

Present:

Bill Christie, Chairperson
Lyn Hall, Vice-Chairperson
Carlene Keddie, Trustee
Michelle Marrelli, Trustee
Fred McLeod, Trustee
John Rustad, Trustee
Patricia Wick Thibault, Trustee

Dick Chambers, Superintendent of Schools
Bryan Mix, Secretary-Treasurer
Wendy De Marsh, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

In attendance:

Kerry Firth, Assistant Superintendent
Norm Monroe, Assistant Superintendent
Georgina Johnson, Director of Human Resources
Jane Anderlini, Transportation Administrator

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:56 p.m. following a brief presentation by Mr. Chambers, an informal question and answer session and an informal public input period.

2. **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Christie reviewed the agenda and the procedures to be followed for the meeting.

3. **RECONSIDERATION OF DECISION TO CLOSE SHADY VALLEY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

3.1 Report from Senior Administration

Mr. Chambers reviewed the following information:

- the dollars saved by the April 15 decision to close Shady Valley Elementary

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- the offer of a one-time grant of \$100,000 from the Ministry of Education, received on June 20
 - the potential enrolment at Shady Valley for September 2003
 - the funding that would be provided to the school by the district
 - the potential organization of classes for 2003/04
 - the support services the school would be able to provide
 - busing issues related to Aberdeen subdivision – including it in the catchment area for Shady Valley, Hart Highlands, or giving students the choice
 - busing issues related to grade 6 students – Shady Valley, Heather Park Middle School, or giving them the choice.

3.2 Motion to Waive Written Notice of Amendment to Bylaw

MOVED:

That written notice of the proposed amendment to School Closure Bylaw No. 3-2003 – Shady Valley Elementary School be waived.

CARRIED.

3.3 Motion to Rescind School Closure Bylaw

MOVED:

That School Closure Bylaw No. 3-2003 – Shady Valley Elementary School be rescinded.

CARRIED.

The issues discussed included the following:

- The poor timing of the receipt of the grant – if the small community grant had been provided for Shady Valley prior to April 15, the school would not have been closed.
- The disruption caused by the grant being received after the decision to close the school had been made; the issues included the rescinding of layoff notices, the re-staffing of the school, the reorganization of neighbouring schools and busing.
- The need for ongoing funding in order for the school to stay open in following years and the hope that the Ministry of Education would revise its rules regarding the designation of rural schools.

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- The “roller coaster” effect that year-to-year uncertainty regarding funding and the viability of the school would have on students, staff, parents and the community.
 - The effect re-opening the school would have on neighbouring schools.
 - The effect re-opening the school would have on all students in the district, due to the redirection of funds that would be required.
 - The levels of service that could be provided at the school, compared to those that would be available to the students if they attended nearby, larger schools.
 - The commitment made to the residents of the Aberdeen subdivision to bus their children to Hart Highlands, and the possibility of giving families in that area the choice to attend either Hart Highlands or Shady Valley.
 - The impact that returning the school to a Kindergarten to Grade 6 configuration would have on enrolment, class sizes and services at the school.
 - How long the school would remain viable, given the expected continuing decline in enrolment.

MOVED:

That Shady Valley Elementary School be configured as a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school for 2003/04 and the years to come.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That the primary catchment area for the Aberdeen subdivision be Hart Highlands Elementary School, and that busing be provided for students from this area to Hart Highlands. If busing can also be provided from Aberdeen to Shady Valley Elementary School for less than \$5,000, that the area be designated a dual catchment area, with the students given the choice of being bused to Hart Highlands or Shady Valley Elementary School.

CARRIED.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer