

School district may adopt new school building use policy

By Michaela Kennedy

The School Committee reviewed an updated proposal to the school building use policy at its regular meeting last week. No votes were made at the Nov. 1 work session.

Policy sub-committee members Julia Held and Superintendent Marcia Lukon presented a draft policy on building use by non-school-based organizations. The document included language taken from other districts' policies that better addresses ambiguities in the current policy.

Held said that the current policy was not clear enough to suit the needs of the school or those who wish to use the buildings for activities. The policy should be combined with regulations on procedure as well as insurance, she noted. "There's a separate list

of procedures, which is not complete yet, and we're going to look at whether there should be a priority list," she said. A set of procedures would allow the school to prioritize possible conflicts. "The number of requests has become voluminous," she added.

Groups that use the school facilities currently pay a custodial fee, but nothing extra is paid for heat and lighting use. "We are having real costs associated with use," committee chairwoman Cathy Kaiser said. "We need to come up with a fee schedule that reflects the cost."

Building facilities manager Lew Kitts confirmed that he is looking for clarification on building use, which would include defining who is qualified to use the buildings. He noted that changes were needed, so he was not compelled to make decisions on an individual basis, but rather by categories, "so everyone is treated on a fair basis."

Continued review of the amended policy with added revisions is scheduled for the committee's next meeting.

In a discussion about tuition for North Kingstown High School, Kaiser said an interesting new business formula might be the best solution for both communities. "The new formula is based upon a common way of assessing what the central office overhead is," she explained.

The proposal for student tuition includes an administrative overhead fee, general education expenses per pupil, and a pro-rated portion of bond costs. The bond fees are reduced by 30 percent to adjust for the state aid housing reimbursement. When the formula was last renegotiated, it had

administrative costs. "We paid a per capita percentage, which we thought was unfair," Kaiser noted.

Kaiser went on to note that the fee set for bond re-payment did not include support from the state. "Jamestown had agreed to pay its percentage of the bond, but the state was paying 30 percent," she said.

Ned Draper, a business manager in North Kingstown, provided the NK school committee with an analysis of the contract, according to Kaiser. The analysis showed that the high school would experience an approximate \$1 million budget gap if Jamestown students ceased to attend NKHS. "These are all good things," she added.

School committee member William "Bucky" Brennan noted that Jamestown made up 13 to 15 percent of students attending the high school, "and we pay about the same in costs for operation of the school."

In the principal's report, Kathleen Almanzor presented details of a proposed eighth grade field trip to Washington, D.C. Almanzor asked the committee to approve the four-day trip, scheduled for June 14 to 17. "If we're going to do this and it's going to be on school time, then I think it should be school-sanctioned," she said.

The cost of the trip is estimated at \$496 per student. Any parent concerned about meeting the cost of the trip is encouraged to call the school for assistance, Almanzor added.

The committee agreed to sanction the trip as a school-sponsored activity, as long as the administration provided clarity on insurance liability. School committee member David Dolce was absent.



Night for the Light

Jamestown Chamber of Commerce representatives present a \$4,500 check to Scott Chapin (right), president of the Dutch Island Lighthouse Society. The money was raised from the Chamber's Night for the Light dinner-dance event. From left are Barbara Lundy and John Collins, co-chairs of the Chamber benefit, and Vicki deAngeli, president of the Chamber.

Photo by Jeff McDonough

Holiday art and craft fair scheduled

Artisans by the Bay will hold their 4th annual Christmas in Portsmouth Arts and Fine Craft Show on Saturday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The show will be at St. Barnabas Church, 1697 East Main Rd., in the church hall. Admission and parking are free.

Lady Shriners hold fall event

The RI Shrine Ladies Activities Group will host a Pumpkin Patch Bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 10, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Shrine Center in Cranston.

Included in the daylong event are a penny social, arts and crafts, a bake table, food and much more.

A raffle will be held for a Dell laptop computer, a television/DVD combination, \$100 and a handmade quilt.

The Shrine Center is at One Rhodes Place.



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