

June 13, 2017

## Minutes from QACREA Meeting March 21, 2017

11:30 Visitation

Richard Mc Neal, President, explained the absence of the Vice President and the Treasurer with the change of meeting date. Richard blessed the food. We all enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by Susie's Kitchen.

12:40 Richard called the meeting to order.

**Minutes:** Accepted as presented.

**Treasurer's Report:** Accepted as presented.

**Legislative Update:** Richard encouraged the group to keep up to date with the state website. If you haven't gone onto the new website-do. The suggestion was made that you check the website once a week. Create a new password since old passwords disappeared in December. MRSPA.org

Steve informed us that the state legislative committee has ended for this year. They looked at 100 bills. Go to the website to see their position on the bills. Our pension is 71% funded, however, some of the promised contributions have not been put in. The focus of attention was on 4 bills in the legislature having to do with self-contributing funds. Any money going to self-contribution takes away from the pension fund. Because we have a large pension fund it is getting the attention of the governor and the legislature.

Locally, our health benefits are not guaranteed. In Talbot County there was an attempt to take benefits away from spouses. We need to keep our eye on this.

**Scholarship:** Jean reported that we can celebrate an increase in the scholarship fund. We will need more than \$1,000 to meet our obligations next year. Information has gone to both high schools but to-date there have been no applicants. This is not unusual. Jean said guidance counselors will remind the students and she expects applications in April.

As of July 1, Jean will retire from the Scholarship Committee. We are looking for someone to assume this position. A clarification was made that scholarships are only awarded for one year. There was a discussion about whether there should be a minimum GPA. Scholarship recipients must send their grades after the first semester.

**Items for Discussion:** A list was passed so those who didn't receive their newsletter by email who wanted to could sign up again.

It was noted that the budget is presented at a work session, not at the regular board meeting. A lot of things have been proposed by the interim superintendent. Where will the money come

from? Richard talked to Mark Farley about 90% support of our health care. He wasn't able to assure Richard that it would continue at that level. As costs come back to the county what programs will be affected? 2020 graduation requirements may have an impact.

There has been a leadership shift in the county. High school changed principal and vice principal. Middle school principal went to the high school and there is currently an interim principal at the middle school.

The search for a new superintendent continues. Several meetings were postponed due to weather. Each of 5 focus groups take part in the interview process. Every candidate gets the same questions however you cannot ask another question for clarification. The final decision is made by the board and they do not have to follow the recommendation of the focus groups. The search started with 18 candidates and was narrowed down to 5 who were interviewed by the board. The final pool was made up of 3 candidates. Madelyn Hollis asked when it changed to focus groups becoming involved in the interview since it used to be the board interviewed and chose. Richard said the announcement would probably be made in another month.

Membership dues will increase locally from \$7 to \$10.

In Memoriam from March 2016-February 28, 2017 Richard shared names and asked for any additional. Ava suggested checking with Marcella Bordley. Frances Lewis' name was added.

Richard has a state meeting tomorrow. The executive director is gone with no information about his departure.

There are 6 spaces available for the annual business meeting. Let Richard know by April 7 if you are interested in going. The meeting starts at 9:30 on May 9 at Turf Valley.

Old Schoolhouse-Hope School – A list was passed for volunteers to sign up to have the building open the first Saturday of the month from May to October. Richard said they are tracking down a new door. There is discussion about who is responsible for upkeep. This is a cooperative effort with the Historical Society.

Nominations are being accepted for 2017-2018. Let Richard know if you are interested. The official vote will be in June.

Bring community service/volunteer hours to report at the June meeting.

For the good of the group- Dave Van Wyck asked what we thought about the new Secretary of the Dept. of Ed. Richard thinks we're in trouble. If you get a voucher the money comes out of the local budget. Mary Beth noted that we're all products of public education. We should speak up in support of public education.

1:30 Adjourned

Marge Felty, Secretary