

Poultney School Board  
Official Minutes  
August 19, 2008

Attending: Mary Jo Teetor, Board Chair, and Board Members Pat Davenport, Al Jackson and Michael Nagar, Superintendent Tom Gallagher, JeanMarie Oakman, PHS Principal, Kristen Caliguiri, PES Principal, Dick Stewart, Interim Business Manager, Anne Colpitts, PTSB Recording Clerk, Michele Harmon, Barb Mulholland, Debra Brown, Tammy Petty, Colleen Nagar, Melissa Kristiansen, Linda Paquette, Liz LeBrun, Clarena Renfrow, Dale Kerber, and Joe DeBonis.

Chair Mary Jo Teetor called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Consent Agenda:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: Pat Davenport moved to approve Unofficial Minutes from July 15<sup>th</sup> (regular) and July 15<sup>th</sup> (continuation), with amendments. Mike Nagar seconded. Motion carried. Human Resources Committee Meeting minutes from July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008, were also included.
- b. Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Gallagher brought up the issue of many small appliances (refrigerators, microwaves, coffee pots) being used in PTSD school buildings, which cost an estimated \$1000 a month to operate and are of concern to the insurance company. He suggested removing appliances that are not necessary for safety or student welfare. Superintendent Gallagher also thanked PHS Principal Oakman for her prompt and professional response to a recent community tragedy.
- c. Principals' Reports: PHS: Principal Oakman included a fundraising spreadsheet in her report. Al Jackson asked why Deb Brown was listed as advisor to so many classes. Principal Oakman answered that the year is wrong on the spreadsheet, and she will correct the error. Principal Oakman announced that 15 students have enrolled at Stafford for the fall - 5 seniors and 10 juniors. She will bring textbook ordering to board for approval at September meeting. Principal Oakman asked the board to approve one student's substitution of a Stafford Electrical/Plumbing class for .5 credit of Physical Education and 1 credit of Science. **Action:** \*Al Jackson moved to approve the substitution. Pat Davenport seconded. Motion carried. Principal Oakman also announced that art teacher Melissa Kristiansen has planned a 2-week 3-D class at a carving studio in West Rutland. She has received grants to cover the cost of materials and transportation. Principal Oakman asked the board to approve a \$3000 grant from Hills and Hollows and \$200 from Rotary to use for this program. **Action:** \*Al moved to accept the two grants. Mike Nagar seconded. Motion carried. The district's internet use policy is being updated, although the previous version was sent home to students in welcome packets. Staff will be asked to sign the new policy, which was revised with their input taken into consideration. Mike Nagar asked Superintendent Gallagher and Principal Oakman if they would share the Poultney High AP scores with the SU, since some SU members send their students to Poultney High.

PES: Principal Caliguiri asked the board for permission to purchase Reading Street for grades 2-6 with available funds. **Action:** \*Mike Nagar moved to approve the purchase. Al Jackson seconded. Motion carried. The program supports Vermont state standards in reading. Principal Caliguiri said that she has worked hard this summer to revise the attendance procedures, and she thanked Mr. Stewart for his help with the budget for the reading program.

d. Business Manager's Report: Dick Stewart reported that 75% of the maintenance and repairs budget has been spent over the summer, which is appropriate, and he acknowledged the director of maintenance for being aware of the maintenance needs of both buildings. He reported that the SU board has approved hiring NEMRC to keep track of accounts. They are ahead of schedule in reconciling books for FY08 – Wells and Middletown are done and hopefully Poultney will be done in the next week. He will give a report to the SU board on Monday with final numbers on FY06 special ed audit and its impacts on each district. This is his last board meeting as interim business manager. Superintendent Gallagher brought up the positive fund balance reported last year and recommended creating a fund for one-time expenditures instead of temporarily lowering the tax rate. Possible one-time projects include updating science labs or bathrooms in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade wing. Regarding Tracee Oakman Rupe's question on an expenditure, Dick Stewart said that it is a legitimate expense that was received late so it will be added to the appropriate fiscal year.

