

School District #5: Baie Verte, Central, Connaigre
Regular School Board Meeting
Indian River High School, Springdale
May 21, 2002
MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE

Terry Brown, Chair
Carolyn Andrews
Clarence Brown
Randy Edison
Robert Elliott
Raymond Gray
Albert Hodder
Gail Hoskins
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

PRESENTERS

Gilbert Penney & Cathy Alyward

OBSERVERS

12 Observers

ABSENT

Winston Keeping sent regrets.

1. INVOCATION

The Chair welcomed people to the meeting at 7 p.m. The invocation was repeated after the presentations.

2. Presentations

2.1. Indian River High School, Springdale

Gilbert Penney, a school council member from Indian River High School, Springdale, showed a slide presentation on their school focusing on its curriculum, co-curriculum, extra curriculum, and student achievements.

2.2. Baie Verte High School Council

Cathy Alyward from the Baie Verte High School Council made a verbal presentation to the Board on concerns they have at their school that impact on student achievement. Ms. Alyward gave a copy of her notes to the Board Chair.

3. Program PRESENTATION

There was no program presentation at this meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion the Agenda was approved. (Winsor/Andrews) Carried.

113-01/02

5. MINUTES OF april 23, 2002

6. BUSINESS ARISING

6.1. School Review Committee

6.1.1. Bishop's Falls

The Bishop's Falls School Review Report entitled "A Study of Recommendations for the Education of K-12 Students in Bishop's Falls" dated April 23, 2002, was circulated to School Board trustees at the April School Board meeting.

In response to David Morrow's question as to whether or not the report was a consensus of the Committee, Frank Norman, Assistant Director (Programs) informed him that it was.

Clarence Brown asked what the square foot per student in a school means. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said the square footage was included in the report just to give a perspective of what is available in all three schools in Bishop's Falls.

Frank Norman drew the trustees' attention to the recommendations that follow:

- a. That Bishop's Falls Academy, Bishop's Falls, close as of June 2004 and that a planning committee be struck to identify and address transitional issues of the grades six and seven students to another building. Determining the best configuration for those students would be one of the mandates of this committee.
- b. That the closing of Bishop's Falls Academy will result in an annual operational cost saving of approximately \$56,513.00 for three years. The committee further recommends that this money be used to address the transitional issues.
- c. That the proposed restructuring of the school system in Bishop's Falls be contingent on the following conditions:
 - i. An appropriate level of staffing will have to be maintained at Helen Tulk Elementary for the next two years. (Losing more than one unit will result in reduced program offerings.)
 - ii. Depending on the configuration for 2004/2005, Helen Tulk Elementary and Leo Burke Academy may need some additional storage space.
 - iii. In the event that grade 7 students move to Leo Burke Academy, the air quality issues will need to be resolved and improved lunch facilities will need to be provided.

Carolyn Andrews reminded Board trustees that junior high school students need their own space.

6.1.2. Botwood

"A Study and Recommendations for the Education of K-12 Students in Botwood" dated April 23, 2002, was circulated to School Board trustees on April 25, 2002.

The Committee reported that it does not see the closure of L. P. Purchase Academy at this time. However, given declining enrollments and excess space requirements, there is recognition that this issue will need to be explored in the future.

Enrollment figures indicate that in the school year 2004-2005 the student population of L. P. Purchase Academy will be approximately 100 students. These numbers do not include out-migration figures that are sometimes significant enough to result in even lower numbers. It is not unrealistic to project less than 100 students at L. P. Purchase Academy. The question arises as to whether or not it is feasible to operate a school with this population when another school may be able to accommodate the students.

The Committee recommended that another review process should be activated in the school year 2003-2004 to plan for the future reorganization of the Botwood school system.

On motion it was agreed to accept the Report of the Botwood School Review Committee entitled "A Study and Recommendations of the Education of K-12 Students in Botwood", dated April 23, 2002. (Power/Hodder) Carried. 116-01/02

6.1.3. Springdale

The School Review Report for the education of K-12 students in Springdale was forwarded to Board trustees during the week of May 13, 2002. It will be discussed at the Regular School Board meeting in June.

