 2011 at 7 PM at the *NewBrook Firehouse*.
- c. A discussion regarding getting the word out about the time and place of the upcoming meeting for residents of both Brookline and Newfane to vote on the FY12 proposed budget followed. Kim Colligan advised that the notice was already posted outside the *Newfane Town Hall*, the *Williamsville Grange* and at the *NewBrook Elementary School*.

TASKS

- **Steven John will contact Deb Luskin regarding a paper vote on the Australian Ballot question at the February 12, 2011 upcoming meeting at the former *Brookline Elementary School* building, where residents of both Brookline and Newfane will vote on the proposed FY12 budget.**
 - **Steven John will send Deb Luskin a copy of the warning of the February 12th meeting.**
- d. Board members signed an updated warning for the *Newfane School District* meeting which had been revised to indicate 11 AM rather than 9 AM.

- e. Kim Friedman made available a DVD from the Ethan Allan Institute on education spending.

TASKS

- **Kim Colligan will get a photograph of herself and put it up with the other photographs of Board members on the bulletin board at *NewBrook Elementary School*.**
- **Pam Meihak volunteered to put a copy of the joint board's agenda and minutes up on the bulletin board inside the *NewBrook Elementary School* each month.**

IX. Executive Session: Contract negotiations update. Executive Session entered at 9:08 PM. Board came out of Executive Session at 9:25 PM. No action was taken.

X. Next Meeting : Thursday, February 17, 2011 at *NewBrook Elementary School*.

XI. Upcoming Meetings:

- Brookline-Newfane informational meeting on proposed FY12 budget: Monday, January 24, 2011 at 7 PM at the *NewBrook Fire Station*.
- *Brookline School District & Newfane School District* joint meeting to vote on proposed FY12 budget for *NewBrook Elementary School*: Saturday, February 12, 2011 at 10 AM at the former *Brookline Elementary School* building.