

**INFORMAL MINUTES** of the Joint  
Meeting of the City Council of the City of Rye and  
the Board of Education of the City of Rye held in  
City Hall on April 30, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.

**PRESENT:**

STEVEN OTIS, Mayor  
ROBERT CYPHER  
MATTHEW FAHEY  
ROSAMOND LARR  
HOWARD G. SEITZ  
Councilmen

JAMES CULYER, President  
STEVE M. FEENEY  
SARAH MARIANI  
GEORGE PRATT  
VICTORIA STERLING  
ROBERT ZAHM  
Board Members

EDWARD SHINE, Superintendent of Schools  
O. PAUL SHEW, City Manager  
WILLIAM CONNORS, Police Commissioner  
WILLIAM RODRIGUEZ, Recreation Dept. Supervisor  
SALLY WRIGHT, Rye Merchants Association  
DOUG FRENCH, Chair, Rye Recreation Commission

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Roll Call. Mayor Otis welcomed everyone, stating it was good to review present collaborative efforts and look at new ones.

1. Shared Services

Paul Shew gave an update on the various shared services saying fuel has been added and financial reporting is being developed, with a combination of intermunicipal and personal collaboration. Dr. Shine said it is a less formal and better procedure and he has enjoyed building a relationship between the School and the City. Mr. Shew said they had begun a dialogue with the Town of Rye as well. Lots of this information is on the City's web site. Ms. Mariani suggested the information be put on the School's web site as well as it is important for the public to know.

2. RESPECT Manual

Sally Wright, representing the Rye Merchant's Association, and Commissioner Connors presented the recently printed RESPECT manual that evolved because of the lack of communication between merchants/parents/kids/and police (triggered by complaints from merchants about teens hanging out in town and a volatile house party incident). They pulled many people together to work out a solution and found it a good healing process that lead to a better understanding, especially between teens and the Police. They found a prototype of a manual from Kirkland, WA and set about writing one for Rye. Many contributed to the writing but primary drafting was by Gail Fell and the Police Department. Also special thanks to Ann Kantarian for the layout. Funding for the first 5000 copies comes from Legislator Latimer. They now have a plan to officially roll out the document (Sergeant Craig is taking it to the classrooms; a list serve has been mailed; the Rye Record will run an article; a copy has been mailed to all families with children in grades 8-12 [Middle School families next fall]; and copies are available in the Library, with the merchants, at the Rye Youth Council office and with the guidance counselors). So far there is no great interest from RCDS and Holy Child. The manual should be put on the web site and it is hoped all parents will read it and continue a dialogue. Maybe copies should be sent to other school boards. Commissioner Connors said the police officers have been given a training session and he thanked Ms. Wright for being the driving force. He said a core of people did a lot of work and it was a great group effort as well as an eye-opener for everyone. General thanks and congratulations.

3. School Renovations/Street Parking

Dr. Shine reported that Milton School has gone out to bid and construction is now estimated to begin in June. Midland and Osborn expected to be completed by September 2006; Milton not until January 2007. He said coordination with the Rec. Dept and Midland has been good (Mr. Rodriquez and Mr. French said they were happy to help, but they, too, will hopefully be under construction, so they hope the plans will still work). Re: Milton School - Dr. Shine asked the Council to 1) reverse the one-way ordinance on Hewlett to start at Forest Ave instead of Milton Road (to ease the drop-off during construction – even though K and 1<sup>st</sup> Grades will be at Osborn and Midland); and 2) to consider permit parking on Hewlett because generally the teachers think Rye Town Park (RTP) is too far away and some actually go from school to school during the day. This would involve about 40 permits. Dr. Shine said they could prioritize the parking needs, but asked the City to reevaluate potential limited parking space behind the firehouse, Dockside Deli, and in and around the Marina. He said they were already working on the possibility of parking in neighboring driveways (“adopt a teacher program”). Members of the Council said they felt permits on Hewlett would be a very hard sell; that RTP is closer than most people walk to work in NYC; and it will probably be necessary for everyone to be inconvenienced. The Mayor said issuing permits would need State legislation that probably could not be obtained in time. Dr. Shine and Mr. Shew will meet again to try and work out something for those who share their services between schools. Mr. Rodriquez reiterated the offer to use some spaces at the Nursery Field. The Council agreed to set the public hearing for changing the direction of Hewlett at the May 4<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting and to hold the public hearing at the May 18th meeting.

4. Teens in Government Day

Mr. Rodriguez proposed a program to establish a “Teens in Government Day” during which teens would become Mayor, City Manager, DPW Superintendent, etc. for a day and have a chance to develop one-on-one relationships with those in government. It would be a one-day event during the school year; would encompass working for a morning followed by a luncheon to share experiences; and involve about 40 teens (preferably in their Junior year) who would apply to participate. Ms. Sterling recommended the idea be remanded to the Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum and the Curriculum Committee for consideration. In general, the proposal was positively received and perhaps there would be a tie-in to extra credit and/or community service. Mssrs. Shew, Rodriguez, McCann and Dr. Shine will meet to discuss the idea further.

5. Bonfire

Mr. Pratt read a report from the RHS Excellence Team unanimously recommending that the bonfire be dropped, citing concerns with walking, overtime costs, complaints, no participation from older students and unsafe conditions. It has been recommended that a student committee explore alternatives. Should it continue to take place, it is essential that parents continue to volunteer to help make it a safe event. It cannot take place on the upper field because it is too close to homes. Councilman Cypher said he thought it had come off pretty well last year; Commissioner Connors said it went well and the parent volunteers were terrific. He said the most dangerous part was when the football players were doing their bonfire laps inside the police lines. The issue of having the bonfire next Fall (October 7) will be reviewed by the Board of Education and a resolution will be made by June.

6. Other Items Not on the Agenda

Mr. Pratt reported a 150-page report on the evolution of Policy 7900 (stadium lights) is available. He said a process of notification concerning changes has been strictly adhered to. He said he did not take the complaints well and it is clear that there has been some miscommunication and misconceptions. Councilman Fahey suggested the Stadium Lights Committee might be well served by being comprised of members pro, con and neutral, much like the City’s Deer Committee. Mr. Pratt said more time has been spent on lights than on curriculum. Mr. Culyer said the matter will be on the agenda next week and hopefully the issue will be decided.

Mr. Feeney said a \$22 million bond had been issued at 3.98% and an additional \$8 million at 3.75%, saving the taxpayer about \$400,000. They floated the bonds now to get the lower rate. If the bids come in too high they will either scale down the project or take the money out of reserves.

Mr. Zahm said he was the head of the new Health and Safety Committee and that traffic issues, such as the need for a light at Sonn Drive would be considered, along with sidewalks and

other matters. The Mayor said the City's Traffic and Transportation Committee has considered the installation of a traffic signal and it doesn't make sense right now. Councilman Fahey said there is more work to be done on the topic.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session: (to discuss Real Estate and Litigation matters) at 11:52 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan A. Morison  
City Clerk