

School District #5: Baie Verte, Central, Connaigre
Regular School Board Meeting
Helen Tulk Elementary School, Bishop's Falls.
January 21, 2003
MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE

Terry Brown, Chair
Carolyn Andrews
Clarence Brown
Randy Edison
Robert Elliott
Raymond Gray
Albert Hodder
Gail Hoskins
Winston Keeping
Sharon Mayne
David Morrow
Sean Power
Gregory Roberts
Mabrey Winsor

Debbie Armstrong, Director of Education
Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration)
Bonnie Lane-McCarthy, Assistant Director (Human Resources)
Frank Norman, Assistant Director (Programs)
Beverly Wells, Recorder

OBSERVERS

Representatives from Schools/School Councils in Bishop's Falls

1. INVOCATION

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with trustees repeating the invocation.

2. Presentations

2.1. Leo Burke Academy School Council

Dorothy Pretty, Chair of the Leo Burke Academy School Council, made a presentation to the Board. Ms. Pretty's presentation focused on the lack of facilities for students to eat lunch; accessibility with narrow corridors and stairwells; the new high school math program; school bus stop safety; and a vote of thanks to the Board for the work that is being carried out on the air exchange system in their school and on the roof. A copy of Ms. Pretty's presentation will be circulated to Board trustees.

2.2. Helen Tulk Elementary School Council

Jody Fancey, School Council Chair at Helen Tulk Elementary School, made a presentation to the Board. Ms. Fancey's presentation focused on the air quality issue at their school. A copy of that presentation will be circulated to School Board trustees.

Letters of acknowledgement will be forwarded to Leo Burke Academy and Helen Tulk Elementary school Councils.

3. Program PRESENTATION

3.1. Public Examinations

Keith Collins, Program Specialist, made a presentation to the Board on the 2002 high school public examinations results. Mr. Collins circulated a Public Exam Report and highlights of that Report. He said most schools in the District submitted lower school marks in June 2002 than they did in June 2001. Mr. Collins said he was pleased that there was a marked improvement in the public exam scores in Thematic Literature 3201 since June 2001. There is a cause for concern, however, in the scores

in Chemistry 3202, Math 3201 and to a lesser extent Biology 3201 and Math 3200 since June 2001. Mr. Collins said this was the first year for a public exam in French 3200 and this District scored much lower than the provincial average. Mr. Collins added, however, that students in this District scored highest in the province on public exams in World Geography 3202.

Carolyn Andrews said it is reasonable for marks to drop in public exams considering the students are being evaluated on a whole year's work.

Gail Hoskins asked if this District's data could be compared to other districts. She was informed that other districts results are not available to this District.

Gregory Roberts asked is there is any influence for teachers or principals to inflate the school marks. He also asked if smaller schools have a bigger problem than larger schools. To both questions the response was no.

Carolyn Andrews said tutoring is increasing in math. She said this may increase our District Math marks for 2003.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion the Agenda was approved. (Hoskins/Morrow) Carried.

35-02/03

5. MINUTES OF December 10, 2002

On motion the Minutes of the December 10, 2002, Regular School Board meeting were approved. (Winsor/ Gray) Carried. 36-02/03

6. BUSINESS ARISING

6.1. Leo Burke Academy, Ventilation System

It was expected that the work on Leo Burke Academy's ventilation system would begin on December 16. However, it was later starting and is expected to be completed by mid-February. A pre-contract meeting was held and some adjustments were made to the specifications. Works, Services & Transportation engineer said he doesn't think there is a ventilation system problem in Leo Burke Academy and hopes the modifications will be successful but is doubtful. Works, Services and Transportation has stated that they are not sure there is a fool proof system to eliminate the problems associated with that school.

Gail Hoskins said the Board is not getting results and asked whether it should stop until answers are provided to the problems. Terry Hillier responded that the system has come a long way and suggested that the Board wait until the modifications that have been suggested are implemented.

In answer to Mabrey Winsor's question as to whether or not the Board would accept the problem after it is completed in mid-February, Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), stated that the project has a one-year warranty. If it doesn't correct the problems, Works, Services and Transportation will be contacted at that time.

Gregory Roberts asked what would be the recourse if the modifications do not rectify the problems. Robert Elliott suggested that the issue of the Board's capital projects being covered by Works, Services and Transportation be added to the MHA Forum Agenda in February.

