CALL TO ORDER

The Sitka School Board meeting was called to order by President Amy Morrison at 6:04 p.m. at Harrigan Centennial Hall, 330 Harbor Dr., Sitka, AK 99835.

ROLL CALL

Members present were Paul Rioux, Blossom Teal-Olsen, Todd Gebler, and Amy Morrison. Andrew Hames arrived at 7:00pm. The meeting was quorate.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Teal-Olsen moved, Mr. Rioux seconded to approve the board agenda and consent agenda as presented. The motion PASSED with no comment or opposition.

SPECIAL REPORTS

- GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT

Rebecca Himschoot – City of Sitka Assembly Member

Sitka Assembly members will be touring the schools with Superintendent Hauser on November 17th. Ms. Himschoot spoke about Eric Van Cise and commented on his compassion and knowledge as a school board member. She also recognized Ian Crane and the work he has done for the district as IT Director.

RECOGNITIONS

The Board recognized the Sitka High School Cross-country Team. The Girls’ Cross-Country Team for winning the Division 2 Region V Championship, and the Boys’ Cross-Country Team for winning the Division 2 Region V Championship and for winning 2nd place at the State Championship.

The Board also recognized Eric Van Cise for his service as School Board member from 2015-2021. He was presented with a carved paddle made by Mike Vieira’s wood shop class, and a plaque from the School Board.

PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Ian Crane was recognized for his eleven year ten
Annette Becker – Program Manager at Raven’s Way Adolescent Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program.
Ms. Becker came to speak to the board to raise awareness and share concerns about the relocation of Sitka’s seaplane base, to be located adjacent to a Raven’s Way classroom. According to Ms. Becker, the seaplane base will have a negative impact on the ability to provide education and counseling treatment due to seaplane noise, and foot and vehicle traffic noise. The land is owned by Alaska Dept of Education and Early Development. Ms. Becker encouraged the board to email or call Heidi Tichenor, school finance manager, who is working on the land sale and inform her of the impact it will have on the program. Ms. Becker provided a handout to the board for further information and offered to give the board a tour of the site, if so desired.

Elias Erickson, former School Board member – came to honor Eric Van Cise and his time on the school board.

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

- **Jill Lecrone, BES** – Reported that the library is now available for student access. There had not been a staffed library position for over ten years. She thanked Kari Sagel, Jeff Hole, and AmeriCorps volunteers for getting the library ready to be used again. Interventions started again for reading and math for students who need the support. Reported on the concert Ed Littlefield, artist in residence, performed over Teams in the classrooms. Teams will be used in the future to facilitate monthly assemblies. Parent night – good in person turnout and online.

- **Casey Demmert, KGH** – Normal activities have resumed, including 5th grade band, Girls on the Run, and 4th grade choir (25 students). Interventions for all four grade levels have resumed. Weekly COVID testing program has been beneficial. Mr. Demmert recognized the staff, custodians, paras, etc. for the time put in to develop relationships with the kids.

- **Laura Rogers, BMS** – Cross country fun run after SHS cross country event. Chess club continues to grow. Ben is with STEAM class pulling halibut skates, they used some modern hooks and some hooks kids made in class, using 3d printed design. Basketball starting Monday, and jazz band has resumed. Newspaper class this year, led by Mr. Vowel. Student council election took place and the students have started a revision of the school dress code and creating formal bylaws. Student council is also busy organizing Jamboree. Ms. Rogers reported a tutoring center has been formed in library, Americorps with school counselor Diana Twaddle and SHS NHS students are acting as tutors.

- **Sondra Lundvick, SHS** – The recognitions earlier in the meeting for her staff were appreciated. Cross country team
weathered out. Over the weekend but were able to run Monday. Furniture arrived and in the classrooms. Tomorrow college and career fair. 40 institutions will be present in person. PHS and MEHS will also attend. Not open to the public.

- President Morrison recognized principals for National Principals month. They were presented with gift cards.

**REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS**

Kari Sagel – STEPS Family and Community Coordinator
Shared with the board about the Pathways Community Coalition, a group of like-minded organizations in town that have similar visions – STA, SSD, SAFV, and Youth Advocates, along with a family engagement work group with Lisa Hodges. The City of Sitka identified three priorities for early childhood under a STEPS process. Increasing free and fun family activities was one of them. Using a collective impact approach, the work group designed an outdoor family challenge in the spring. They encouraged agencies and organizations to provide free and fun family activities from April through June. They used Sitkakids.com website and Sitka Kids Facebook page for promoting and tracking events. Several organizations donated gift cards for drawings (Youth Advocates, SAFV, SSD, SEARHC). Other participants included Sitka Public Library, 4H, Salty Spoke, Herring Protectors, STA, SSSC, etc. There was a total of 24 events hosted in the spring. Encouraged organizations to return to providing activities. Some new activities were created, and previous activities like Babies and Books boosted attendance. They also boosted advertising for some of the agencies’ separate activities. 100’s of children and adults impacted through the program, targeted families native, mixed ethnicities, low income. Registration to build database to keep up with those who participated became overwhelming. Wants to decide whether to continue the program next spring.