6.2. Leo Burke Academy, Ventilation System

Terry Hillier said he had just recently spoken to Ingrid Clarke, School Construction Engineer at the Department of Education, who said she has spoken with Gary Hatcher, Senior Director with the Department, and that they would be coming back to the Board shortly with a decision regarding the ventilation system in Leo Burke Academy, Bishop's Falls.

6.3. School Facilities in Bay d'Espoir

The Board Chair reiterated that at a Regular School Board meeting on March 20, 2002, a motion was passed that the Board apply for extra funds to upgrade Holy Cross School, St. Alban's, with the intention to close Greenwood Academy, Milltown. It was also decided that a group of trustees travel to St. John's to meet in person with the Minister of Education and the MHA for the area to ask for the extra money needed.

The School Board Executive met on April 26, 2002, and decided that they would be the group to go to St. John's since the executive contains a good cross section of the Board. On May 2, Gail Hoskins, Clarence Brown, Gregory Roberts, Sean Power, the Board Chair and the Director of Education traveled to St. John's. After their arrival they decided that officials from the Department of Education and the School Board would not attend the meeting. It was then decided that Clarence Brown, Gregory Roberts and the Board Chair attend the meeting.

Terry Brown said he led off for the Board's side and explained to the Ministers why the Board had chosen Holy Cross School to upgrade. He said the thrust of his argument was based on the fact that St. Alban's is the center of population in that area. He said even more revealing is the projected kindergarten enrollment for 2006-2007 whereby 57 children will come from St. Alban's and 39 from all the other communities in the area. Further, the Board would have to bus 139 fewer students to Holy Cross School than to Greenwood Academy.

The Board Chair advised that the Minister of Education was not swayed by his arguments. He asked Minister Langdon if he had any money to contribute to the project but his answer was a very firm no.

Gregory Roberts, the Board Treasurer, explained to the Ministers the significance of the savings on bussing. Clarence Brown proposed the idea of completing the work in phases but the Minister of Education was not interested in that approach.

Chair Brown said that by the end of the meeting the message had been repeated loud and clear: there was no more money and that the program could be delivered at Greenwood Academy, Milltown.

The Chair said the Board chose Holy Cross School to upgrade because it is located at the center of the population and the Board felt that Government could be persuaded to give sufficient funds to do the work. However, government was not persuaded. They told the Board in no uncertain terms that the funds needed to upgrade Holy Cross School would not be forthcoming.

The Chair said that the status quo in Bay d'Espoir is not acceptable because a K-12 education for children there can best be delivered in a single school building. He said school boards have to make decisions based not just on ideas, but also on available resources. He urged the Board, for the sake of the children's education, to revisit its previous decision.

Clarence Brown said that although it was argued a number of times that money would be saved on bussing by renovating Holy Cross School, the Minister did not change her mind. Mr. Brown said the Minister of Education has no personal knowledge of the schools. He said she did, however, say she was willing to give an extra two to three hundred thousand

dollars to renovate Greenwood Academy.

Terry Brown read a letter from the Minister of Education dated May 21, 2002, in response to Mr. Brown's letter of May 14, advising that the maximum amount of money that the government is prepared to allocate for the upgrading of a facility in Bay d'Espoir to serve the K-12 population there is the \$1 million which has been committed by the Department of Education.

David Morrow said the Minister of Education is correct in stating that the program can be delivered at Greenwood Academy. He said it doesn't appear that any more money will be made available for a new school or to renovate Holy Cross School. He said the Board would not be doing the students any favour by sitting around fighting for more money. He reiterated that the Board has been told what is available and he feels there is nothing more it can do about it.

Randy Edison asked why the Board was discussing this topic. He asked if the Board was planning to rescind the motion made at the last meeting to renovate Holy Cross School.