Sean Power said the present contractor, Tri-Star Mechanical, cannot be responsible for former problems associated with the ventilation system in Leo Burke Academy.

6.2. School Facilities in Bay d'Espoir

The Director informed the meeting that the consulting group, officials from the Department of Education, Department of Works, Services and Transportation, and the Board will meet to discuss the plans again on January 28. Following that, it is expected that the plans for the project will be drawn up and the project can be signed off.

On January 3, 2003, and December 20, 2002, the Department of Education wrote letters to the Board stating that there is \$1,000,000 available for the Bay d'Espoir project and any extra money would come from the Board's incentive funding which it will receive by closing Holy Cross School. Trustees reiterated that this is not what the Board has decided to do with its money from school closings. Trustees felt that the Department of Education committed to the project and, in order to have the school opened in September, 2003, the Board should sign off on the project and continue to fight for the extra money needed for finishes, connectivity and a link between the buildings.

David Morrow stated that if the Department of Education doesn't provide the entire amount of money for this project, the Board should inform the public accordingly. Mr. Morrow said it seems like a waste of time to be sitting around the Board table and be dictated to by the Department of Education.

Sean Power echoed what David Morrow stated. He said the Board has been forced to rubber stamp government decisions and now it is faced with the same situation with Helen Tulk Elementary School Ventilation System and the Bay d'Espoir project. Mr. Power said until the Board goes to the public, there will always be a problem.

David Morrow added that the Board should go public and say exactly what the Minister of Education is saying and let her defend it.

Robert Elliott said he agreed with Power and that the Board is playing nice guy and government is taking advantage of the Board. He said the Board should advise the public what the Department of Education committed to doing with the project.

Sean Power said the whole issue needs to be framed in a process whereby the Board will have an ongoing public relations campaign.

On motion it was agreed to initiate an ad hoc committee to deal with public relations to look at problems the Board is facing with the Department of Education dictating to the Board regarding its needs. (Andrews/ Edison) Carried. 37-02/03

Gregory Roberts said the Board should be more involved with providing programs for students rather than spending so much time on infrastructure.

Randy Edison, Sean Power, David Morrow, Clarence Brown, Gregory Roberts, Mabrey Winsor and Albert Hodder said they would be interested in sitting on an ad hoc committee on PR.

Clarence Brown suggested the Chair write the Minister of Education clarifying the intent of the Board's motion (27-02/03) of December 10, 2002.

6.3. Baie Verte Middle School, Renovations

Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said he assumes the work on the Baie Verte Middle School renovations is complete.

Clarence Brown gave a report indicating that the original scope of work was not necessary because it was questionable if there were any structural problems with the gymnasium walls.

Mr. Hillier said he had not received such a report but that he would talk to Mary Bungay, Operations Manager—Emerald Zone, about the project.

6.4. Helen Tulk Elementary, Ventilation System

Following the December School Board meeting, the Board Chair wrote a letter to the Minister of Education stating that the Board is not willing to fund any additional costs of the ventilation system at Helen Tulk Elementary School, Bishop's Falls. The Minister responded on December 27, 2002, stating that they would provide \$5,000 over and above the \$17,000 committed by the Director of Education in a letter to Ingrid Clarke, School Construction Engineer, on April 24, 2002. A copy of Ms. Armstrong's letter was circulated to Board trustees but it did not indicate that the Board would subsidize the project by \$17,000.

Vehbi Kantarcioglu, Engineer from Works Services and Transportation, wrote in an e-mail to Jim Kennedy, WST, and Ingrid Clarke on January 13 that if \$22,000 were invested in the project, the Board would see an improvement in the system.

David Morrow said he feels the Board should invest the \$17,000 although an earlier motion stated that it would not do so.

Robert Elliott suggested waiting until after the MHA forum in February before making such a decision. Gail Hoskins said if the Board doesn't take a stand on this project, it may as well give up.

Clarence Brown suggested telling the government that if the Board is going to spend \$22,000, it spend it itself. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said if that were the case the Board would have to provide specifications for the project and that would cost more money.

The Director of Education said that although the Board committed to the project in the beginning it now has a project that is not finished. She said it is a matter of principle. Ms. Armstrong said the Board should not lose sight of the children's health in the school.

Sean Power said the Board should not change its motion (32-02/03) of December 10, 2002.

