

Petersham School Committee
Minutes – July 22, 2013

In Attendance: Chuck Berube, Russell Fontaine, Lynn Peredina, Chris Dodge, Ann Degnan and Paul Koulouris

Not In Attendance: Pat Martin and Tari Thomas

Meeting was called to order by Chuck at 5:56 p.m. Chuck then welcomed new Principal Chris Dodge to the meeting.

May 14th Minutes – Were accepted with the changes previously made and voted on. Russell Fontaine made the motion to accept the minutes with changes with a 2nd by Lynn Peredina and motion passed with All In Favor.

June 26th Minutes – Motion to accept the minutes as read by Lynn with a 2nd by Chuck. Motion passed with All In favor.

2013-2014 Budget – Principal Dodge explained to the Committee that the budget was all set to go with the appropriation voted on by the town of \$1,218,660.00 and that Ann had met with Stacey from Mahar and the budget was now in the new program.

2012-2013 Budget – Principal Dodge explained that the budget was being worked on in the new program, Budget Sense, and that there will be a zero balance on the General Budget after all expenses were accounted for. Chuck asked what the actual amount of carryover from the 2012-2013 School Choice money would be. Ann advised that she would get this figure to Chris. Chuck also asked for the figure of what would be spent for special education on school choice vs. what we would get for reimbursement. Visitor Paul Koulouris explained that there might be some confidentiality involved in the questions of money spent for school choice special education students vs. what we receive. Russell stated that he felt that the only answer that the Committee should be giving is a yes or no to the questions regarding spent money vs. reimbursed money for school choice special education costs.

New Business: Questions raised at town meeting – Chuck wanted to evaluate what the questions were and how to answer them. One of the questions was spending more on special needs expenses than what was received. Another question was where are demographics for Petersham going? Last question being - are the current way of doing things with School Choice the viable and proper way of doing things?

Chuck mentioned the Quabbin District and the demographics that they just had done. Russell said that he thought that the demographics was done for the Town of Hardwick only and specific to that town. Chuck asked what options might exist in combining classes. Visitor Paul Koulouris asked if there was discussion regarding a Study Committee and if so

when would that happen. Is it still an option? Principal Dodge told the Committee that he was aware of the concerns in the Town and that he wanted to work with all for the betterment of all the children at Petersham Center School.

Computer Issues – Chuck stated that teachers have told him that they are bringing their own laptop computers in to use in the classrooms because the ones in the building are not working. Chuck asked why money was not placed on the budget for these computers and noted that this was a surprise to hear. Principal Dodge reported to the Committee that after speaking with Kate Arsenault, Tech Specialist at PCS, that there are 45 student computers in use (laptops as well as desktops) and that all the laptops that the teachers have are in working condition. It was noted that teachers choose to bring their own laptops in to their classrooms. Chris went on to explain that there are also four interactive boards already in use in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 and that a portable whiteboard and projector have been ordered for the upcoming year. Fifth and Sixth grade students have laptops for their use and 4 are being replaced this year, with those four being placed in the computer lab. Chris went on to explain that there are two document cameras being purchased for the upcoming year – one for lower grades and one for upper grades. Kate and Chris are meeting in August with the Broadband Commission for an upgrade and that this has been placed in the upcoming budget.

Motion made by Chuck Berube to adjourn at 6:37 p.m. with 2nd from Russell. Motion passes with All In Favor.