Sean Power stated that all School Board Trustees should have an opportunity to speak on the issue.

Gail Hoskins asked what would happen from a legal procedure if the Board rescinded the motion. The Director responded that if the motion is rescinded, another motion would be required and a new public consultation process would have to be initiated.

Mabrey Winsor made a motion and Carolyn Andrews seconded it to rescind the April 23, 2002, intention motion 94-01/02 to renovate Holy Cross School and close Greenwood Academy. (This motion needed a two-thirds majority vote.) Discussion continued.

Carolyn Andrews said the quality of education could be sustained in either building. Students can access other buildings should the need arise. She said Greenwood Academy is the better building and can be renovated at one-half the price required to renovate Holy Cross School and the government is willing to give the money to renovate Greenwood.

Mabrey Winsor said the Board has been at this issue for years and agreed with Ms. Andrews that Greenwood is the better school and added that the Board should accept the \$1 million and renovate the school in Milltown.

Raymond Gray said he agrees with Carolyn Andrews and David Morrow in that Greenwood Academy is the better school.

Frank Norman asked if the Board rescinded the previous motion, would it have to enter into another review process. He was advised that legal counsel says that public consultations have to be held on the school being closed.

Sean Power said he believes Holy Cross School is the one to renovate but he is willing to rescind the previous motion.

Robert Elliott said he will not support a motion to rescind. He reiterated that Minister Langdon did say he would support whatever decision the Board makes. He said he would not let Oliver Langdon or Judy Foote push him into a decision he does not believe would be in the best interest of the students. He said he is willing to prolong the decision a little longer and still feels the Board should continue to fight for extra money no matter how long it takes.

Clarence Brown said he would vote against a motion to rescind the earlier motion stating that he is not in favour of bussing students from St. Alban's to Milltown.

Gail Hoskins said this is a difficult process for her. She felt that the motion made in April was in the best interest of education for the students and that she would not support a motion to rescind.

Robert Elliott asked the trustees to vote against rescinding the earlier motion. He said the Premier of the Province knows the facts, however, he is out of the province and has not had a chance to respond to the issue.

Carolyn Andrews said she regrets people thinking that the former board trustees on the Board want to get this issue over with. She said all board trustees, not just the newly elected/appointed ones are thinking about the education of the students.

Sean Power asked how many times does the Board have to be told by the Minister of Education that there is no more money. He said he doesn't expect the Premier to override the Minister's decision.

David Morrow said he understands the Board's concerns and it feels wrong to be told by someone else how to make a decision. However, he said it was time to get on with the issue and make a decision for the sake of the students in Bay d'Espoir.

Clarence Brown said he had spoken to the Premier and the Premier had committed verbally to take this issue back to the Minister of Education.

Robert Elliott said his decision is a personal one and was not suggesting that others were not committed to their decisions. Some discussion ensued regarding whether or not there should be a secret vote.

It was moved that there be a secret vote to rescind motion 94-01/02. (Roberts/Andrews) Defeated (6-6) The Chair did not vote.

Albert Hodder said he was not knowledgeable on the topic and was not ready to vote. He abstained from the above motion.

Mabrey Winsor and Carolyn Andrews agreed to withdraw their earlier motion to rescind motion 94-01/02.

Following public hearings on June 11, 2002, the Board will debate the motion of intention (94-01/02) and make a final decision on that motion on June 18, 2002.

6.4. Smoking Policy

It was agreed at the last Board meeting that the Board undertake a review to develop a new smoking policy. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), circulated a memo to schools and school councils regarding such a review and is waiting for responses. A draft policy will be brought back to the Board from the Finance and Properties Committee.

6.5. Harbour Breton Trustee

The Director said she spoke to the principals from the area and asked them to put the word around that they need a school board trustee. It is expected that someone may volunteer from Seal Cove.

6.6. NLSBA AGM

Resolutions to NLSBA will be discussed at the June 18 meeting of the School Board. It was suggested that trustees bring Andy Butt's report to the June meeting. Carolyn Andrews, Sean Power, Clarence Brown and the Board Chair will attend the AGM of NLSBA.

