

**December 1, 2011**  
**Minutes of Special Meeting**  
**Harrisville-Wells Memorial School Board**  
**Harrisville-Wells Memorial School, 5:30 p.m.**

**In attendance:** Earl Horn, School Board Chair  
Pam Thayer, School Board Member  
Erik Anderson, School Board Member  
Emily Hartshorne, Principal  
Wayne Woolridge, Co-Superintendent of Schools  
Tim Ruehr, Business Administrator for Towns  
Kathleen Brady, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order: Earl Horn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
  
2. Sullivan Students: Mr. Horn expressed to the board that he thought it prudent to have preliminary discussions regarding Sullivan students and the potential for them to attend Harrisville. Mr. Horn and Ms. Hartshorne met with the Sullivan committee, who had sent Harrisville a list of questions. Mr. Horn distributed these questions, and their answers, out to the board for their review. The questions and meeting that day touched on the following points:
  - Tour of building
  - Before and After School Program
  - Tuition/General Ed/Special Education
  - Curriculum/Foreign Language
  - Transition to Harrisville and then KMS
  - Number of staff
  - Facilities changes that might be needed
  - Concerns to be addressed for collaboration to work
  - Special Education needs and interventions
  - Community reaction
  - Busing issues
  - Extra Curricular activities

Sullivan School is also looking at Nelson as a potential school for their students.

Mr. Ruehr pointed out the Harrisville voters would need to vote on accepting Sullivan students. First step, however, will be for Monadnock voters to allow Sullivan to leave their SAU.

Mr. Horn shared with the board that he feels it would be wise for them to become more aware of what Harrisville voters want. Maybe a non-binding referendum to get the sentiment of the voters on this issue would be in order.

Mr. Horn gave the board a schedule of meetings that Sullivan School board will be holding for their voters. On January 18<sup>th</sup> and January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Sullivan Town Hall there will be a Public Forum. Mr. Horn will check to see if there is flexibility on these dates, Harrisville's next board meeting is the same evening. Board members stated that they would be flexible and could meet before the public forum at 5:00 p.m. in Keene and then move on to Sullivan from that meeting.

On February 4<sup>th</sup> Sullivan School would like to hold an Open House at Harrisville from 11:00 a.m. – 12: 30 p.m.

2. Strategy Session: Mr. Horn stated that he would like the board to be prepared for pressure and motions from the floor. Mr. Horn also shared that he received a letter from a taxpayer stating that he will be bringing options for the board forward.

Mr. Horn felt it appropriate to write a piece that he would like to publish in Common Threads. He thought it important to pose questions, provide information, start a conversation and provide an opportunity for public input. Mr. Horn presented the board an “unofficial” document.

The document touched on the following points:

- Declining enrollment
- Questions to be considered during the budget 2012 – 2013 process include;
  - Does declining enrollment mean reduction in budget? Can quality of education be maintained?
  - How strongly should cost per student be considered in appropriate budget for Harrisville?
  - Closing WMS and tuitioning elementary students to another school, 6<sup>th</sup> graders to KMS?
  - Is the school valued enough as institution and physical facility to warrant staying open even with a high cost per student?
  - Tuitioning Sullivan students to our school, which might potentially be less than cost per student Harrisville pays for its own students?

Members of the board and those present offered suggestions to Mr. Horn for his letter. Ms. Hartshorne suggested inclusion about Affordable Choice in the article.

Mr. Andersen would like to see order or bullets moved around a bit. Mr. Ruehr suggested showing where Harrisville sits tax wise in Cheshire County.

Mr. Horn will rework letter based on the board's input and send to Mr. Woolridge.

Mr. Horn distributed cost comparisons to the board (charts from 2002 through 2012):

- Harrisville cost per student chart
- Elementary budget
- Harrisville/Marlborough Comparison

Mr. Ruehr would like to see tax rate to "cost per student" graph.

Mr. Woolridge feels the board needs to put together a long-range strategic plan (a couple of years out) to present to public.

Mr. Horn will present contents of Common Threads letter to staff on Wednesday, at 8:00 p.m., before it goes to print.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Brady  
Recording Secretary

APPROVED: 12/21/11