

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION NOTES

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JAMESTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING: DECEMBER 30, 2010

Executive Session: The committee met pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5: Exception 2, contract negotiation/litigation. No votes were taken. The committee voted unanimously to seal the minutes of the executive session.

New Business

SORICO Withdrawal: In response to a question from an audience member, Ms. Kaiser explained that the extra meeting had been called to allow the committee to complete a final review of its options prior to the end-or-the-year deadline for submitting letters of intent to withdraw from SORICO. Since the committee's Dec. 16 meeting an additional district has submitted notice of intent to withdraw. Ms. Kallfelz, the committee's liaison to SORICO (Southern Rhode Island Collaborative), provided an update and recommendation. She reported that four of the nine SORICO districts have submitted letters of intent to withdraw from SORICO, effective June 30, 2011. (The organization's bylaws require that written notice be submitted to the Commissioner of Education and all other members at least six months prior to the start of the next fiscal year.) Ms. Kallfelz cited benefits of maintaining membership in SORICO: the organization provides an infrastructure for inter-district collaboration and the coordination of efforts such as Race to the Top; and it serves as an entity for the submission of multi-district grant applications. Member districts have agreed that they can work together without a facility and have retained a broker to lease or sell the building on Camp Avenue in North Kingstown; members will benefit from the equity realized if the building is sold (a 9-party split prior to June 30, 2011; a 5-party split thereafter). Ms. Kallfelz recommended that the committee vote to remain a member of SORICO; and that the committee join the other non-withdrawing districts in requesting a clarification from Commissioner of Education Deborah Gist about whether conditional withdrawal is a valid option (in their letters of intent, withdrawing members have reserved the right to rescind their notice, an option upon which the SORICO bylaws are silent); and to what extent the withdrawing districts are responsible for liabilities (such as the mortgage) incurred while they were members. The committee approved Ms. Kallfelz's motion by unanimous vote.

The next workshop meeting of the Jamestown School Committee will be on January 6. The next business meeting will be on Thursday, January 20. All open meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the Lawn Avenue School Library.