

## **BAC MEETING MINUTES 3/10/09**

The meeting began at 7:10 in the Samoset Boardroom Annex.

The following members attended: Alan Sacher, Ed Hudson, Mike Isernia, Jim Mayers, Liz Morrison and Larry Nostramo. From the district office was Ron Sacks and Bruce Singer. From the BOE was Rob Scavo. Speaking to the committee on behalf of their departments were Food Service Director, Nancy Padrone and Transportation Supervisor, Stephen Shadbolt. There were no visitors.

The following topics were discussed:

- 1) Review and approval of the BAC minutes from 2/24.
- 2) Nancy Padrone, Food Service Director addressed the committee on where food service stands at this time. Due to increases in food costs, supplies and labor the food service department will run at a deficit for this year. Food Service currently has approximately \$1.5 million in their fund balance. That money will be used to offset the approximately \$220,000 deficit for this year. The department has seen a 15-20% cost increase for food between 2007 and 2009 but has not had an increase in meal prices to the students since 2003.

This year there has been an increase of .10 cents for Ala Carte items such as cookies, chips etc... Ala Carte also items fiscally support the food program. Vending machines with snacks are operated by food service and there is a vending contract for beverage machines. The contract provides commissions to both the food service program and other organizations.

For the past 3 years, food service contributes to the general fund part of the cost of garbage carting or electric to run the food service department.

There are approximately 2000 students that receive free or reduced meals, up 300 from last year. The government reimburses the district \$2.63 per free or reduced lunch.

Sachem does cooperative bidding with other districts for food supplies in order to achieve the best prices. Bids for the 09/10 year will be opened on 4/30/09.

Ms. Padrone reviewed equipment that has been replaced and what equipment will have to wait to be purchased. The committee was advised that at this time the equipment purchases are on hold.

Mike Isernia did an analysis of the food service program and made a suggestion on increasing the lunch price by .30 cents to offset rising costs. There was a suggestion made that instead of 1 large increase to do smaller increases over a few years. After Ms. Padrone's presentation, Rob Scavo gave an explanation of the BOE's position on this matter.

- 2) Stephen Shadbolt, Transportation Supervisor, addressed the committee on where transportation stands at this time. The first topic of discussion was the walking radius for students. Even though the district uses a ½ mile as its limit for walkers, the state only requires 2 miles for elementary and 3 miles for secondary schools. In changing the walking distance for students to the state requirements it would offer the district a huge savings in the budget (about \$10 million), it would also put many students in dangerous road situations. This distance change would cause many if not most walkers to have to cross major roadways, which is not a risk the district wishes to take with its students. There would be too many safety hazards involved. The BOE (and the BAC) agree this is not a cost saving measure that should be done.

The maximum amount of students per large bus is 66 but the district tries to keep the number of students per bus to 45-48 for middle school and 50 for high school.

The transportation dept uses a computer program, to map out each student in the district. It pin points them to a bus stop and can design routes to be the most efficient. Traveling time per bus could be up to approximately 15 minutes for elementary students, 22 minutes for middle school and 40 minutes for high school.

Sachem buses and Towne buses are used for morning and afternoon routes. There are 953 runs and 30 Sachem drivers. As many trips as possible are covered by Sachem drivers. Most days, when there are many trips out, the trips after 3:30 are done by Sachem drivers. Also, Saturday and Sunday activities are Sachem drivers. This reduces the cost instead of using Towne Bus. The cost is \$400.00/per bus per day for athletics that are covered by the contractor beyond the 8 that are built into the packages.

There has been a reduction in the cost of buses used for BOCES because there has been a drop in students attending BOCES.

There was again a discussion in regards to changing the private school busing distance from 25 miles to 15 miles. Private schools would be eliminated except for St. Johns. With only a \$90,000 savings the district feels it would be too disruptive to too many families and would not benefit the district enough. There will be no consideration to making this change.

Mr. Shadbolt explained the 5 year bus contract with Towne Bus in regards to cost, number of buses (111 large and 98 small) and fuel. The district has 32 large buses and 2 vans. There are 3 mechanics and a full time dispatcher. He also explained how the 2010 emissions regulations would change.

- 3) There was a request for Mr. Jose Cruz, Director of Community Education, to attend the next BAC meeting.
- 4) Alan Sacher expressed his views as to the BAC verses the BOE and the committee agrees they will continue to look into areas of interest within the budget.

The meeting ended at 9:15 and the next meeting is scheduled Tuesday 3/24 at 7pm. Due to a scheduling conflict the 3/24 meeting will be held at the district office conference room.