

## School Liaison Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday September 13, 2012

Location: Franklin City Hall

Committee Members in Attendance:

Al Warner, Scott Clarenbach, George Dzjuna, Keith Lohmann & Paul Trudel.

Committee Members Absent: Ed Cogan

Also in Attendance: Ms. Annette Andreozzi & Mr. Bob Lucas

- I. The Meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Co-chair Trudel
- II. Members of the community who wished to address the committee were invited to come forth to speak:  
Mr. Lucas stated that given the time frame since the last meeting was held he recently contacted several committee members to voice his concern and inquire as to whether the committee had been disbanded. Further, he stated that he had been contacted by committee members and he was relieved to hear that the meetings would resume.
- III. Approval of the minutes from the May 10, 2012 meeting:  
  
Motion made by Co-chair Trudel to approve the minutes of the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
Seconded by George Dzjuna  
There were no corrections or suggested revisions to the minutes as written.  
Approval of the May 10, 2012 minutes was unanimous.

Narrative/Synopsis:

Co-chair Trudel opened the meeting by asking if there were any outstanding issues or concerns in regards to past school board meetings and the status of the teacher's contract.

Co-chair Lohmann stated the negotiations were still ongoing and he had to be careful as to what he divulged as there have been lengthy discussions in non-public sessions.

Committee member Dzjuna stated he was informed that teacher morale is very low for a variety of reasons and they pertain to more than the contract negotiations.

Co-chair Lohmann stated that there are many procedural issues that have yet to be resolved.

Committee member Clarenbach commented that tenured teachers have left the SAU and were not too happy in making the decision to leave. Committee member Warner informed the committee that there has been about a 30% attrition rate since the SAU has started summer break.

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Committee member Clarenbach informed the Committee some of the teachers relocated to Hopkinton and others went to Winnisquam.....unfortunately for the city, the teachers went to where the money talks.

Co-chair Lohmann replied “a lot of change is putting people off” and while change can be good, unfortunately some folks have a hard time adapting to those changes and rather than adapt they are finding it easier to leave and start fresh somewhere else.

Committee member Clarenbach stated that priorities and goals need to be established, however it is vital that all those concerned need to clearly understand what those priorities are and how the goals will be achieved.

Committee member Dzjuna asked if low morale was in part due to the stalled contract negotiations. Scott Clarenbach commented that perhaps not having a contract does have a role in the issue, but demographics, socioeconomic issues, lack of parental involvement and other issues all play a part in the low morale. Additionally, as far as he is aware of there is no accurate measure of teacher performance to base pay raises on.

Co-chair Lohmann commented that at this point in time it is his feeling that some time in the not to distant future we stand the risk of having the state step in and assume control of the SAU and when/if that happens the state will dictate how much gets spent on education.

Committee member Warner stated that teacher evaluations are mandated by the state and the trend is for educators to resist that evaluation, further, it was his opinion that raises should be based on and awarded via a merit pool. Committee member Clarenbach responded by saying the city had encountered the same problems for merit raises for city employees. Mr. Warner commented that we need to get the funding from somewhere, either through cost reductions and other related activities or additional appropriations from the city.

Co-chair Lohmann commented that there is good news in that test scores are rising as direct result of curriculum and administration changes. Standardized tests are no longer tied to the curriculum in that we're no longer 'teaching to the tests.' Mr. Warner furthered by adding there has been a measurable improvement in the form of using the recently adapted tools such as Study Island. This has assisted in a different way to measure performance as close to real time as possible.

Co-Chair Lohmann informed the committee that STANT tests are now given twice instead of once and performance is judged based on those results. He reiterated that scores have gone up but we're not yet where we need to be.

Committee member Dzjuna said he questioned whether the City Council as a whole was aware of the current school situation and he felt that there existed a need to convene the city council so these issues and others could be brought forth.

Mr. Clarenbach felt that the path we should take is to approach this strategically. The school funding and the condition of the schools is one piece of the overall picture that needs attention and prioritizing. Further, we have a whole municipality that needs to be dealt with. Our roads and other infrastructure are decrepit and in dire need of attention. The city has put off the big ticket items for so long we are fast approaching a condition where recovery will be insurmountable.

Mr. Trudel commented although the City Council meets monthly to address upcoming issues there exists a perception of constantly being in a reactive mode rather than a pro-active mode. He cited the recent purchase of a new ambulance as an example.

Mr. Dzjuna proposed that the city council has a calendar opening at the end of each month that is to be used for other city business. Perhaps we should consider using that time to convene the Council to make

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the Mayor and all the members of the Council aware as to what is transpiring. He then made a motion to investigate the possibility of convening the Council at the regularly October work session.

Mr. Dzjuna's motion was seconded by Mr. Lohmann.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Trudel brought forth a suggestion to consider holding future Liaison Committee meetings in one of the schools. Since the Franklin Opera House has a lease with the city there have been scheduling conflicts whereas Liaison meetings have had to be cancelled due to band practice or other Opera House activities.

Mr. Lohmann said he would discuss the possibility with Dr. Ward and report back.

Mr. Trudel made a motion to adjourn at 8:35PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Warner.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith Lohmann, School Liaison Committee Co-chair

Paul Trudel, School Liaison Committee Co-chair