

Newport City School Board Meeting Minutes March 21, 2016

Present

Board Members:

Corinna Lancaster – Chair
Vicky Lantagne
Mary Ellen Prairie
Chris Royer
Wendy McGillivray

Administration and Staff:

Kathy Nolan, Curriculum Director
Melinda Mascolino, Ass't Principal
Nancy Frenette, Interim Principal
Glenn Hankinson, Finance Director
Nancy Griffith, Recording Secretary
John Castle, Superintendent**
Sharon Pare, Teacher
Cindy Stone, Teacher
Kristen Morey, Teacher
Mary Pat Goulding**, President Memphremagog Watershed Association
Don Hendrich**, Memphremagog Watershed Association

**Partial Attendees

- I. LANCASTER called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Additions or Adjustments to agenda: Frenette brought forward a letter from the bank in regards to approved signors on the account. HANKINSON asked if he could talk about tax rates with the board at some point during the meeting.
- II. **Approve the minutes of March 7, 2016 (attachment A).** **Motion** to approve the minutes – LANTAGNE/PRAIRIE – **Approved.**
- III. **Public comments, Communication with Parents/Staff/Citizens:** HENDRICH spoke on behalf of the Memphremagog Watershed Association. He discussed a new grant they received in 2015 to carry out a Storm Water Retrofit Study which will be identifying potential sites for storm water mitigation projects, such as infrastructure. They are identifying 20 potential projects with the assistance of a consulting firm out of Burlington. After the 20 sites are identified they will choose 4 sites that would have the opportunity to request additional grant funds to complete the project. All sites will have access to purchase the proposed project plans at a discount even if they are not selected as one of the sites to receive additional grant funds. They would like to analyze NCES as a potential sites. **Motion** to have them evaluate the school as a potential site– LANTAGNE/MCGILLIVRAY – **Approved.**

FRENETTE presented three letters of resignation to the Board. One was from Elise LeComte (teacher) for the end of the school year, second one was from Carol Viens (Library Media Specialist) for the end of the school year, and the third one was from Melanie Fauteux (SLPA) whose last day will be April 1, 2016. LANCASTER expressed that with great regret the Board accepted the letters of resignation and wished them all of the best in their future endeavors. **Motion** to have Central Office advertise for the open staff positions immediately – PRAIRIE/ROYER – **Approved.**

LANCASTER inquired as to the need of the hiring of new paraeducators (action item on the agenda) due to her concerns around the FY17 budget. FRENETTE indicated that these were not new positions, they were to fill vacancies created when employees recently left. They are all for 1:1 student needs, some with personal care involved. There are a total of 23 special education para positions within the school and two para positions that are regular education, but the students attached to those two paras are pending special education evaluations. FRENETTE stressed that all paras are needed, and are used to maintain a good learning environment for all students. PRAIRIE asked if there was a limit on Special Education reimbursement, and FRENETTE indicated she is not aware of one, legally all services indicated on IEPs need to be provided, so it would be impossible to do so if there were financial limits. HANKINSON confirmed that. LANCASTER thought at one time that NCES had been chastised by the State for high spending, but HANKINSON explained that the State does identify high spending schools and ask that documentation be presented to justify those costs, but there are no penalties.

LANCASTER indicated that she is submitting her letter of resignation as her request of a waiver from the State was denied as she cannot be employed within the SU and be a board member. She stressed how she had served on the board for numerous years and always served to do what was best for the students of NCES. She will continue to support the Board and the school as much as possible. She has approached a couple of people to see if they would be interested in filling the board opening her resignation creates, but nothing is confirmed yet. The board still needs to appoint someone for the high school board opening as well. The Board will need to re-organize. **Motion** to elect LANTAGNE as board chair – PRAIRIE/ROYER - **Approved**. PARE indicated perhaps they could put the need for a board member in the newsletter that goes home to parents. LANTAGNE agreed and asked FRENETTE to do so.

- IV. **Financial Reports:** PRAIRIE indicated that Samantha Knight could not attend due to a previous engagement. LANTAGNE indicated that they will review financials at the end of the meeting.
- V. **Principal report (attachment B):** FRENETTE indicated she had nothing new to add to her report that she handed out. MOREY asked that the report be accessible to all for review as it currently was not posted on the website. ROYER asked for clarification on the violation report received in regards to the door locks, which FRENETTE provided. The School has until the end of summer to correct all violations. The inspector has been asked by FRENETTE to show us exactly what is acceptable. PRAIRIE asked that she be invited to that meeting. FRENETTE indicated that she was able to get tables from the NCUHS as they were giving some away. PRAIRIE also asked that all the items left out from the Christmas Bazaar be packed away as it is taking up a lot of room on the third floor.
- VI. **Superintendent's Report:** CASTLE was not in attendance as he was at the NCSU Legislative/School Board Education Forum. NOLAN indicated that both she and HANKINSON were in attendance to support them in their budget discussions.
- VII. **Unfinished Business:**

A. **Budget Discussion:** CASTLE had sent an email to encourage the board to set a date before the end of April for the re-vote and to hold a community forum to get feedback from the tax payers. He also recommended reconfiguring the assistant principal position to less days per year due to Melinda Mascolino's request to be released from her contract for next year. They could also consider renaming the position. There was discussion around the modification of the assistant principal position. FRENETTE agreed that it was feasible to have the second administrator contracted at a reduced amount of time. The Board wants to get feedback from the principal that will be coming in next year to get her thoughts before anything is finalized. FRENETTE indicated that perhaps other office staff positions could be looked at as well, a closer look would have to be had around workloads. PRAIRIE brought up her concern with the reduction of 70% intervention time between the requests received from two teachers to work less time. NOLAN expressed her concern around the reduction in the Reading Recovery position as that program includes services that need to be provided on a daily basis. NOLAN'S recommendation is that administration take a look at the proposed schedule around those two programs (intervention and reading recovery) for next year and bring it forward to the board in order to make a better decision at the next meeting. PRAIRIE asked HANKINSON how much centralized bookkeeper would save the district and what services that the current bookkeeper did that Central Office would not. HANKINSON indicated he could not answer that as he was not certain what her daily tasks were, but that Central Office would do all bookkeeping related tasks under their proposal. Discussion was had around the possibility of shifting some responsibilities. PRAIRIE also inquired as to potential yearly increases in a potential NCSU contract and HANKINSON indicated the contracted amount was calculated on actual costs, so such things as increases in employee benefit premiums could affect future year contract amounts.

HANKINSON indicated that the Board needs to decide how they want to move forward. Does the Board want recommendations, and is the community forum to get feedback in the development process or to simply provide information on the finalized budget. PRAIRIE asked if the Board wanted to present the same budget or not. LANTAGNE and MCGILLIVRAY both feel that the tax payers did not understand what they were voting on and that information needs to go out. LANTAGNE feels that they can look at other recommendations from administration and determine if they move forward with a revised budget or the same budget. ROYER indicates that we need to stress that our cost per equalized pupil is at par with other schools. After some discussion, it was decided that the community forum would be March 31st at 6:15 pm to get input so that action can take place at the April 4th meeting (approval of the budget and the warrant). MCGILLIVRAY asked who would develop the informational pamphlet and potential articles in the newspapers to share information on the budget. HANKINSON expressed that the pamphlet would go out after a budget is approved to explain what is included in the budget and to indicate a brief rationale. If all went well, the informational meeting could then be held on April 25th. The Board could potentially reschedule their regular board meeting from the 18th to the 25th. The actual budget re-vote could be on the 26th or 28th. The Board decided to move ahead with that schedule.

B. **Board Meeting schedule for 2016-2017:** LANTAGNE expressed the following thoughts on the calendar due to conflicts around holidays/breaks: Move September 5th to the 12th, have a meeting on January 2nd only not the 16th as that is MLK day, then March 13th instead of the 6th as the 6th is Town Meeting Day. September, January and March would only have one scheduled meeting only unless emergency meetings were needed. **Motion** to approve the proposed changes to the calendar - MCGILLIVARY/ROYER - **approved**.

VIII. **New Business:**

- A. **Approve hire of paraeducators:** Motion to approve the hiring of Morgan Simoneau and Kory Morse - MCGILLIVARY/PRAIRIE – **Approved.**
- B. **Approve release of assistant principal from her contract for next year to pursue a principalship position at another school:** CASTLE supports MASCOLINO in her pursuit of this opportunity. **Motion** to approve release of MASCOLINO from her contract effective June 30, 2016 – PRAIRIE/ROYER – ROYER mentioned that he did not receive an email about this request as well as other board members. CASTLE apologized as he thought he has included the whole board in his email last week – **Approved.**
- a. **Next steps for Assistant Principal Search:** CASTLE indicated his belief is that two administrators are needed in the front office to maintain successful leadership, and not simply be reactive. However, he feels there is some room to reduce the second administrative position. The second administrator could provide assistance with such things as discipline and evaluation. MCGILLIVRAY and ROYER asked if the reduction in days and a potential change in the name of the position would attract less applicants, and CASTLE indicated it could go either way. It was mentioned again that they would like input from the new principal. CASTLE encouraged it be advertised soon. The board agreed to 210 days with a reduction in annual salary. **Motion** to post position as an assistant principal for 210 days with a salary range of \$68, 000-\$72,000 – PRAIRIE/ROYER – **Approved.** CASTLE proposed that FRENETTE run the search in collaboration with COLLINS. It should be run similar to the process that was followed for the principal search. A job description could be finalized with COLLINS. PARE mentioned that colleagues of hers at others schools indicated that their principal search committees included a 6th grader, and she thought that was a great idea. The board saw merit to this idea.
- C. **Auditor Report and Recommendations:** LANTAGNE asked that the auditor report and recommendations be placed on a future agenda due to the lateness of the hour.
- D. **Kitchen Steamer:** **Motion** to have the steamer advertised for sale – PRAIRIE/MCGILLIVRAY – **Approved.**
- IX. **Agenda Items for next meeting on April 4, 2016:** Budget discussion, 6th grade presentations on forecast reports. PARE pointed out that there was a conflict for the forum being held on the 31st. **Motion** to move the forum from the 31st to the 30th – ROYER/MCGILLIVRAY – **Approved.**
- X. **Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Griffith

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCSU Annual Meeting	Thursday	March 24	6:30 p.m.	NCUHS Library
NCES Board	Monday	April 4	6:00 p.m.	NCES