Albert Hodder suggested writing the Department of Education again reminding them of the Board's motion not to fund any additional costs of the ventilation system at Helen Tulk Elementary School.

It was agreed that the Chair write the Minister of Education responding to her letter of December 27, 2002, and state that the Board's motion of December 10, 2002, still stands.

6.5. Charitable Organization

Following the last School Board meeting an application was made for the Board to be registered as a charitable organization. No response has yet been received.

6.6. School Review - Bishop's Falls

This item was placed on the Agenda to advise trustees that it is now moving into action. Frank Norman, Assistant Director (Programs) will pick up the school review process in Bishop's Falls and bring it forward to a transition committee. He will meet with principals from the three schools in Bishop's Falls to discuss it with them. Mr. Norman should have a report for the Board in a few months.

6.7. School Board Retreat

The School Board Retreat was held in Buchans on January 10 and 11, 2003. Because of inclement weather, the Retreat had to be cancelled on January 11. Randy Edison said the Board should finish the work started at the Retreat.

The Director said it would take approximately three hours to finish the agenda from the Retreat. It was agreed to meet for a supper meeting on February 5 at 5 p.m.

6.8. La Rochelle Property in Brent's Cove

The La Rochelle Property in Brent's Cove has been signed over to the R. C. Episcopal.

7. Reports

7.1. Director's Report

There was no report at this meeting due to the fact that the staff member who submits the information for staffing is on sick leave.

7.2. Executive Report

The Executive met on January 13, 2003. The following action is or will be taken as a result of that meeting:

Different committees will review board policies, ie. personnel, programming, finance & properties, governance, legal, etc.

A "draft policy on governance" and a draft sample of a revised policy are being worked on and will be discussed at the next executive meeting.

Copies of Robert's Rules of Order have been ordered for all Board trustees.

The Director is looking for someone to do a session with trustees on Robert's Rules of Order.

Board trustees can meet with school council chairs on February 4 at Springdale. A tentative date has been set for the whole Board to meet with all school council chairs on April 1, 2003.

The Director is checking to ascertain the cost of fax machines and fax lines for Board trustees who do not have access to fax machines.

Ten trustees returned surveys to the District Office on e-mail services for trustees. The Executive agreed that \$200.00 would be sufficient to cover the cost of paper, printer cartridges, and internet services used while performing Board business. It was also agreed that the Chair of the Board would need extra money since he uses a fax machine and computer more than the other trustees for Board business. It was agreed that invoices would have to be provided for trustees to claim such expenses.

On motion it was agreed that effective January 21, 2003, costs incurred by School Board trustees, up to \$200.00, to cover paper, printer cartridges, internet services, etc., used while performing Board business be forwarded to the School Board office for reimbursement. (Power/Brown) Carried. 38-02/03

The Minister of Education responded to a letter from Everett Allen regarding the Board's financial situation. It was agreed that the Board would write to Mr. Allen acknowledging a copy of the letter from the Minister of Education and explain the Board's dilemma. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Minister of Education and MHA Oliver Langdon. Copies will also be sent to Board trustees.

Brenda Kelleher-Flight would like to have four Board trustees engage in a taped 55-minute interview as she endeavors to complete governance research in this province as a fulfillment of her requirements for a Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of South Australia. It was agreed that David Morrow, Terry Brown, Carolyn Andrews and Randy Edison would meet with Ms. Kelleher-Flight on February 6 following Strategic Planning meetings.

The Chair will ascertain whether or not District 6 would like to meet with District 5 Board members to discuss common concerns. If there is agreement to such a meeting, the Minister of Education and her senior staff will also be invited.

On motion it was agreed to accept the Proceedings of the Executive Meeting held on January 13, 2003. (Gray/Keeping) Carried. 39-02/03

7.3. Financial Report

Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), advised the Board that after six months into the fiscal year, there is a deficit of \$79,112. It is expected that there will be a deficit at the end of the fiscal year.

On motion it was agreed to accept the Financial Statements of the Board to December 31, 2002. (Roberts/ Gray) Carried. 40-02/03

7.4. Finance & Properties Report

Chair of the Finance and Properties Committee, Gregory Roberts, said items brought up at the last Finance and Properties Committee meeting were discussed at the last Regular School Board meeting.