6.7. CSBA Conference July 4-6

Randy Edison, Carolyn Andrews, Terry Brown and Sean Power will attend the CSBA Conference in St. John's on July 4-6, 2002.

6.8. Helen Tulk Noontime Bussing

Further to the last Board meeting, a letter was written to Sandra Sutton of the Parent Bussing Committee at Helen Tulk Elementary School, Bishop's Falls, advising them that the user-pay service they now use to provide lunch hour bussing may continue under the same conditions as those at present. The School Council has since written asking that the Board reconsider its decision. However, the Board agreed that it would stay with its original decision as listed in the letter to the Bussing Committee.

7. Reports

7.1. Director's Report

The Director's Report dated May 21, 2002, was circulated to Board trustees.

On motion it was agreed to approve the staffing appointments listed in the Director's Report dated May 21, 2002. (Power/Mayne) Carried.

117-01/02

On motion it was agreed to approve the leaves as listed in the Director's Report dated May 21, 2002. (Morrow/Gray)

Carried.

118-01/02

On motion it was agreed to approve the resignations as listed in the Director's report dated May 21, 2002. (Winsor/Andrews)

Carried.

01/02

119-

7.2. Executive Report

Clarence Brown is continuing his work on the by-laws. He said the copies attached to the Executive Minutes of May 13 show suggested changes from those of October 23, 2000. The Executive had agreed that the by-laws would be compiled in compliance with the Schools Act.

Randy Edison suggested that keeping presentations at Board meetings to ten minutes be included in the by-laws.

On motion the Board accepted the Executive Proceedings of May 13. (Gray/Andrews) Carried.

120-01/02

On motion the Board accepted the Executive Proceedings of April 26. (Winsor/Power) Carried.

121-01/02

7.3. Financial Report

A copy of the Board's Financial Statements to April 30, 2002, was circulated to Board trustees. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), stated that at the moment it is expected that the Board may have a surplus of \$122,100 at the end of the current fiscal year.

On motion the Financial Statements of the Board to April 30, 2002, were accepted. (Roberts/Morrow) Carried.

122-01/02

7.4. Finance & Properties Report

There was no Finance and Properties meeting since the last School Board meeting. Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said the Board is still waiting for approval of money for roofing, windows, etc. He said the School Board Office on St. Catherine Street, Grand Falls-Windsor, and La Rochelle Academy properties in Brent's Cove are still outstanding issues and will be dealt with when new information becomes available.

7.5. Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee had not met since the last School Board meeting.

7.6. Programming Report

The Programming Committee met since the last Board meeting but due to the fact that the secretary had been sick, the proceedings were not available for this meeting.

7.7. CRSC Report

Neither the Director nor the Board's representative could attend the last meeting of the CRSC.

7.7.1. Speech-Language Pathology

Copies of correspondence between the CRSC and the Minister of Education regarding speech-language pathology services in the region were circulated for information purposes.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Bussing Changes in the White Bay Zone

The Assistant Director (Finance & Administration) circulated proposed bussing changes on the Baie Verte Peninsula. Mr. Hillier said the changes were only proposed and further studies need to be completed before the changes could be made final. He said the District had to notify employees of the proposed changes to meet the required May 7 deadline to terminate employment. Clarence Brown suggested meeting with small groups of parents on the Peninsula to get their reactions and suggestions.

9. Correspondence

There was no correspondence needing action at this meeting

10. Outstanding Business

10.1. Home Schooling Policy (pg. 4, 00/01)

10.2. Sale of Board Office (pg. 23)

10.3. By-Laws

10.4. Renaming Schools (pg. 22, 00/01)

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

10.6. Renovations at Windsor Academy (pg. 42)

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next Regular School Board meeting will be held on June 18 at the School Board Office in Grand Falls-Windsor.

12. Motion to Adjourn

On a motion by Sean Power and Sharon Mayne the meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

