

**NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2006 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE NCUHS LIBRARY**

**Board Members Present:** Arne Amalixsen (Chair), Steve Brochu, Richard Cartee, Joe Gregersen, Harold Morse, Peter Moskovites, James Privee, June Rosenberg

**Board Members Absent:** Ken Canning (Lowell), Todd Durkee (Newport City), Rick Geisel (Derby), Rose Mary Mayhew (Troy), David Merrill (Holland), Muriel O'Gorman (Brighton)

**Administrators:** Bob Fitts, Thomas Pound, Brent Hilliard, Rod Weston

**Media:** NEK-TV; Chris Roy: The Newport Daily Express; Robin Smith: The Caledonian-Record; Joseph Gresser: The Chronicle

**Student Council:** none

**Faculty Forum:** Helen Poulin

**Guests:** Rick Isabelle, others

A. Amalixsen, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He asked for approve of the minutes of September 19, 2006. **S. Brochu moved the minutes of September 19<sup>th</sup> be approved as submitted, seconded by R. Cartee. J. Rosenberg stated she voted in favor of hiring the NCCC Assistant Director; that it was J. Privee who voted against the motion; J. Privee agreed. The minutes were unanimously approved as corrected (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

**Superintendent's Report, Dr. Rod Weston**

Dr. Weston stated he would field questions as they came up.

**Administrative Reports**

**Associate Principal, Thomas Pound**

**Maniatty Week**

Mr. Pound distributed information to the board concerning activities being held during Maniatty Week; noting it began last Friday and today was Crazy Hat/Crazy Hair Day. He noted he had difficulty not telling students to remove their hats.

**VPA Member to Member Agreement**

Mr. Pound noted the agreement between NCUHS and Lake Region allowing girls to play together on the ice hockey team had happened last year and asked the board for permission for it to happen again this year. **J. Rosenberg moved the board permit the LRUHS athletes to play on the NCUHS girl's ice hockey team, seconded by R. Cartee.** S. Brochu asked if any of the NCUHS students would be left out; Mr. Pound stated he honestly didn't know; S. Brochu stated the board approved it last year due to the numbers on the team. **J. Rosenberg agreed to amend her motion to include giving the NCUHS students priority unless there was a student who played last year on the team, allowing the LRUHS girls to fill vacancies on the NCUHS girl's ice hockey**

**team. R. Cartee stated he agreed with the amendment. The motion and amendment passed unanimously (J. Rosenberg/R. Cartee).**

Mr. Pound stated he would make certain that LRUHS knows it is conditional upon the board's motion.

**Career Center Director, Bob Fitts**  
**Computer Gaming Club**

Mr. Fitts reported that 2 NCCC teachers: Stuart Cornell and John Wagner proposed having an after school computer gaming club; holding it a couple of nights a week. He noted according to Policy: F. 14 Student Clubs & Activities (Secondary) they had answered 5 of the conditions required; adding the 6<sup>th</sup> condition was the recommendation of the superintendent.

Dr. Weston noted this was not an easy decision for the board; noting they had dealt with this issue once before. He stated on one hand computer simulations are at the cutting edge of technology; that at the core of the educational opportunities provided these should be some of them; noting that on the other hand there were some games that are prone to violence and certainly not the things that every parent wants their child involved in. Dr. Weston noted there were pro's and con's with everything; noting they could not protect their children all the time. Dr. Weston stated when they create these simulations it was not reality; and not always healthy stuff for children. He noted the person involved in the Montreal school shooting was involved with dark side activities and not involved with other persons. He also noted these 2 teachers proposing this activity could guide students and be positive role models. He stated it was with his guarded recommendation that the board allow this to go forward; noting he was stating that this is some of the best things computers can provide; that a pre-requisite to participation not just be parents signing off; but the sponsors having a meeting with the parents to discuss the benefits and down sides of it; then having the parents signing off on it.

