

## **KEENE BOARD OF EDUCATION Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** November 10, 2009

**LOCATION:** Keene High School Large Group Instruction Area, 43 Arch Street, Keene, NH

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:30 p.m.

**TIME ADJOURNED:** 9:08 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell, Chair
- Mrs. Carol Brown
- Mrs. Kristin Blais
- Mr. Carter Chamberlin
- Mr. Chris Coates, arrived @ 6:44 p.m.
- Mr. Neil Donegan
- Mr. Carl Panza
- Mr. Donald Parker

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

- Mr. William Gurney, Co-Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. Wayne Woolridge, Co-Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. John Harper, Business Administrator
- Ms. Catherine Reeves, Director of Special Education
- Mr. Paul Cooper, Director of Human Resources

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

- Mrs. Dru Fox, Stenographer
- Ms. Sarah Palermo, Keene Sentinel Reporter
- Mrs. Chris Weeks, Public Information Coordinator
- Members of Public (2)

**Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.**

### **Public Hearing Acceptance of American Recovery/Reinvestment Funds**

Mr. John Harper introduced the purpose of the Public Hearing and explained the availability of unanticipated funds in the amount of \$1,331,534.44 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. He explained how the funding came about. A majority vote is required to accept the funds and the three specific areas that will benefit from the money, Title One, special education, and the homeless. Mr. William Gurney provided a history of the stimulus package and spoke about its goal to stimulate the economy.

Mrs. Jan Barry spoke to the issue of funding in her area and how she perceives the expenditure of the funds. She talked about Title 1 and professional development. She explained the distribution of the funds to individual schools via a rank order of number of students in the Keene Food Services free and reduced lunch program.

Ms. Cathy Reeves then spoke about the federal dollars for special education and explained that much of the ARRA money will be used for professional development opportunities for all levels of staff (tutors, paras, teachers etc.) and for other unanticipated services of occupational and speech therapy. She explained that we cannot supplant the

budget and yet unlike Title 1 she will be able to reapply for funding throughout the two-year period.

Mrs. Carol Brown questioned how the funds would be tracked and Mr. Harper explained that the funds would be transferred in from the general fund into specific Title One, special education and homeless budgets. He said the funds will be kept separate without interaction within the general fund budget and will require very specific reports for the spending of the funds Mrs. Brown then asked about and Mr. Gurney responded that there is an expectation from the federal government to track the benefits of the funding and our plan to use testing mechanisms and other data tracking programs already in place to do so.

Mr. John Harper reminded everyone that the funds are intended to supplement the general fund budget, not supplant it, and that there is the very specific language in the grant to that issue.

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to accept the ARRA fund as unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$1,331,534.44. Mr. Donald Parker seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a vote of 7-0 with Mr. Chris Coates abstaining.*

1. Public Input

None

2. Consent Agenda

a. Agenda Item #3, Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, October 13, 2009

b. Items Recommended by Committee Chairs

1. Waive rental fee for Nelson School – *Bldg. Facilities*
2. Waive rental charges for Keene Swamp Bats – *Bldg. Facilities*
3. Waive rental charges for Keene Babe Ruth Baseball – *Bldg. Facilities*
4. Accept Financial Report – *Finance*
5. Approve 2010-11 Tuition Rates – *Finance*
6. Budget Transfers:
  - a) Approve request from Mr. Remillard to transfer \$40,009 - *Finance*
  - b) Approve request from Mr. Cate to transfer \$5,510 - *Finance*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve all items appearing on the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote of 8-0.*

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting, October 13, 2009

4. Report of Student Representatives

Miss Ashley McCormack reported on; a new program to register for classes being rolled out with implementation next year if successful, online parent communication survey being conducted, first quarter report cards going out, very successful “Grease” production, 5 instrumental students and 6 vocalists being selected for Jazz All State Band and Choir, upcoming performances by Recycled Percussion, upcoming motivational

speaker, Mark Sharenbroich, a very successful United Way campaign and the Aids Memorial Quilt display.

5. Report of Board Chair

Tutor Plan

The current monthly number is 134 and after making concessions for lunch hours the numbers match up to what is reflected on IEP's, which is what we want to see. 134 are actual bodies and not FTE.

Differentiated Learning

Mr. William Gurney attended a recent presentation on gifted and talented programs around the country and reports the study continues at Keene Middle School. With the recently approved budget transfer of \$10,000 the plan is to continue the study of differentiated learning and gifted and talented programs at the middle school. Discussion ensued.

Principal Utilization

Mr. Wayne Woolridge presented information on the recently conducted study of the utilization of principals, which consisted of compiling and studying 20 years of data. The task force narrowed down the study to information pertaining to the districts which best compare with Keene and announced that there will be a presentation to the Education Committee in December with a summary being distributed beforehand. Other topics that came out of the study that Mr. Woolridge touched on were; declining enrollments with same number of principals and staff, the distinct difference between the staffing levels at elementary, KMS and KHS compared to other districts, cost per student issues, and then explained that there should not be any questions outside of the report. Discussion ensued around budget implications after the presentation, financial impact, timing, need for a special meeting, and board and committee input. Consensus is to hold a full board meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in lieu of an educational committee meeting or at the very least, conduct an education committee meeting at the conclusion of the full board meeting.

KMS Marketing

Mr. Neil Donegan will make a presentation to the full board in executive session, with a recommendation from the committee to sign a contract with HG Johnson Real Estate to market the property.

New KMS construction

Mr. Chris Coates reports a meeting on Thursday to look at the process for general contractors and overall bids.

