

Petersham School Committee  
Minutes – May 14, 2013

In Attendance: Chuck Berube, Russell Fontaine, Lynn Peredina, Tari Thomas, Patricia Martin, Rebecca Phillips, Ann Degnan

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Berube.

Motion made by Russell Fontaine to accept the April 11<sup>th</sup> minutes with a second by Lynn Peredina. Motion passed with an All in Favor.

Old Business: 2013-2014 Budget – Chuck explained to the Committee that a lot of time was spent with Tari in her office and that there were still some questions regarding the changes that the Finance Committee asked about, specifically the incoming school choice money. What we have vs. what the state has for an amount.

Changes that were made to the budget were discussed. Some of which were the deduction from 3% staff raise to 2.75%; the removal of the \$10,000.00 for the after school program; the reduction of \$8,000.00 for the custodial cost share with Mahar; error in the custodial salary line; health insurance costs. Chuck explained that the town appropriation was good with only a 2.6% increase but that would change due to the custodial salary mistake. This error increased the **appropriation** to 3.3% overall.

Chuck told the Committee that the Finance Committee is saying that the State is saying that the Cherry sheet number for school choice is \$386,000.00. Tari explained that that was last year's school choice money. Tari explained that \$350,000 was a good number to go by for incoming school choice money. Chuck stated that he thought that if additional money was incoming that it should go to the reserve and not be spent on anything. Discussion regarding the cherry sheet numbers not being reliable and making it hard to work with took place. Chuck asked if the \$350,000 was a comfortable number for the School Committee to work with or do we need to be careful with this number.

Patricia Martin explained that the \$350,000 was an actual figure and that the information to the Finance Committee should be that there is \$10,000 being placed in a reserve account for extraordinary circumstances.

Motion to accept \$1,218,660 for the 2013-2014 town appropriation for the Petersham Center School budget was made by Chuck Berube. The motion was seconded by Russell Fontaine and passed with an All in favor.

Collective Bargaining Agreement with Teachers on Education Evaluation: Pat Martin explained to the committee that the meeting did not take place due to Wendie LeBlanc being out sick and no business was conducted.

School Calendar: Tari Thomas passed out the school calendar for the consolidated district with the explanation that the ½ day professional development days were not yet in the calendar. The calendar was voted on by R.C. Mahar and Orange Elementary Schools. Lynn Peredina questioned why school starts before Labor Day and Tari explained that this was a good way to get more academic days in before actual MCAS testing. Russell Fontaine made a motion to accept the 2013-2014 Petersham School Calendar with a second from Lynn and motion passing with an All in Favor.

More discussion followed regarding level of expense vs. reimbursement from the school choice program. Much work needs to be done and to go backwards from here would be very time consuming, but from now on there would be accountability for that. Tari explained to the committee that changes regarding special needs happen on a daily basis and that it would make it difficult to answer to the extent that Marianne asked. Some examples being hours that were spent with specialists, and IEP anniversaries always changing. She then passed out a sheet which showed some cost analysis regarding special needs and the reimbursements for these items.

Milk Bids: Tari Thomas explained to the Committee that there were three responses for the milk bids for Petersham Center School. The lowest bidder was Maines Paper and Foods. Russell Fontaine made a motion to accept Maines Paper & Foods as the 2013-2104 milk provided for the Petersham Center School, with a second from Lynn and the motion passed with All in Favor.

Letter from Athol Agricultural Commission: Tari passed out a letter from the Athol Agricultural Commission which formally invited the members to join a forum that was being held on Wednesday, May 22, 2013. There would be a presentation regarding a grant which would connect farms with schools to provide them with quality local foods for students. Lynn Peredina stated that she would be interested in attending the forum.

Superintendent's Report: Tari Thomas informed the members that there would be a coffee at the school to welcome Chris Dodge as the new Principal of the Petersham Center School. She told the Committee that Rebecca has been meeting Chris to provide him with information regarding the school in little increments in order to give him time to get acclimated. She explained that Chris would be working on an entry plan with Safety, communication, and connections with family and community being the top three priorities.

Tari told the Committee that the PCS staff joined Mahar and Orange staff on a Professional Development Day (In-service) on Safety and Lockdown Procedures. This was followed up by a drill on the following Friday. The police were very impressed with the way PCS conducted their drill and told the Principal that they placed in the top three schools by doing the drill in under 30 seconds.

Correspondence from R.C. Mahar was given to the Committee inviting them to graduation at Mahar on May 31, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Next School Committee meeting items: Collective Bargaining on Teach Evaluation and Union Contract.

Next meeting date: June 26, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Motion made by Russell Fontaine to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. with a second from Lynn and passed with an All in Favor.