**R. Cartee moved the board authorize John Wagner and Stuart Cornell to form, run and supervise an after school computer gaming club, seconded by H. Morse.**

Dr. Weston noted that S. Brochu asked if this was related to the curriculum; noting the ability to create a simulated activity was central to what they were trying to do in technology; that this was the top level of doing that, but they would not give up reading and writing for this. Mr. Fitts noted this program would be held all year, one or two afternoons a week. **After discussion a vote was held: the motion passed unanimously (R. Cartee/H. Morse).**

**State Aid for School Construction**

Mr. Fitts reported there was a new formula created by the DOE for state aid for school construction; noting instead of the NCCC getting \$12.4 million; they would be getting 14.4; which would be a decrease to the taxpayers, as they would only have to repay 4.4 million instead of the original \$6.4 million. He noted t his was good news.

**Construction Aid Application**

Mr. Fitts noted the construction aid application needed to be signed by the board chair, the superintendent and any board members present, who cared to sign it as well. He also

noted the email was included in the board packet. Mr. Fitts stated there were a couple of things that needed to be included in the board minutes. Mr. Fitts noted he included, in the board packet, an email from Kathy Hilgendorf that he was copied to; noting she asked that him to make sure a couple of things were included in the minutes.

Mr. Fitts requested that the board acknowledge that they would have to have a HVAC commissioning done once the project was complete; adding a separate contractor would be asked to come in to check all HVAC systems.

**R. Cartee acknowledged the board would be required to have an HVAC Commissioning done once the project is completed. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/H Morse).**

### **Alternative Bidding Process**

Mr. Fitts noted that the state had approved an alternative bidding process for school and technical center construction; adding the information had been included in the board packet. He reviewed the memo, received from Robert Rea, Director of Construction, with the board. Mr. Fitts noted Ms. Hilgendorf's recommendation was that all bids be verified by the construction manager to be sure they are complete; that at least one representative from the DOE, Department of Buildings and General Services, a member of the school board, or the architect be included when bids were opened. A. Amalixsen reported he attended the opening of the most recent bids; stating the process went well and he was very impressed with their work.

Mr. Fitts reported there were some bids opened last week for the start of work at the Land Lab property; noting this process will also help speed up that process. **J. Rosenberg moved the board accept the alternative bidding procedure as recommended by Kathy Hilgendorf, of the DOE. The motion was unanimously approved (J. Rosenberg/R. Cartee).**

Mr. Fitts distributed information regarding the reviewed the bids received, and reviewed them with the board. He reported that for the site work project bids were received from: Omer Choquette Trucking for \$313,900; JP Sicard, Inc. for \$522,625; and Roger Gosselin, Inc. for \$454,690. Mr. Fitts reported the low bid went to Omer Choquette Trucking for \$313,900.

Mr. Fitts reported bids received for the well construction were received from HA Manosh Corporation for \$17,843; Chevalier Drilling Co., Inc. for \$19,517; and from Roger Gosselin, Inc. for \$19,448. Mr. Fitts reported the low bid went to HA Manosh Corp. Mr. Fitts reported on the bidding for the concrete work: Walker Construction, Inc. at \$211,903; Roger Gosselin, Inc. at \$194,367; and Harrison Concrete Construction did not submit a bid. Mr. Fitts reported the low bid was awarded to Roger Gosselin, Inc.

Mr. Fitts reported on the bids for structural steel: CCS Constructors LLC at \$291,500; Reliance Steel, Inc. at \$302,700; Breton Steel Corp. at \$277,900; Jeffords Steel & Engineering at \$287,508; Trimax Steel at \$292,286; and Mandate Erectors at \$322,700. Mr. Fitts reported the low bid was awarded to Breton Steel Corporation.

Mr. Fitts reported work would not be started until they had a completed construction aid application with the state; that they would then get written permission from the project manager; adding it was just a matter of the paperwork being completed. R. Cartee asked if the figures were within the budgeted amount and Mr. Fitts stated that some figures were lower and some higher; noting they were not to the bottom of the line yet. R. Cartee stated it was good to see that some local people were getting business from this project.

