

Newport City School Board Meeting Minutes December 14, 2015

Present

Board Members:

Corinna Lancaster – Chair
Jessica Ward
Mary Ellen Prairie
Karrie Briggs**

Administration and Staff:

John Castle, Superintendent
Melinda Mascolino, Ass't Principal
Glenn Hankinson**, Fin. Director
Nancy Frenette, Interim Principal
Samantha Knight, Bookkeeper
Kristen Morey, Teacher
Nancy Griffith, Recording Secretary
Wendy McGillivray**, Parent

Melissa Lagoy**, Parent
Rory Carr**, Parent
Laura Houle**, Paraprofessional
Mary Ellen Maclure**, Teacher

**Partial attendees

- I. LANCASTER called meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Additions or adjustments to the agenda: LANCASTER indicated MACLURE and HOULE had a matter to discuss that will need to be done in Executive session as it related to Personnel.

- II. **Public comments, Communication with Parents/Staff/Citizens:** None.

III. **Unfinished Business**

1. Information

- a. Ski Program: LAGOY shared information with the Board that she had gathered around trying to have some sort of limited ski program at NCES this year. Jay Peak's program is in a bit of disarray due to lack of snow, so they have pushed back some dates. They have confirmed two dates in January that would be available for the NCES ski program. She also contacted Burke Mountain. While they are much more organized, they are more expensive (total of \$29 per student per day, which is double the cost of Jay Peak). The only time slot Burke Mountain has are Mondays at 1:30, which would be difficult around busing. Jay Peak is able to offer Thursdays at 10:00 a.m and their rental department comes here to the school to size everyone. Jay Peak would waive the annual foundation cost, and have confirmed one additional date in February and one in March. FRENETTE confirmed that 5 staff members volunteered for the program, which would allow some to be based in the lodge, with others based on the slopes. PRAIRIE asked why they didn't pursue the ski program thru the Newport Rec Department and MCGILLIVRAY indicated that program only offered reduced pass rates, no lessons or transportation was provided, which limited who would participate. Board and FRENETTE said it was okay to lock in the dates available with Jay for this year. CARR asked how we ensure that the program is organized earlier for upcoming years as LAGOY confirmed that Jay's School Ski Program Coordinator meetings are held in October. CARR asked when is it voted on by the board. CASTLE confirmed that the program has been sanctioned so it does not need to be brought to the board every year. CARR indicated that their group would help coordinate this going

forward so that deadlines are met to have a full program going forward. The Board thanked the parent group for their efforts.

LANCASTER asked to go into executive session at 6:17 p.m. inviting administration, HOULE and MACLURE. Exited executive session at 6:47 pm. **No action taken.**

2. Action:

- A. Audit report & follow up. HANKINSON handed out the report. He indicated that the cost containments under Act 46 place limits in Education spending for FY17 and FY18, but that spending can be offset by fund balances from FY15 audit (fund balance of \$200,000 in general fund, \$30,000 in Special Education Tuition Reserve Fund). Town previously voted to transfer other balances into specific Tech Fund (\$60,000) and Construction Fund (\$33,920). Auditor was concerned about outstanding “due to, due froms”, and HANKINSON will work closely with KNIGHT to review which ones can be done in order to not have a deficit. PRAIRIE asked how the district goes about getting rid of a deficit, and HANKSINSON indicated loans can be taken out.

LANCASTER thought some of these Technology transfers had been approved previously and was questioning why they were not done. After reviewing previous minutes CASTLE wants to do more research before approving any transfers.

CASTLE indicated that this is a draft audit report, and some correspondence needs to happen with the auditor to get a final audit report. The Board does not have to take action on all recommendations, they can do as many or as little as they want at this time.

- B. Bus Lease Consideration: Recent discussions have revolved around NCES having three buses/routes to gain instructional time and reduce management time. CRESSI declined to bid due to some constraints on their end. Butler’s Bus Service provided a bid for two buses, and NCES would keep one of their buses to have the three routes. CASTLE recommends going with the lease but only start in FY17, versus starting this year. That FY17 lease cost would be covered with a fund balance in a bus fund. Challenge is to fund the lease for FY18 and going forward. Discussion was had around savings between owning/maintaining and leasing buses. HANKINSON reminded the board that part of the transportation costs are offset by reimbursement from the State. Final decision for FY17 will have to be made during the budget process. **No action taken.**

IV. **FY17 Budget Considerations and Recommendations:**

Based on restrictions under Act 46, NCES’ estimated containment threshold is minus \$319,438.00 for FY17. CASTLE reviewed various increases in costs due to Collective Agreements, benefit premium increases, etc. PRAIRIE and CASTLE discussed behavior specialist needs at NCES and how that would look in the budget. CASTLE handed out a list of areas to look at in the budget around staffing, facilities, transportation, etc. These were all areas to discuss, nothing is set in stone. As one area to consider was re-structuring of paraprofessionals, LANCASTER mentioned

that last year they cut para positions in the budget, but then turned around and hired more this year, so she would like that taken into consideration. CASTLE discussed the small 5th grade class moving on to 6th grade, so discussion was had around either the re-assignment of existing staff or the hiring of a new teacher. CASTLE would have a hard time supporting the hire of a new teacher due to the cost containment figures. Another area is around teachers of “specials” such as PE, Art and Music. Some of those teacher have down time, so perhaps reduction in FTEs could occur. Board discussed state education standard mandates around those specials. FRENETTE stressed the importance of those programs as some of the students would not have exposure to these activities if not offered thru school. The discipline attached to these activities show up positively in areas of academic. PRAIRIE questioned some line items under operations, maintenance and building upkeep. KNIGHT clarified them for her. MASCOLINO asked what types of line items need to be reduced to have a bigger impact on the overall picture. CASTLE indicated that it is really personnel that is the big driver. The board can look at other lines, but it will have a much smaller impact. CASTLE reminded the board they can use other fund sources to offset expenses, such as Medicaid, which would not affect the cost containment thresholds.

LANCASTER stressed that they are not doing anything in regards to the construction fund until the FY18 budgeting process. LANCASTER would like some specific recommendations from administration sent out prior to the next meeting so that we could realistically come out of the next meeting with an approved budget and a warning for Town Meeting.

PRAIRIE suggests perhaps eliminating a part-time custodian position. CASTLE passed around a letter from the Abbey Group that had indicated some requests for upgrades in equipment, but he feels that our budget for FY17 will not allow for much.

Board asked that the food program be part of the budget for them to review as it has never been in the past. There was discussion around an old deficit that exists in the food program, that perhaps anticipated income from this year’s food program can go towards.

- V. **Agenda Items for next meeting on January 11, 2016:** None.
- VI. LANCASTER asked to go into executive session at 9:05 p.m., asking administration to stay. Exited executive session at 9:30 p.m. **No action taken.**
- VII. **Adjourn: Motion** was passed to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Griffith

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	December 17	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCES Board	Monday	January 11	6:00 p.m.	NCES