Minutes

**ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**October 21, 2015 6:30 P.M.**

**Athol-Royalston Middle School**

# CALL TO ORDER

The session was called to order by Chairperson Nancy Melbourne at 6:30 P.M.

1. **ROLL CALL –** 
   1. **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Nancy Melbourne Present Joao Baptista Present (6:54)

Deborah Kuzmeskas Present Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Present Mitchell Grosky Present

Lee Chauvette Present Charles Pretti Present

Amber Parker Present Carla Rabinowitz Present

**B.** **RECORDING SECRETARY** Julie Marynok

Also present: Superintendent Polito, S. Meyer and F. Dupere

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

September 10, 2015 – Regular Session – L. Chauvette moved approval, D. Kuzmeskas seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 8-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Absent

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

**IV. PUBLIC INPUT**

Keith Kent from the Athol Daily News asked several questions about the former business manager. He asked if she quit, Superintendent Polito stated that she resigned. Mr. Kent asked about the 90 day notice in her contract, Attorney Dupere stated it was a breach and also stated that under the 13th amendment of the constitution she could not be forced to work. Attorney Dupere stated that it is not unusual for an individual to sever a contract. Mr. Kent asked if the former business manager had accrued benefits and did she receive a payout. Attorney Dupere stated that under the state law, accrued vacation time, once approved, C. 149, Section 148, based upon service given an employer has to pay accrued and unused vacation time. Mr. Kent asked if the district has any recourse with the 90 day clause and if not, why have the 90 day clause if it can be breached? Attorney Dupere stated that things can be added to a contract to help with accrued time. L. Chauvette stated that when it comes to a contracted employee it should go through the committee.

## V. RECOGNITION

C. Pretti recognized Jessica Willhite and Brenda Hopkins Kindergarten teacher and aide at the Royalsotn Community School for the wonderful job they did with transitioning students into kindergarten. Parents have told him how thrilled they are that thei kids are off to a great start.

A. Parker recognized Tyler Lajoie for winning the Mass Live Player of the Week honor. She also recognized Sarah King and Tracy Johnson for the field hockey program. The team looks good for the future.

M. Grosky recognized the Athol Fire Department for visiting the schools for Fire Safety Week. He also recognized the community of Royalston for their 250th anniversary.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Parker moved to move the MSBA up on the agenda, M. Grosky seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 8-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Absent

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Chair K. McNiff stated that the building is on schedule and still on budget. The work inside the building will start in December. An August opening is still on track. There will be no walk through before the next MSBA building committee meeting due to darkness but they are planning on submitting photos of the progress.

J. Maga moved to move the MCAS presentation up on the agenda, C. Rabinowitz seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 8-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Absent

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Spring 2015 MCAS Presentation – Tom Lamey from DSAC and Heather Johnson, consultant from Looney Math were present for the discussion. Assistant Superintendent Steven Meyer did the MCAS presentation. A. Parker stated that every year we get the test results and we are disappointed. We are frustrated and we’re trying and she can appreciate all that, but it is not getting better, and treading water is not enough. We have got to do better. Superintendent Anthony Polito responded by explaining how many changes have been made over the last few years, with some 15 to 20 teachers retiring, vast changes in curriculum, coaching, procedures and more. J. Mega stated he was a lifelong educator. He has never ever supported any state for federal mandated test. Parents are the key. C. Pretti said he is kind of disappointed. He wanted something that says we are climbing that mountain. He thinks we have started but it is not showing yet, but he does believe we are moving in that right direction. M. Grosky stated that we are doing many new things here that we have not done in the past, especially with trying to do them with the money that we do have. L. Chauvette stated that looking at the graphs, you can polish and make it out to be like we are doing great, but he does support the staff and their efforts. With school choice going one way, and your test scores going the other way, it is not going to happen. School choice has increased in this community every year and he has been on this committee for 14 years. Something is not right. The perception is out there with parents is that we didn’t improve. He is very supportive of the work that is being done and the testing, and as we move forward he will look forward to better numbers and finally being able to put this to bed. C. Rabinowitz stated that she is concerned about the message being given by some of the school committee members. It is accurate and she would have to agree, the scores are disappointing, as some scores are not improved significantly while in some others they have improved. We are in the middle of a process of radical change, and that was what was presented to us by both the DSAC and Math Consultant who visited us this evening. This is the way things normally go, and you can’t expect to see change overnight. Reeducating teachers takes time.

J. Maga moved to move the Alternative Program at the Athol High School up on the agenda, J. Baptista seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Athol High School adjustment counselor Amanda Pager-Wein discussed the Alternative Program being offered at the High School to help those students with attendance issues as well as those who need support. Currently there are 8 students in the program with schedule being Tuesday thru Thursday from 2:00 – 4:00.

Strategic Plan-Implantation plan requires school committee vote – L. Chauvette moved

approval, D. Kuzmeskas seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Update- Turnaround Plan – Plan has been accepted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for year 2

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will visit the district in December

Update- YMCA use of ARMS – Currently 12 students utilizing the program

Update- Business Manager Search Committee – L. Chauvette moved to enter into contract negotiations with Lynn Bassett, D. Duzmeskas seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

# VII. NEW BUSINESS

MASS/MASC- November 4-6th 2015 – Reminder

Surplus Items from Royalston Community and Athol High School & Equipment – L. Chauvette moved approval, J. Baptista seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Washington DC trip School Committee Approval – L. Chauvette moved D. Duzmeskas seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Nature’s classroom ARMS 6th Grade with RCS 6th grade second vote for School Committee – J. Baptista moved approval, J. Maga seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Athol Elementary School Staffing/Enrollment update - FYI

### VIII. COMMUNICATIONS – Athol Public Library – Community Reading Day flyer

### IX. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS

* 1. Treasurer’s Report and Financial Statement
  2. Prior year tutoring bill – A. Parker moved approval, M. Grosky seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

**X. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

1. Professional Development Update
   1. Half Day PD on 9/23/15
      1. DSAC presentation on using data to drive instruction for MS & HS
      2. Looney math content work for elementary teachers
   2. Full-day PD was held on 10/9/15
      1. DSAC presentation on Mass. Tiered System of Support for MS & HS
      2. Looney math content work for elementary teachers
   3. Unified Arts teachers (K-12) worked collaboratively on curriculum (Atlas) and district-determined measures (DDMS)
   4. Nurses worked on concussion protocol and reviewed concussion policy on 9/28 and worked with the school physician for Narcan standing orders policy considerations
   5. Using title 1 funds, Looney consulting will providing 26 additional days of 1:1 teacher instructional coaching.
2. International Walk to School Day - This event was observed at all schools on October 7, 2015, it is part of the safe routes to school program.
3. Free overdose prevention training was held at AHS on October 8, 2015. All those who attended (including the middle school and high school nurses) received free Narcan.
4. Substitute teacher training was held on September 30, 2015. 28 substitute teachers attended the training and completed their mandatory training requirements.
5. CHART program – the hiring process for a school-based care coordinator for ARMS is underway. This position will start on December 1, 2015 per the grant funding.
6. Telehealth – The equipment is in for telehealth. Mr. Telicki, Mr. Skutnik and I met at Heywood hospital to discuss the logistics of telehealth and begin working on a memorandum of understanding.

# XI. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Reports of the Chair – A sidebar agreement for the 2015/16 school year with the Athol Teachers Association needs a vote to approve. L. Chauvette moved approval, M. Grosky seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

1. Budget/Finance Sub Committee – Joint meeting with the FWAC – Discussed moving forward with districts priorities, increasing revenue, etc. The group would like an All Boards Meeting.
2. Facilities/Buildings/Grounds Sub Committee – Will be scheduling a meeting
3. Negotiations Sub Committee – Starting November 17th.
4. Academic Excellence Sub Committee – None
5. Public Relations Sub Committee – Tri-fold brochure discussed to be sent to parents and families. Next meeting, November 12th from 3:00 – 4:00, ARMS Library.

7. Policy Sub Committee – Second reading - JEB – D. Kuzmeskas moved approval, J. Maga seconded, motion unanimous.

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Next meeting – October 29, 2015 – 6:30

**XII. COMMITTEE MEMBER REFERRALS –** Student representatives from the high school are Olivia Dufour, Senior and Ashley Giansanto, Junior

M. Grosky commented on the Walk-to-School Day.

A. Parker commented on Donna Lajoie and the parent volunteers who transformed the High School cafeteria into a café from the 50’.

L. Chauvette moved to go into executive session, Chapter 30A, section 21, **To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; A. Parker seconded, roll call vote required:**

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Aye Joao Baptista Aye

Deborah Kuzmeskas Aye Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Aye Mitchell Grosky Aye

Lee Chauvette Aye Charles Pretti Aye

Amber Parker Aye Carla Rabinowitz Aye

**Regular session adjourned at 8:45**

**Returned to open session at 8:48**

**L. Chauvette moved to approve the contract negotiated between Lynn Bassett and the Athol-Royalston Regional School District, A. Parker seconded, motion unanimous.**

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

**A. Parker moved to adjourn, L. Chauvette seconded, motion unanimous.**

**Vote: 9-0-0** Nancy Melbourne Yes Joao Baptista Yes

Deborah Kuzmeskas Yes Dale Lougee Absent

Joseph Maga Yes Mitchell Grosky Yes

Lee Chauvette Yes Charles Pretti Yes

Amber Parker Yes Carla Rabinowitz Yes

Meeting adjourned at 8:50