### **Land Lab Deed**

Mr. Fitts referred to paperwork included in the board packet; noting that part of the construction aid application required they have proof of ownership of the land. He noted that Attorney Davies did a search of the property; that the property consisting of 33.86 acres was deeded to the NCUHS District #22; that there was a piece of adjoining property at the Land Lab, which consists of 30 acres, which had been deeded to the NCUHS Chapter of FFA; that he had been advised by Attorney Davies that FFA of NCUHS was not a legal entity and that NCUHS should get the deed.

Mr. Fitts noted the board needed to make a motion to get the deed for the 30 acres transferred from FFA to the NCUHS District. **R. Cartee moved the board direct Mr. Fitts to make arrangements to get the deed transferred from FFA to NCUHS District #22, seconded by J. Rosenberg.** The board discussed their options of getting this done, and then a vote was held. **The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/J. Rosenberg).**

### **Faculty & Student Representatives**

A. Amalixsen noted that Jason Benn was not present tonight as he was filming a student activity. A. Amalixsen noted that Helen Poulin, Spanish teacher, was present as the faculty representative; and asked the board to introduce themselves to her.

### **Comments from Guests**

There were none.

### **Finance/Operation's Committee**

R. Cartee noted tomorrow night's meeting would be their first to start the budget process; adding he hoped to have Mr. Rivard and Dr. Weston report on their findings. Dr. Weston noted that Mr. Rivard is out of state attending a conference and he, also, would not be present, but would have a written report for the committee.

### **Bus Garage**

S. Brochu reported the deal with the Sloan property for the bus garage had fallen through; that the process for a replacement had begun; adding they would discuss this issue at their meeting tomorrow night.

**S. Brochu moved the board approve the minutes of September 27<sup>th</sup>. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/H. Morse).**

### **04/05 Audit**

R. Cartee reported they had received the audit; that it showed the academic wing after the previous year's adjustments and starting the 03/04 year with a \$70,000 deficit ending the 04/08/5 year with a \$125,000 deficit; that NCUJHS had a \$10,000 surplus; and NCCC

showed a \$103,000 surplus. A. Amalixsen noted they would be starting the 05/06 audit next month. R. Cartee noted if they took the surplus from the NCCC and NCUJHS and deficit from NCUHS they would be about \$22,000 in the hole; adding for District #22 to be just in the hole for that amount they had good management of their dollars. A. Amalixsen stated that now that they have audited numbers that becomes part of the revenue; that if there is a deficit it also has to be taken care of. J. Rosenberg asked what the NCCC was doing with the surplus from that year; R. Cartee noted that \$95,000 of the \$103,000 was warned at Town Meeting. S. Brochu asked Mr. Hilliard what they had agreed to ask the voters to approve; Mr. Hilliard stated they asked for approval for a loan for the bleachers. Mr. Hilliard noted when the bleacher project went forward the cost for financing was for 2 years; for costs not covered in this year's budget they would need to borrow funds. He reviewed the proposal from Lyndonville Savings Bank with the board and asked for approval of their proposal. **S. Brochu moved the board approve the Municipal Equipment Loan from Lyndonville Savings Bank at %50,167.86. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/H. Morse).**

S. Brochu stated the last thing they were going to ask for from the voters in March was carrying over the bus fund and the funds left from the bleachers.

**S. Brochu moved the board ask the tax payers to apply \$13,399.00 from those funds to apply towards the loan, seconded by R. Cartee.** J. Rosenberg stated she thought this was premature; discussion ensued. **A vote was held: with all voting in favor. The motion carried (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

J. Rosenberg noted a community had arrived; adding the guest thought comments from guests would be later in the meeting as scheduled on the agenda; and asked that he be allowed to speak.

Rick Isabelle, of Derby, reported he was told the high school administration and board were not aware of the proposed Methadone clinic being considered for Union Street; adding he was that that Mr. Rivard told him the board said they would wait to see what the outcome was. He stated, as a parent, he felt it was not appropriate for the board to take a middle of the road approach; noting they represent the people who elected them and expected them to take action. R. Cartee stated the first he, as a board member, heard about this was at a planning meeting last Tuesday night; that as a planning committee they have no authority to take a stance on behalf of the board; but as tax payers they should have been there; but it would have been inappropriate for any board member to represent the view of the board. J. Privee reported he attended as part of the Newport City Zoning Board; that he was there to learn about the clinic as well as observe. J. Gregersen he also attended; and is a full time counselor at the local methadone clinic. P. Moskovites stated Mr. Isabelle was chastising the board for not doing something that no one asked them to do; that he took exception to him giving the board a hard time; adding that someone could have asked the board for an opinion on the issue.

J. Gregersen noted this issue was brought to the City Council a week ago Monday; that they put it off until the forum was held before making a decision. He noted due to the public response the City Council voted to keep things as they are; adding without community support there was no sense in moving ahead.

Mr. Isabelle stated he wanted to make a point to the board; that he went to the administration; that their response was lacking, at best; that he was told basically they would do nothing; that he thought an administrator would have polled the board to see if they should represent the board in a non-committal way; that the information he got was they would have a wait and see attitude. Mr. Isabelle stated what he got as a community member was lacking; that the board should look at information going back to the community. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Dr. Weston stated he had talked to Mr. Rivard about this issue; adding they were in agreement. He noted they had been chastised for issuing a no trespass issue against an adult student, who could not participate in school as a student; adding they do this periodically; and in that case felt they had the responsibility to protect students as the board was suggesting. He noted they probably disagree on this; noting he had seen tonight that in the community this was a real hot button issue; that in terms of the school and protecting students he was sure the methadone clinic was a good thing; but was not sure it would be good to have it too close to a school; adding as administrators they felt it was a community issue, but they do step in if they know about drug dealers. Dr. Weston noted that Mr. Rivard is proactive in terms of protecting students, adding that is really not the administrator's role in being involved in a community issue. He noted the board could always direct the administration to do things; and if the board wanted to take a position on this they could direct them one way or another.

#### **Personnel Committee**

**S. Brochu moved they board accept the minutes of September 19<sup>th</sup> as printed. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

#### **School Committee**

**S. Brochu moved the board approve the minutes of September 21, 2006. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/H. Morse).**

#### **NCUHS Policy F.47: Cell Phones, Beepers and Other Electronic Communications Devices**

J. Gregersen reported the committee was enforcing the rules that were already in place. S. Brochu noted they discussed the policy at the meeting and the committee was in favor of leaving it the way it was written. It was noted incorrect information went into the student handbook; but that a notice correcting this issue would be mailed to all parents/students with the next school mailing.

#### **Community Relations Committee**

A. Amalixsen noted R. Geisel was not present; adding they had not met since the last board meeting.

#### **Negotiation's Committee**

A. Amalixsen reported they had not met since the last board meeting.

#### **Any Other Business**

R. Cartee noted he forgot to mention that the finance/operation's committee had been presented with a partial list of fundraisers, adding the committee recommended the approval of the list as presented to the committee. S. Brochu reported the partial list also

involves a raffle; adding he still doesn't agree with raffles as items donated need board approval. **S. Brochu moved the partial list presented to the finance/operation's committee be accepted by the board, with the qualification that all donations need to be approved by the board. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

**At 8:00 p.m. S. Brochu moved the board recess until 8:15 p.m. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

**At 8:15 p.m. S. Brochu moved the board enter executive session for a student issue. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

**At 8:50 R. Cartee moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/S. Brochu).**

**P. Moskovites moved the board continue the suspension for Student A until released from Tri-County and NKHS; that drug tests be done a minimum of 2 times a week; that all release forms be signed; that Student A must be current on all homework assignments; and that the board would visit this issue again in two weeks. The motion was unanimously approved (P. Moskovites/S. Brochu).**

**There being no further business to discuss the board unanimously agreed to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Rubino  
Recording Secretary