

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Regular Session Minutes – September 14, 2021

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Vice Chair Catherine Giusti, Ryan Callahan, William Day, Gary Liguori, Craig Louzon, Lisa Macaruso, Linda McAllister and David Stall. Absent: George Abbott, Donna Chambers and Sheila Grover.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien, NEA ESP President Thomas Pirnie and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

I. Meeting Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

Chair Linda Lyall called the meeting of the Chariho School Committee, held in the Chariho High School Library, to order at 6:30 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silent meditation.

II. Motion/Vote to go into Executive Session

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and Catherine Giusti and it was VOTED: That the School Committee go into executive session and close the meeting to the public under the authority of R.I. General laws Section 42-46-5(a)2) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to litigation (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of August 10, 2021 - Litigation Update – Robinson Green Beretta); under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of August 10, 2021 - Approval of Emergency Operations Plans; and 2. Approval of Emergency Operations Plans); and under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(8) for the purpose of reviewing and/or approving matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of August 10, 2021 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests; 2. Approval of Home Instruction Requests; and 3. Rescinding of Home Instruction Approvals); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous.

III. Reconvene Open Session/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

The Committee returned to open session at 7:06 PM and Chair Lyall reconvened the meeting at 7:07 PM. She asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent meditation. She then thanked everyone for wearing masks and noted that masks cannot be taken off at all, even to speak.

IV. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices (Emergency Operations Plans) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: That minutes pertaining to the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices (Emergency Operations Plans) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes which relate to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: That minutes which relate to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

3. Superintendent Picard recommend that minutes which relate to the privacy of students and their records (Rescinding of Home Instruction Approvals) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: That minutes which relate to the privacy of students and their records (Rescinding of Home Instruction Approvals) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Giusti disclosed that voting in favor to approve the executive session minutes of August 10, 2021 – Litigation Update (Robinson Green Beretta) were Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister and Stall with Macaruso abstaining.

The next in favor of approving the executive session minutes of August 10, 2021 – Approval of Emergency Operations Plan were Callahan, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister and Stall with Day and Macaruso abstaining.

All were in favor to table approval of the Emergency Operations Plans with Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall voting.

Voting in favor of the executive session minutes of August 10, 2021 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests were Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall.

Next, those voting in favor of the approval of Home Instruction Requests were Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall.

Voting in favor of rescinding Home Instruction Approvals were Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall.

Finally, all were in favor of returning to open session with Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister and Stall voting.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated:

1. Postseason Awards: High School Baseball – Liam Goldstein (All Division - Golden Glove); Liam Flynn (All Division – Catcher); Austin DeAngelis (All Division – Center Field).
2. High School Sophomore Weeko Thompson's brick stitch beadwork is on display at the Warwick Center for the Arts in the juried Native American Art Exhibit entitled "Resilience".
3. Jeanine Mankoff, Chariho's 2021 Educator of the Year. Superintendent Picard read the glowing nomination remarks from Principal Joe Gencarelli.
4. Danielle Scuncio, Chariho's 2021 Education Support Professional of the Year. Shared with the Committee was the nomination remarks from Principal Greg Zenion.
5. Distinguished Educators: Kelly Vocatura, Emily Iredale, Dr. Lisa Smith, Danielle Bruneau, Wendy Gillam, Diane Ballata, Sharon Jaruta, Dana Palmisciano. Sharon Jaruta was in attendance and congratulated by all.

VII. Public Forum

Kedrick Swain from Ashaway felt that previous requests for agenda items brought by Committee Members should be brought to satisfaction. The Committee is non-compliant. They are elected and bound by the Powers and Duties of School Committees and he referenced the Code of Basic Management Principles and Ethical Standards for School Committee Members (Accept and encourage a variety of opinions from and communication with all parts of the community). First

and foremost is the educational welfare of all students. We elected you; why do you ignore parents. You ignored my email and did not respond. What you are trying to achieve and lack of response does not increase his confidence. Home school numbers have increased; what about those in school – will there be a lack of funding because of home schooling? Committee members are supposed to do six hours of professional development annually. He is going on record that he would like a response to that email. Caleb Grant from Hope Valley thanked all on the Committee for their work. He put in a plug for those outside of the meeting to talk to the Committee. Get their perspective. It is hurtful to him the misunderstandings of the Youth Task Force and the Anti-Racism Task Force. He feels the community is better because of these organizations. There are people who want these taken down. He doesn't want people to think that their values are not as important but we need to compromise. We all care so much about all children in this community and he would like people to approach the School Committee. Thank you. Chair Lyall thanked both gentlemen for their comments.

