

## Minutes of the Reading School Board

March 17, 2009

Unapproved Draft

### Attendance:

School Board- John Fike, Justin Sluka; Superintendent- Meg Gallagher; Principal- Ray Pentkowski; Recording Secretary- Rayna Bishop; Visitors- none

The meeting was called to order at 4:42 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes from February 24, 2009, as presented was seconded and passed.

### Reorganization:

Elect Officers:

- John Fike nominated for Chair; accepted
- Justin Sluka nominated for Vice Chair; accepted
- John Philpin nominated for Clerk; accepted

There were discussions regarding preparations for when John Fike and John Philpin decide to step down from the School Board.

Posting of Notices: A motion was made for posting notices at the Town Hall, in the Reading Elementary school foyer, and in the Reading store. The motion was seconded and passed.

The Vermont Standard and The Reading Informer were chosen for publication of warnings, postings, and employment advertisements.

### Visitors:

There were no visitors in attendance. However, Shiri Macri had planned to attend and was unable to. Shiri has questions regarding the plan for Guidance next year. This will depend somewhat on who is hired for that position. Ray will call Shiri to answer some of her questions.

### Financial:

It was agreed that the Town Meeting was a rather quiet affair. Ray voiced the opinion that he feels the townspeople respect the Select Board, the School Board, and the school. There is concern regarding the next school budget, as the 09/10 budget started in the 2-vote and penalty stage, and took intense effort to get us below the threshold of those stages. We were able to do that this time without cutting any programs. John Fike requested that the Board and Ray put together "what if" scenarios, as the budget is barely below the penalty phase as it is. The fuel contract needs to be reviewed also, as the situation is more volatile now than it has been in the past.

The 09/10 school year is the last year in the 3 year transportation contract. The current contract does not include an escalation clause, which undoubtedly saved us a lot of money when the cost of fuel rose dramatically.

There is now a freeze on spending for this year.

There was discussion regarding the desire of the Vermont Education Commissioner, Armando Vilaseca, to consolidate districts. John Fike believes that rather than lump all of the districts together, the districts should be audited to find out which ones are doing a good job and functioning well.

### Superintendent Report:

There is a full day Cabinet meeting coming up on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

The district needs to be thinking ahead regarding how to spend the money it will receive from the stimulus package. We need to focus on things that will have permanency.

Meg discussed a book titled "The Outliers," by Malcolm Gladwell. The book will be a topic of discussion at the Cabinet meeting. In addition, NECAP scores will be discussed.

The WCSU Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, at 6 P.M.

### Principal Report:

The students are preparing for a production of "The Pied Piper." It will be presented on April 16<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall, and is being coordinated by Johnny Esau, Lisa Kaija, and Ginger Armstrong.

The second trimester ended on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Our students will attend the WUHS District Music Concert on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Red Apple Award was presented to Lisa Kaija in February, and passed on to Ginger Armstrong at the staff meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

Anticipated vacancies at RES for the 09/10 school year are being advertised. This includes Guidance, teacher's assistant, and Title I Reading.

The spring issue of Rutland Magazine featured an article on the Spanish program at Sherburne Elementary. Their Spanish teacher, Elaine Leibly, also teaches here at RES and at Bridgewater.

We have received an order from the Town Road Foreman that staff, parents, and the school bus are not to be using the emergency exit located at the far end of our parking lot unless it is a true emergency. Notices have been sent out, and it will also be posted in the Informer.

Updates on the cooler conversions were discussed.

The telephone service through Fair Point has been revised, and will slightly lower the monthly cost.

The cellular phones through Unicel will be researched for a compatible plan, as AT&T has purchased Unicel.

### Chair Report:

John Fike attended a State School Board meeting, where the main topic of discussion focused on restructuring the way teachers teach, and how education will be provided in the future.

### Action Items:

- Appoint staff- A motion was made to reappoint Certified Staff, Administration, and Support Staff as presented was seconded and passed.
- Policy Review- The current policy regarding use of facilities needs to be revised to include enforceable policies and procedures, and include a reasonable deposit fee. The Principal will review the current policy, rewrite it, and present it at the next meeting.

The Board entered into Executive session at 5:45 P.M. to discuss a student matter. The Board returned from the Executive session at 6:00 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2009, at 4:30 P.M.