Current Middle School

No report.

34 West Street

Mr. John Harper reports the future of 34 West Street remains with the development of the new headquarters on Maple Avenue with the recommendation and plan to sell the West Street property coming shortly. He reports not being able to move forward until the SAU Board signs a new SAU lease.

30 Royal Avenue

Mr. Tom Remillard reported on the meeting with the State Department to review qualifications for the additional 3% of funding. Mr. Ed Murdough from the state

department was pleased with the facility and Tom reports it is well on its way to being designated a high performance school.

#### KAPS

Mr. Neil Donegan reported things were going very well with several negotiating sessions already completed and an agreement to come forward within the next several weeks.

#### Preschool

Mr. William Gurney provided a history of the preschool program and described it as operating at full capacity now in its area at Wheelock School. The district is continuing to look at future options to provide the high level of services that our preschoolers require. He spoke about conversations with Keene State College to partner with them and expand both programs. Discussion ensued around space issues at Wheelock and anticipated increase in enrollment numbers.

#### 6. Report of Co-Superintendents

Mr. William Gurney provided an update on the social studies issue brought up at the last board meeting and explained when and how states and capitols will be studied in the district. He further explained that emphasis is now focused on what a state capitol is and how it functions within the states and within the US and that memorizing names is no longer the approach to teaching this subject. Mr. Gurney continued his update with information on the study of continents, world geography and ancient history in grades 5 & 6. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Wayne Woolridge clarified the change in curriculum and explained how the approach will be more thematic rather than simply recitation of names and said an example of this approach is the citywide project "Keene Comes Alive". Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Gurney continued his report by recognizing Michael McDougall's English Writing Achievement Award, Cliff Lerner's induction into the Canon Envirothon Hall of Fame, and the five students selected for Jazz All State Band and the six students selected for Jazz All State Choir.

Mr. Gurney announced that H1N1 is present in the Keene community with Keene Middle School experiencing over 100 absences and an increase in absent students in all other schools. He reminded everyone that the virus is in the community and not in any specific school and provided information about reporting absences to the NH state department, nurses meetings with state representatives and urging parents to keep children home and not return to school until they are symptom free for 24 hours without medication.

Mr. Gurney continued with a budget update and spoke about administrators being hard at work preparing budget proposals for 2010-2011.

Mr. Wayne Woolridge announced an SAU meeting on November 23 with the topics for discussion being the retirement issue and the financial report.

Mr. Gurney added that the superintendent's advisory council has met with representatives participating from every school in the district. He reported productive discussions with a great group of people and a lot to learn as they move forward.

7. Report of Secretary  
None

8. Report of Standing Committees

a. Building Facilities and Ancillary Services

Mr. Chris Coates reports that facility items were previously covered on the consent agenda and he requested a time to meet with Mr. Remillard and Mrs. Farmer to talk about the athletic facilities at KHS.

b. Education Committee

Mrs. Brown reports the 2010-2011 School Calendar presentation will be at the next committee meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

c. Finance Committee

No report.

d. Personnel Committee

No report.

e. Communications Committee

Mr. Donald Parker reports a very productive recently held meeting where the topic discussed was using electronic communications to get the message out in a timely fashion.

f. Policy Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Neil Donegan reports the next meeting is scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at which time Mr. Gurney and Mr. Remillard will have some recommendations to present regarding Policy FEH: Clerk of the Works.

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy IHBB: Programs for Gifted Students. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy KF: Use of School Buildings and Facilities. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy JICK: Pupil Safety and Violence. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy JICFA: Hazing. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy JICC: Student Conduct on School Busses. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy ECF: Energy Conservation. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to approve Keene School District Policy FE: Facilities Construction. Mrs. Carol Brown seconded. Vote taken, motion passes by a unanimous vote.*

9. Reports of Special Committees

Mr. Chris Coates requested that someone else assume his position on the NH School Boards Association committee, as he does not have the time to commit to it. Mrs. Kathleen O'Donnell asked Mr. Panza if he would be willing to serve. Mr. Panza agreed and Ms. O'Donnell assigned him to serve on this committee.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Donald Parker reported a great Jonathan Daniels Association meeting and announced an upcoming annual craft fair on Saturday, December 5th from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm and urged everyone not to miss it.

Mr. Chris Coates reported a wonderful Grease performance, TAMY awards for high school performances with KHS being top in NH if not in New England. He commended Mr. Tom Martin, the KHS choir and all involved in this production.

Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell urged board members to provide a liaison report each month and then commended the KHS basketball team for the fall leaf raking fundraiser event to raise money for new uniforms. She reported on the great job by 4 boys who worked several hours and said they were very polite and efficient.

Mr. Coates reported on the recent fundraising event with the very entertaining Globe Trotters in which there were 300-400 people in attendance.

10. Old Business  
None.

11. New Business  
None.

12. Resignations  
None.

13. Nominations/Election of Staff  
None.

*Mr. Neil Donegan made a motion to enter into Non-Public Session according to RSA: 91-A3. Role call vote taken: Mr. Chris Coates-yes, Mr. Carter Chamberlin-yes, Mr. Donald Parker-yes, Mrs. Carol Brown-yes, Mr. Neil Donegan-yes, Ms. Kathleen O'Donnell-yes, Mr. Carl Panza-yes, and Mrs. Kristin Blais-yes.*

***Meeting entered into non-public session by a unanimous role call vote at 7:55 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted  
Dru Fox, Stenographer

William B. Gurney  
Co-Superintendent of Schools

**Approved by the  
Keene Board of Education  
December 8, 2009**