1. Approve Warrants:

- a. #24, in the amount of \$47,340.82, dated 7/18/08
- b. #25, in the amount of \$305,646.96, dated 8/1/08

**Old Business:**

a. FY08 Audit: Dick Stewart provided a summary of the FY08 audit. He reported that revenues are within \$8,000 of budget. Major variances include legal services to the board (\$13,000 deficit) and lower interest (\$27,000 deficit). Two major areas of savings were fuel oil (\$45,000 surplus) and repairs and maintenance (\$52,000 surplus). At the elementary school, there was a deficit due to the hiring of additional instructional assistants. The middle school had a deficit and the high school a surplus, so it appears that some positions were shifted from the high school to the middle school without changing the budget. The bottom line is a budget surplus of \$373,000. The audit noted "significant deficiencies" in internal control of financial reporting. Accounts should be reconciled monthly so that accounts match treasurer's report. They have implemented this plan, and Kathy Marino is now reconciling books at the end of each month. The new business manager will need to develop a plan to keep track of accounts payable and accounts receivable. The audit also found fault with encumbrances; they have been removed from all SU budgets.

b. Hiring Practices: Superintendent Gallagher presented the official procedures regarding the role of the board in hiring from the policy manual – one procedure from 1978, and one from 1992. Both procedures say the board should interview 3 candidates for each position. Following the procedure would have meant 45 interviews this summer. Superintendent Gallagher suggested that the board may wish to revise the policy in light of the difficulty of scheduling number of

interviews necessary to meet this requirement, and he asked if the board is happy with the current system, where a committee brings one candidate to the board, and board members are welcome to participate on the interview committees. Pat Davenport said she thinks it should be up to the principals and the members of the committee to suggest the best candidate for a position. Al Jackson and Mike Nagar both agreed. Superintendent Gallagher will revise the policy and present it for a first reading at the next meeting.

#### **New Business:**

- a. Board approval of food service contract with Fitz-Vogt: **Action:** \*Al Jackson moved to approve the food service contract with Fitz-Vogt for FY09. Mike Nagar seconded. Motion carried.
- b. Hills and Hollows Grant: PES received a grant for \$800 from Hills and Hollows to support 5<sup>th</sup> grade involvement in Starbase. Al Jackson moved to accept the grant. Pat Davenport seconded. Motion carried.

#### **Policies:**

- a. Drug and Alcohol Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> reading: Superintendent Gallagher looked into the issue of family noncompliance with counseling due to lack of money. He found that PHS was eligible for grant funding and should have had a half-time student assistance counselor for the past 2 years, but the contract was never sent back from central office. He will keep working on getting a student assistance counselor, who would be able to provide counseling to students who cannot afford outside counseling. A copy of the revised drug and alcohol abuse policy was presented for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Changes include an addition that states that a student cannot leave campus or use the phone without permission during an investigation and the stipulation that the number of counseling hours will be decided by the mental health professional, who does not need to be a “drug and alcohol” counselor. Situations and procedures will be presented to board next month for review. Dale Kerber brought up the issue of students having counseling required twice, since if they are referred to law enforcement the diversion program will require them to attend counseling. He was concerned that parents would expect the school to cover the cost of counseling required by the school. Principal Oakman replied that the school must have its own procedures in place because the court diversion process can take a long time and the school cannot afford to wait for the court to act. Pat Davenport brought up her concern that a student could be punished because the parents do not have resources to provide counseling, particularly by being out of school for far too long before they can complete the necessary counseling. Principal Oakman said that the school will not let the student suffer unnecessarily. Dale suggested that the school work with local agencies to find out where students go for court diversion and have students get counseling that the court system will accept so that it works for both the school and the courts. Superintendent Gallagher would like to meet with Principal Oakman and Dale Kerber to talk about better coordination between the school district and law enforcement. A 3<sup>rd</sup> reading of the policy will take place next month.

- b. Animal Dissection Policy – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Principal Oakman is still working on developing procedures for students who opt out of animal dissection. She will present the procedures at the September meeting. Mike Nagar asked if they would include the option of virtual dissection. Superintendent Gallagher said that the Humane Society can provide suggestions for alternate activities. Principal Oakman said she would call the Humane Society and run the virtual dissection available at “froguts.com” by her student representative.
- c. IA Practices: Principal Caliguiri suggested changes to deal with absenteeism, including a new permission form to alter schedule. Changes were presented for board review.
- d. Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources and the Internet Policy – 1<sup>st</sup> reading: The form will be changed to read “Staff and *students* will sign Agreement on Use of Technology Form”. A 2<sup>nd</sup> reading will take place at September meeting.
- e. Instructional Personnel Policy – Long Term Substitute – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: The policy will be changed to clarify that long-term substitutes will receive benefits after 45 days of employment. The policy will be presented for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading at September meeting.
- f. Field Trip Policy (new) – 1<sup>st</sup> reading: Superintendent Gallagher wanted to revise the field trip policy to allow administrators to approve field trips that do not have a specific classroom-related learning objective, but that celebrate a culminating activity. Principal Oakman recommended changing policy to acknowledge that advisors also plan field trips, in addition to teachers, so that it would read: “Teachers or advisors . . .”.
  - i. Field Trip Guidelines (revision) - 1<sup>st</sup> reading: PES and PHS developed 2 different field trip forms that include standard checklists of necessary preparations and notifications. Overnight trips must be approved by PTSB in advance and must be accompanied by an administrator or the administrator’s designee, and the club or class must pay for that person’s costs. They also changed the form to say that administrators have the right to cancel trips in a time of crisis.

**Action on Personnel:**

- a. New hires:
  - i. Lynam, Brian – Music Teacher (PHS)
  - ii. Beayon, Jasmine – School Nurse (PSD)
  - iii. Gardyne, David – Math Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - iv. Capman, Chris – JV Football Coach (PHS)
  - v. Jurnak, Gary – Science Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - vi. Keagy, Donald – Language Arts Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - vii. LeBrun, Elizabeth – Social Science Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - viii. Capman, Maureen – School Health Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - ix. Brown, Debra – Class of 2011 Advisor (PHS)
  - x. Renfrow, Clarena – Class of 2010 Advisor (PHS)
  - xi. Bunce, Carol – Senior Class Advisor (PHS)
  - xii. Howard, Renee – Senior Class Advisor (PHS)
  - xiii. Kristiansen, Melissa – Yearbook Advisor (PHS)
  - xiv. Kristiansen, Melissa – Unified Arts Dept. Coordinator (PHS)
  - xv. Kristiansen, Melissa – Art Club Advisor (PHS)

- xvi. Summers, Erin (Vendor) - Long Term Sub. SLP
- xvii. Shona Marston (Vendor) - Behavior Consultation
- xviii. Weeden, Heather (Vendor) - SLP
- xix. Wuestoff, Alicia (Vendor) - School Based Clinician
- xx. DeBonis, Leanna - Summer IA (1:1) (PHS)
- xxi. Morganti, Laura - Instructional Assistant (PHS)
- xxii. DeMatties, Irene - Instructional Assistant (PES)
- xxiii. Lenihan, Jean - Instructional Assistant (PHS)

**Action:** \*Pat Davenport moved to approve all listed new hires. Mike Nagar seconded. Motion carried.

b. Resignations:

- i. Rebecca Cook - At-will Library Aide
- ii. Warren Blair - At-will Instructional Assistant

c. Terminations: None

d. Leave of absence requests: None

**General Public Comment:**

a. Copy of audio tape from November meeting: Tammy Petty said that her husband, Medrick Petty, requested a copy of the audio tape from the 11/20/07 school board meeting at the February board meeting, but they have not yet received it. Superintendent Gallagher said he will look into it. She also asked about the status of the seniors' transcripts kept in a file at central office. Superintendent Gallagher said he will also look into that.

**Next Regular Meeting:** September 16, 2008, 6:30 pm, PHS.

Mary Jo adjourned to move to executive session at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Colpitts, Recording Clerk

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Board of School Directors  
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Mike Nagar made a motion to move into executive session for personnel at 8:30 PM. Pat Davenport seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Present: Mike Nagar, Pat Davenport, Al Jackson, Mary Jo Teetor, Superintendent Tom Gallagher, Principal Jean Marie Oakman, Principal Kristen Caliguiri, Dean of Students Joe Debonis.

Al Jackson made a motion to move out of executive session at 9:14 PM. Mike Nagar seconded the motion. Motion carried.

No Action Taken

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Teetor, chair