

Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Council

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

6:30 p.m.

Scotland Elementary School

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Joy Becker, Allan Cahill, Paul Graseck, Ann Gruenberg, Elise Guari, Theresa Lambert, Michelle Murray, Richard Packman, Cathy Pinsonneault, Leahbeth Scandura, Scott Sears and Geri White

Guests: Clare D'Appollonio, Dan Syme,

Staff: Sandra Frizzell

1. **Call to order:** Theresa Lambert called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.
2. **Audience for citizens:** none
3. **Update agenda as needed:** Ann Gruenberg made a motion to move discussion on School Readiness Coordinator Position and approving tuition expenditures early on the agenda. Scott Sears seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Allan Cahill abstained.
4. **Approval of May 7, 2013 meeting minutes:** A motion to accept the May 7, 2013 meeting minutes with correction (insert word fund into first sentence in line 5 a.) was made by Ann Gruenberg and seconded by Scott Sears. (Scott Sears also pointed out a necessary correction to the April 23rd Meeting Minutes in line 9 a. should read "be at Scotland" not "beat Scotland".) Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.
5. **School Readiness Coordinator Position:** Richard Packman thanked Sandra Frizzell for her years of service. Due to her resignation, Richard Packman and Paul Graseck presented a proposal to hire EASTCONN staff as School Readiness Coordinator and create School Readiness Manager positions for the two School Principals. (See attached) A meeting was held with Elizabeth Aschenbrenner at EASTCONN on September 17th which included the superintendents and school principals from Hampton and Scotland to draft the proposal. Concern was expressed by Ann Gruenberg, Theresa Lambert and other members of the SRC that selectmen, SRC Co-Chairs and council members were not included in this discussion/exploration of a new structure. Due to the time constraints, the administrators acted independently. This arrangement may create a conflict of interest for Theresa Lambert who is SRC Co-Chair from Scotland and is employed by EASTCONN. Several members expressed concern about retaining our local decision making and autonomy. Elise Guari and Cathy Pinsonneault were asked about their willingness to take on these added responsibilities. They each replied they are willing to do the work to support the children, families and programs. Cathy Pinsonneault noted that it is a pilot and can be re-assessed mid-year and at the end of the year for effectiveness. When asked, Sandra Frizzell expressed concern about the amount of work that will be left up to the principals and suggested matters dealing with tuition should be handled locally and not through an outside agency. Dan Syme expressed concern over contracting with EASTCONN. Alan Cahill and other members expressed that this is the only option currently available as posting and hiring a coordinator would take several weeks at best. Allan Cahill noted that there is an "escape clause" if the plan does not work. Michelle Murray, spoke as a parent, about concerns of losing local effort and recognized how fortunate we are to have such wonderful preschool programs which many communities around us cannot offer. Paul Graseck reiterated that this effort was made in good faith given a tight time frame. Richard Packman suggested this could be a 6 month pilot proposal and the SRC could further explore other options.

Ann Gruenberg made a motion that the SRC approve this proposal as a 6 month proposal only. Joy Becker seconded the motion. Geri White clarified that the 6 month proposal would need to be re-negotiated with EASTCONN. Paul Graseck mentioned that the fees mentioned in the proposal would need to be modified. Seven members voted in favor of this motion, 2 opposed and 2 abstained.

6. Approve Tuition expenditures:

Hampton: Theresa Lambert made a motion to approve a plan to spend down the \$24,001.72 in the Tuition Fund by September 30, 2013; Ann Gruenberg seconded the motion. Paul Graseck explained that the bulk of the funds will pay for the Speech and Language Clinician who supports the Preschool Program and the remaining funds will go toward current operating costs. Motion passed unanimously; Paul Graseck abstained from voting.

Alan Cahill, Paul Graseck and Ann Gruenberg left at 7:40 p.m. to attend the Board of Finance meeting in Hampton.

Scotland: Richard Packman explained that Scotland has the entire year to spend down their tuition fund and offered to present Scotland's Preschool Program's plan to spend down \$53,000 by June 30, 2014 at a future meeting. Ann Gruenberg made a motion to accept this plan. Geri White seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

7. Acceptance of financial reports

- a. Hampton: Scott Sears made a motion to accept monthly and End of Year reports presented for Hampton. Motion was seconded by Theresa Lambert. Michelle Murray asked who prepares the reports. They are prepared by the BOE's finance staff, Sally Lehoux and Donna Sharp. Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Elise Guari left at 7:47 p.m. to attend the Board of Finance Meeting in Hampton.

- b. Scotland: Scott Sears made a motion to accept Scotland's monthly and End of Year reports. Motion was seconded by Geri White. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

8. Program updates: Sandra Frizzell reviewed the enrollment numbers and informed the council that Hampton may lose part of their funding due to under enrollment.

9. Grant/OEC update: Sandra Frizzell highlighted the 8th bullet which shows the percentage of families qualifying for the State's sliding fee scale, the percentage of students above or below the 75 percentile on the State Median Income Chart and the percentages of families requesting scholarship assistance above and beyond the sliding fee scale.

10. New Business

- a. **2013 - 2014 Meeting Schedule** – Sandra Frizzell will send an email to members to get input on their availability for Monday, October 21st, Thursday, October 24th or Thursday, October 28th for the next meeting. A schedule for the year will be discussed at the next meeting.
- b. **SRC Membership** – Co-Chairs and principals will be responsible for informing the First Selectman and Superintendent of any new appointments or re-appointments to the SRC. Current terms are through November 30, 2013. Dan Syme will ask town lawyer if there is a conflict of interest for Theresa Lambert to remain as Scotland's Co-Chair through November 30th. Sandra will forward information gathered-to-date to principals and co-chairs.

Joy Becker left at 8:02 p.m.

Due to the scheduled meeting time, Old Business will be tabled until the next regular meeting.

11. Old Business

- a. **Review 2012-2013 CSRPPES**
- b. **Review of 2012-2013 QE Grant Evaluation**
- c. **Committee updates**
 1. **Hampton Ad-Hoc Playscape**
 2. **Scotland Ad-Hoc Playscape**
 3. **Communications**
 4. **School Readiness Brochure**
 5. **Transition to Kindergarten**

12. Audience for citizens: none

13. Set next meeting agenda -School Readiness Coordinator position, Meeting Dates for 2013-14 School Year, Regular Reports and Updates, Review CSRPPES and QE Annual Evaluation.

14. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. by Michelle Murray and seconded by Leahbeth Scandura. Motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Frizzell

Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Coordinator