VIII. Business

A. Perkins Grant – Superintendent Picard recommended approval to submit the Perkins Grant. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan, to approve submission of the Perkins Grant. David noted that he did not understand the background to this but he had a good conversation with Mr. Auth and he wanted to say how much he appreciated it.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To approve submission of the Perkins Grant. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Commitment of FY21 Funds – Superintendent Picard recommended that the Committee commit, retroactively to June 30, 2021, the funds noted on the memo from Ned Draper dated September 3, 2021.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To commit, retroactively to June 30, 2021, the funds noted on the memo from Ned Draper dated September 3, 2021. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Back to School Plan Update – Superintendent Picard provided an update to her plan. All schools began on September 2nd with the exception of Richmond due to flooding. They began on September 3rd. She thanked the team for their quick response and getting the school ready so quickly. She received a letter from RIDE and RIDOH. There are ESSER requirements in order to access funds. Her plan very much mirrored last year's plan and there were lots of communities that have followed our plan. We have hepa filters in every classroom. They last for 3,000 hours before needing to be changed but we ran them for 2,200 hours and changed them. Athletics is back full swing. She appreciates everyone's patience with transportation; we are better off than most districts. She is still informing families about COVID and contact tracing and we are one of the few that is doing that. Charlestown should be up and running soon with their COVID testing. David noted there is a lot of carryover and doing things the same as last year but there were a lot of things people didn't like about last year's plan. He doesn't want people to think that everyone was happy; we need to be careful not to portray this. The drop-off and pick-up at campus and Ashaway School are messy. Why is it worse this year? There are long lines and traffic jams. Superintendent Picard replied that the campus was built for bus transportation but more parents are driving. They are lining up at 1:30 PM at the Middle School yet school is not dismissed until 2:45 PM. This is backing up everyone, including buses trying to get on campus. She is working with Chief Johnson and administration but it is inevitable; there is congestion at every school. Look at URI. Ned added that we had about 75% attendance last year and we implored the community to help us with transportation because of the limit on the buses. We are checking buses now and if a student hasn't ridden for ten days, he/she is being removed. We did have this same issue last year and we are hoping it will get better. David questioned if they should go the other way and ask parents to put kids back on buses to which Gina responded that we have asked

but many prefer to drive because of COVID rates which are high. Chair Lyall requested an update at the next meeting and hopefully we will see improvement.

D. Review of School Committee Subcommittees – Chair Lyall noted that this is an opportunity for the Committee to review the subcommittees for the new school year. She asked if anyone wanted to be removed or added to a subcommittee. It seems that everyone has a fair amount of representation. Gary stated that he would be happy to join the Health and Wellness Subcommittee.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was
VOTED: To appoint Gary Liguori to the Health and Wellness Subcommittee. In favor: Unanimous.

Bill noted that the Threat Assessment Team needs to be updated with Michael Comella's name added and Jane Daly's removed. Chair Lyall thanked Bill for noticing this. There were no other changes made.

IX. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Lyall requested items to be pulled. Craig pulled A-1, A-2 and H-2.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To move the remainder of the Consent Agenda Items. In favor: Unanimous.

- B. Transfers – Approved.
- C. Bill Review – Accepted.
- D. Budget Summary - As per enclosed.
- E. Balance Sheet – As per enclosed.
- F. Personnel Actions – Staff Updates included in FYI.
- G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quotes – None at this time.
- H. Permission to Award Contracts – Awarded the following:
 - 1. High School Roof Top HVAC Unit Replacement to Trane for a cost of \$28,980.
- I. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.
- J. Grants – None at this time.
- K. Donations – None at this time.

A-1. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of August 10, 2021 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of July 13, 2021 (minutes not sealed). In favor: Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister and Stall. Abstained (due to absence): Macaruso. The motion carried by a vote of 8 in favor with 1 abstention

A-2. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To approve the Regular Session Minutes of August 10, 2021. In favor: Callahan, Day, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, McAllister and Stall. Abstained (due to absence): Macaruso. The motion passed by a vote of 8 in favor with 1 abstention.

H-2. Custodial Services for FY22 - Craig questioned if we were really down six positions with no interest whatsoever from people looking for work to which Gina replied yes. We have lots of overtime available to the staff that is working as everything is up and running. Some staff are out for medical reasons so it is very difficult to get people to work. We have the same issue with teacher assistants. They have met with Tom Pirnie to discuss this. Craig noted this is the first time he has ever seen something like this; it is a regional issue to which Ned responded that it is a national problem. Craig noted that he realizes the northern part of the State pays more to which Gina agreed that the probationary rate of pay is very low.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To award the Custodial Services for FY22 to Precision HR Solutions (PHRS) to provide custodial services on an as needed basis for the flat hourly rate of \$25.75 – no Chariho benefits (which is lower than the RI MPA vendor SJ Services of \$26.30 per hour). In favor: Unanimous.

X. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports – None at this time.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Enrollment Update – The Superintendent noted that we have space in all classrooms with Charlestown Kindergarten currently at 66. There are no overages at this time.

C. Coming Events were highlighted.

XI. School Committee Requests for Future Agenda Items or Legal Opinions

David stated that he emailed a request to the Superintendent to pass to the Clerk after the meeting. He would like a report on home school numbers; numbers opting for home school this year, with a comparison over the past three years. He would also like to know the lost dollar amount. He would like to again request that the previous-requested agenda items be reconsidered as well.

XII. Adjournment

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To adjourn at 7:41 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk