

GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Central Office Conference Room

Business Meeting Minutes

August 2, 2006 Approved September 6, 2006

PRESENT:

Ms Cindy Barrett, Secretary

Dr. Forrest Buzan

Ms Karen Lofgren

Mr. Frank O'Connell, Vice-Chair

ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Alan Genovese, Superintendent

STAFF, PRESS, OTHERS: P. Comtois, Groton Landmark; T. Sheehan

CALL TO ORDER:

The GDRSC Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the vice-chair, F. O'Connell.

INTERVIEW(S) FOR INTERIM DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Dr. Genovese distributed copies of questions that can be asked and that cannot be asked, the employment contract, questions members will ask Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Sheehan's resume. F. Buzan asked for the dates that Mr. Sheehan received his degrees. Dr. Genovese said these were removed as they would indicate age.

Mr. Sheehan came into the meeting at 6:33 p.m. He talked about his qualifications and experiences that will contribute to his success as interim Director of Business and Finance. He stated he worked in the service and private industry for twenty-four years in purchasing and acquisition. He has spent eleven years teaching in a classroom and has excellent computer skills. He is also familiar with the government environment.

Mr. Sheehan was asked what attracted him about this position and he stated he submitted his Business Administrator certification in April and met with Mr. Young to discuss his interest in having a career in this field. From the beginning, Groton Dunstable was first on his list and he finds it a comfortable place.

During his first sixty days of employment, Mr. Sheehan said he would get to know the Central Office staff as well as the Director of Food Services and the Director of Facilities and Grounds. He will also need to get to know the principals and town accountants. He stated he will review past school committee minutes to discover past issues and will get up to speed on the audit. With respect to working with town boards and departments, he feels it is important to share information so there are no surprises.

When developing the budget, Mr. Sheehan feels it is important to get input from everyone that is directly impacted and it is also important to hear from the parent committees. He believes the principals should have some discretionary funds. Once the numbers are set for contracts, utilities

and the like, it is important to prioritize budget items. F. O'Connell asked if he had any thoughts about getting the communities involved in the budget process. Mr. Sheehan said this is always difficult.

When asked what he believes his greatest assets are, Mr. Sheehan said his background in education and the corporate world is strong and he is also very detail oriented. Areas needing more professional development would include learning the accounting system and he said he has no experience with food services.

C. Barrett asked Mr. Sheehan to talk about the Bridge Building Program he was involved with in Lowell. He said this was a very successful after school program that he ran for three years at the Bailey International School. The students built replicas of Lowell's bridges, built roller coasters and other amusement rides and did Robotics.

F. O'Connell asked how he was spending the summer and Mr. Sheehan said he just resigned from an internship where he was developing training plans for a Lowell school. C. Barrett asked what software he has been using and he said it is X2SIS.

Dr. Buzan asked when he received his MBA. Mr. Sheehan said he started in 1980 and it took him ten years, attending part time. He received his M. Ed from U Mass Lowell and stated he always knew he would end up teaching but did not think it would be at the elementary level. Dr. Buzan asked what motivated him to change careers and Mr. Sheehan said his interests changed but it was always in the back of his mind that he would end up teaching. He expected to spend ten years in a classroom and then perhaps become a principal or vice principal. He stated his background led him to be a business administrator. K. Lofgren asked if he ever hears the classroom calling him back and he said he will miss the students and hopes to visit the schools from time to time.

Mr. Sheehan said he has attended the Lowell School Committee meetings for about twenty years and has learned a lot about the budget process.

Dr. Buzan said Mr. Sheehan first applied for the full time position and the position is now for an interim. He asked Mr. Sheehan how he views this as being different and if it will affect how he approaches the job. Mr. Sheehan said he was concerned initially because he will be giving up a good position but now feels this is good for both himself and the district. He stated he will do everything he can to prove they have chosen the right person and he will compete for the position when it is posted. He stated he is confident and feels this can be successful for both parties. He stated he is organized and always prepared and would approach it as though he were the permanent business administrator. He will not leave things undone just because he might not be here.

C. Barrett asked if he has any experience with negotiations and Mr. Sheehan said not directly but he has attended meetings. He was anti-union when he went into education but then needed the union to represent him. They did so competently and he joined right after that.

Mr. Sheehan did not have questions for the committee members. He stated he is comfortable with what he knows about the district. He left the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

F. O'Connell stated it was the consensus of the Screening Committee that Mr. Sheehan would be suggested for the interim position. K. Lofgren said she likes the connection he has from the

classroom. Dr. Genovese said Mr. Sheehan understands the private sector and has a solid foundation. Dr. Buzan said he would be comfortable working with him and the idea of having an interim has the potential of working well. Dr. Genovese said he contacted references and was told Mr. Sheehan has good work ethics and places incredible demands on himself.

Dr. Genovese said they have a strong support network and Mr. Sheehan has the confidence that he can do the work. He welcomes the learning curves. Dr. Buzan asked if Mr. Sheehan has put together budgets before and was told no. He asked if Mr. Sheehan could oversee building projects and Dr. Genovese said he would have Steve Byrne to help.

F. O'Connell said Mr. Sheehan is motivated, disciplined and has a well rounded background.

ACTION ITEMS

F. BUZAN MOVED TO OFFER THE ONE YEAR POSITION OF INTERIM DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE TO TIMOTHY SHEEHAN. SECONDED BY K. LOFGREN

Dr. Buzan asked about the salary and Dr. Genovese referred members to the contract. He will be paid \$80,000, prorated to August 3, 2006, and will receive an additional \$5,000 in five months, contingent upon a satisfactory job review.

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL

ADJOURNMENT

K. LOFGREN MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7: 18 P.M. SECONDED BY F. BUZAN

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Smith
Recording Secretary