

## NORTH SMITHFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 25, 2026

### North Smithfield Middle School

Members Present: T. Bartomioli, J. Meo, C. Simpkins, D. de la Cruz, W. Connell

Others Present: M. St. Jean, A. Melvin, A. Sepe, M. Fasano, R. Bonnell, K. Dailey, E. Albino, F. Halliwell, R. McAnulty, G. Stelle, M. Tek, G. Olaes, A. Gravel, E. Abino, P. Gamboa, S. Russo, V. Fleury, Adam

Meeting convened in Open Session via Zoom Virtual Meeting and in-person at North Smithfield Middle School cafeteria at 5:05 p.m.

1. Roll call was taken with all members noted as present. Mr. Connell arrived at 5:16 p.m.
2. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION/WORKSHOP REGARDING ATHLETIC FIELD AND FACILITIES:** Superintendent St. Jean provided a historical overview of the turf field management, noting that the addition of concession stands and bathrooms by the town significantly increased maintenance and scheduling complexities.

#### Key Points of Discussion:

- **Current Management Status:** The district recently issued RFPs for field management and concessions but received no bids for concessions and only one bid for management from the current vendor, ATM/Wide World.
- **Proposed Prioritization Groups:** The Superintendent outlined a draft structure for field usage:
  - **Group 1:** School and Municipal groups (No charge).
  - **Group 2:** Parent volunteer organizations and booster clubs (No charge).
  - **Group 3:** North Smithfield Youth Organizations (Proposed no charge, pending residency requirements of 60-80%).
  - **Group 4:** Outside for-profit organizations (Hourly fees).
- **Operational Challenges:** Self-hosting would require the district to assume all revenue risk and manage logistical burdens such as weekend custodial cleaning, which requires a four-hour minimum at \$50 *per hour* (\$200 total).
- **Financials:** The turf replacement fund currently holds approximately \$432,000 *\*\*in audited financials*. *The current contract with ATM provides a minimum of \$35,000 annually plus concession rent.*

#### Community Feedback:

- **Priority and Access:** Residents and organization leaders, including Frank Halliwell and Gino Olaes (Express Football), expressed concerns that for-profit entities were being prioritized over local youth non-profits.
- **Facility Maintenance:** Elizabeth Albino advocated for keeping bathrooms open for the health and hygiene of female student-athletes, while some parents expressed concern that town-managed facilities might fall into disrepair compared to the current well-maintained state of the turf.
- **Proposed Hybrid Solution:** Former Athletic Director Matthew Tek and current Athletic Director Robert McAnulty suggested a hybrid model where the district's Athletic Director retains control of the master

schedule using a new automated system, while a third party continues to handle maintenance, cleaning, and lining.

3. **OLD BUSINESS Discussion: Athletic Field & Facility Self-Hosting Management, Procedures, Pricing, and Next Steps:** The Committee discussed the feasibility of the hybrid management model. Superintendent St. Jean and the Committee noted that the scheduling system was already being populated with school and town league data.
  - **Contract Duration:** Community members suggested a **shorter-term contract** (rather than three years) to allow the incoming superintendent to evaluate the system and rebuild community trust.
  - **Next Steps:** The Committee decided to hold off on a formal vote to allow for further refinement of the prioritization policy and coordination with stakeholders. The item was tentatively slated for the July meeting
8. On motion by C. Simpkins, seconded by W. Connell, the Committee voted (5-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.