Andrew Hames – spent Friday afternoon at the PHS kitchen and learned about the lunch program, its challenges and needs. Mr. Hames wants to advocate for the kitchen program. He sat in on gardening class, interacted with students and talked to them about their experience. The garden program is still getting under way with greenhouse being built. Referring to Eric Van Cise’s last board meeting as a member, Mr. Hames acknowledged Mr. Van Cise as a mentor figure.

Blossom Teal Olsen – Sealaska Heritage Institute gave grant to BMS for STEAM classes. Ms. Teal-Olsen learned how the program works by using native arts practices in teaching math and science. She acknowledged Caitlin Woolsey for her work in the program. Ms. Teal-Olsen expressed her thankfulness to hear the Raven’s Way report. She is concerned and wants to look into how to approach the
issue. Also expressed appreciation for Mr. Van Cise and his work on the board over his two terms.

Paul Rioux – Commented on how great it is to see his kids in three different schools and likes how well things are going. Expressed appreciation for Mr. Van Cise.

Amy Morrison – Spent time at KGH as liaison. Saw first-hand how mitigation is working. Honored Mr. Van Cise for his dedication and passion.

Eric Van Cise – Mr. Van Cise expressed his thanks to the board and gave a brief speech on his accomplishments as a two-term board member.

Aitana Gluth – Student representative who introduced herself to the board and sees her role as an extension of her role as the student council president at SHS.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

- **BUDGET REPORT**
  
  The auditing process began two weeks ago and will finish up soon. The board will receive the results of the audit in November.

- **ENROLLMENT UPDATE**
  
  Current enrollment is 1138. Student count will continue through October 22nd.

- **SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE**
  
  Superintendent Hauser spoke to the success of in-person learning so far this school year. Student athletes have been spotlighted in Sitka Sentinel and stated how he has heard students express how glad they are to be competing again. Activities director, Rich Krupa informed Mr. Hauser that fall activities have strong participation. The Drama/Debate/Forensics team, which has won five consecutive state championships, begin their season this weekend. Action Plan Teams, the next step in the Strategic Plan process, are meeting weekly. Over 40 participants meet Mondays and Thursdays.

  COVID update – On October 26th we should hear news about the vaccine being available for students ages 5-11. Mr. Hauser encourages parents to talk to their pediatrician about vaccinating their student(s). Anti-viral pill is in approval process. Currently there are five active cases in SSD, or 0.4% of student population. Mitigation, identify, and isolate infected students. Superintendent Hauser compared Sitka with other regions in Alaska, pointing to evidence that letting up on mitigation resulted in increase in cases again, and led to multiple school closures. SSD has escaped the worst outcomes experienced by other districts around the country. All staff are working in cooperation to implement steps to keep schools open.

  Superintendent addressed standardized testing and informed the board that the state will be transitioning from PEAKS testing to the MAP assessment, which aligns with state standards and will better
reflect learning throughout the year. Supt. Hauser presented the results of the district’s PEAKS testing from 2017-2021. The district’s data was presented as compared to State of Alaska scores. Supt. Hauser concluded his presentation by sharing a video produced by two SHS students on how to properly use a COVID self-test.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **REVIEW OF BP 0520**
  
  Some changes were made to the notes section. Board approval is not required. The policy will be noted as reviewed.

- **REVIEW OF AR 1312**
  
  Updated language regarding public complaints of school personnel. The formal process for complaints is revised. Mr. Rioux commented that there exists a flow chart on the process of the complaint policy. BP 1312E (flow chart) will be presented at the November board meeting for final review.

- **DISCUSSION OF GRADUATION REGALIA**
  
  Superintendent Hauser acknowledged SSD’s long-standing practice of allowing regalia at graduation and stated that it is important to formulate this into official board policy. He is in support of allowing official regalia or object of cultural significance but is not in support of some type of approval process that other districts practice. Ms. Teal-Olsen commented on how vague the present policy is. What we uphold should be put in written policy and should be more supportive and less restrictive. President Morrison pointed to Supt. Hauser’s recommendation to form a committee to write a policy to present to the board. A policy committee will be formed at the October 15th special meeting and will establish a sub-committee to spearhead the policy development.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **SPECIAL MEETING**
  
  5:00PM OCTOBER 15, 2021 – DISTRICT BOARD ROOM

- **ANNUAL RETREAT IN SITKA WITH TIMI**
The meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.

Amy J. Morrison, President

Paul G. Rioux, Clerk