The Minister of Education advised one school council that the Board's support staff severance is paid by the Department of Education. The Assistant Director (Finance & Administration) said the Department of Education pays teachers' severance but not that of support staff.

David Morrow asked what could he tell school councils in his area about the Board's financial situation. He was told to check

with Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration).

On motion it was agreed to accept the Proceedings of a special Finance and Properties Committee Meeting held on December 10, 2002. (Winsor/Mayne) Carried.

41-02/03

7.5. Personnel Committee Report

There was no Personnel Committee meeting held since the last Board meeting. Sean Power said he was unaware of who was responsible for calling the first meeting of the new committee. Terry Brown said he would check the Board's Constitution to ascertain who is responsible to call the first meeting.

7.6. Programming Report

The Programming Committee met but there were no proceedings available at this meeting. Carolyn Andrews said the committee discussed the Safe and Caring Schools Policy and it will be placed on the next Regular School Board meeting agenda.

7.7. CRSC Report

The Director attended the last meeting of CRSC. She reported that things are ongoing and the next meeting will be held on February 20, 2003. She said the first major document for the Social Strategic Plan will be released in February: Where we Stand.

The Director said with regard to the subsidized bussing money, Heather Hillier met with the principals and they are putting together a plan. She said \$6,000 has been allocated for the Baie Verte area. At present they are looking at criteria and doing some research in the area.

On January 31 there will be a session on community accounts at the College of the North Atlantic, Grand Falls-Windsor. If anyone is interested s/he should let David Morrow or Deborah Armstrong know. The sessions will be held from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

7.8. School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee

Minutes of the School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee held on November 21, 2002, were circulated to Board trustees. The Director said there are a number of issues that she will be working on before the next meeting that will be held on February 25, 2003.

The Director said the Government is requiring every work site in the province to have an occupational health and safety committee, however, school boards requested to be exempt and have just one committee per district. The Minister of Labor refused that request. Ms. Armstrong said the Board does not have the resources to provide three days of training to every school in the District for OHS. Trustees asked that this item be placed on the MHA Forum agenda.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Congress 2003

Congress 2003 will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, from July 3 – 5, 2003. The Director and Chair and two trustees can attend on behalf of the Board. Trustees interested in attending, should forward his/her name to Beverly Wells by March 31, 2003.

8.2. Resolutions to NLSBA AGM

Carolyn Andrews suggested that resolutions to NLSBA AGM be discussed in January. The Director suggested that each committee of the Board put this item on their agenda and bring any resolutions to the next Regular School Board meeting.

Samples of resolutions from other Boards were circulated to Board trustees.

Trustees agreed with Carolyn Andrews' suggestion that NLSBA be asked for an update on last year's resolutions.

8.3. Fire Commissioner's Report, St. Alban's

Copies of the Fire Commissioner's Report were circulated to Board trustees. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said that any discrepancies listed in the report have either been corrected or will be corrected to the satisfaction of the Fire Commissioner's Office.

8.4. 2003 Pre-Budget consultations

Terry Brown, Terry Hillier and Deborah Armstrong attended government pre-budget consultations on January 21. The Minister of Finance gave a report on where money comes from and how it is spent. The Board Chair reported that if the government maintains its present programs and services, the province will run a deficit. To operate without a deficit, there may be massive layoffs. The Board's statement to the Minister is that it cannot sustain more teacher cuts or a reduction in budgets.

9. Correspondence

There was no correspondence to be dealt with at this meeting.

10. Outstanding Business

10.1. Home Schooling Policy

The Home Schooling Policy went to the Department of Education and is now out in draft form.

10.2. By-Laws

Clarence Brown will report on the By-Laws at the next School Board Executive meeting.

10.3. Policy on Partnerships (pg. 33, 00/01)

10.4. Harbour Breton Trustee

Gail Hoskins spoke to someone from Harbour Breton Town Council but they were unable to find someone to fill the vacant school trustee position in Ward X. The Chair will write other Town Councils in the area for name suggestions.

10.5. Smoking Policy

The Smoking Policy will soon be ready to be presented to the Board for approval.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next Regular School Board meeting will be held on February 18. The MHA Forum will be held on the same day at 2:00 p. m.

12. Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned on a motion by Hoskins and Keeping at 10:00 p.m.

Beverly Wells, Recorder

Terry Brown, Chair of the Board