

School leaders not invited to reorganization meeting

BY STEPHEN BETTS
BDN STAFF

ROCKLAND — The administration’s plan to reorganize the Rockland-area schools that was unveiled earlier this month was sharply criticized at a Friday meeting of municipal officials in which school leaders were not invited.

The meeting was organized by Esther “Tess” Kilgour, who is one of Rockland’s representatives on the Regional School Unit 13 board. Kilgour invited selectmen and city councilors from the five municipalities that make up RSU 13.

Kilgour, who is both a leading voice to begin Rockland’s withdrawal from the school district and who is seeking re-election to the RSU 13 board, said she did not invite school board members because that would have constituted a formal public meeting and required public notices. She said she did not invite Su-

perintendent John McDonald or Business Manager Peter Orne because they were already committed to the reorganization plan.

“We have taken lots of leaps of faith in the past seven years,” Kilgour said, referring to when RSU 13 was formed. “These are legitimate concerns. We’re talking about an enormous amount of money.”

Kilgour had been one of the board members who last year called for merging schools for the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

RSU 13 Board Chairman Steve Roberts said Monday he could not comment on the meeting because he was not invited nor attended. He said if Kilgour has any information that is relevant to the plan, then she should



Kilgour

provide it to all board members.

At the Friday meeting, two consulting engineers — Donald Bresnahan and Bruce Colburn — criticized the plan on multiple fronts. Both acknowledged they were associated with groups that unsuccessfully sought to do energy assessment on RSU 13 buildings.

Thomaston selectmen and town officials attended. No city councilors attended.

The two engineers said the analysis of the district’s school buildings by Siemens Building Technologies, which won the contract, was limited to energy systems and did not examine the overall structures. In addition, they maintained that much of the proposed work in the schools would not qualify for financing under a law that allows districts to contract with energy companies.

Roberts said the board will vote Nov. 5 on the reor-

ganization project in concept only and that if that is approved, it will begin the process of hiring engineers and architects to look at the buildings.

The reorganization plan calls for spending \$13 million. McDonald has said at earlier meetings that this will not require any additional local property tax dollars because Siemens will finance the projects and the savings in energy and operational efficiencies will more than offset the expenses.

The reorganization plan calls for one high school and one middle school. The Gilford Butler School in South Thomaston and the Lura Libby School in Thomaston would close.

Oceanside East would need renovations and a larger cafeteria. The building now housing Oceanside West, which would become the middle school next year, would also require renovations. Owls Head Central School would be subject to a

major expansion to handle the students from Gilford Butler. Lesser renovations would be needed at the Thomaston Grammar School and the Cushing Community School.

Colburn and Bresnahan both said that before deciding which buildings to close and which to renovate, there should have been an overall assessment of the structures by architects and engineers.

“Siemens looked at the mechanical systems — boilers, heating, ventilation. But what about the architectural aspects? What about the structural aspects? What about the roof, the telecommunication system, the life codes?” Bresnahan said.

The two engineers also said that the state law that allows for third-party financing of school projects by energy companies is limited to energy-related projects and not to additions.

“If we’ve got \$5 million to

spend and want to improve education, is the cafeteria the place we want to dump our money?” Kilgour said.

Tom Seekins of Siemens referred questions to RSU 13 officials, saying they were the customer.

Roberts said formal votes will be needed on each step, including closing of a school.

The Nov. 5 vote by the board on whether to give conceptual approval to the reorganization will come two days after Rockland voters decide whether to begin the withdrawal process. A withdrawal referendum is on the Nov. 3 ballot.

McDonald has said that if the referendum is approved, the reorganization plan will have to be put on the shelf. He said banks will not finance projects when the district is going through such uncertainty. In addition, he said towns will not support closure of schools if Rockland is planning on leaving.



COURTESY OF JOHN MILLER

A large evergreen on Meadow Street in Bingham catches fire Sunday afternoon as a barn fire spreads to the adjacent three-story home.

Firefighters save nearby Bingham church

BY NOK-NOI RICKER
BDN STAFF

BINGHAM — A Meadow Street barn fire Sunday afternoon quickly spread to an attached farmhouse, but flames were stopped by the first group of firefighters to arrive before they reached a nearby church, Bingham Fire Chief Scott Laweryson said Monday.

“The initial guys did a great job,” Laweryson said.

The First Congregational Church is located “about 8 feet” from where the barn

was burning, and the wind was whipping up the flames, the chief said.

“It did melt the vinyl siding, but it’s intact,” Laweryson said of the church.

The fire broke out at around 4:30 p.m. and the homeowners, who purchased the house several months ago, were not at home when the blaze broke out.

“Something inside the barn was the source of the ignition,” Laweryson said. “It started in the barn and spread to the house. The

house and the barn are still standing, but there is a lot of fire damage and a lot of smoke damage.”

The dozen local firefighters were assisted by seven or eight others from Solon Fire Department.

“There were no injuries to humans but they did lose two dogs,” the fire chief said.

Investigators from the state fire marshal’s office responded to the blaze on Sunday and returned Monday to survey the damage and look for a cause.

Sgt. Ken Grimes of the state fire marshal’s office said Monday afternoon that the investigation continues and will involve some heavy equipment needed to remove damaged walls to see what is underneath.

“Until we can see it we can’t determine what caused it,” Grimes said.

The building stands, but is uninhabitable at this point, the fire chief said.

“It was a three-story older home,” Laweryson said. “It was a really nice house.”

REUTERS

Fairchild Semiconductor International Inc. has hired Goldman Sachs Group Inc. to find a buyer and is in talks with companies including ON Semiconductor Corp. and Infineon Technologies AG, Bloomberg reported.

Fairchild’s shares rose as much as 23.6 percent to \$17.48 on Wednesday, giving the company a market value of more than \$2 billion. The company has corporate offices and manufacturing and design facilities in South Portland.

No deal is assured and a transaction isn’t imminent, Bloomberg reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

Fairchild and Goldman Sachs declined to comment. ON Semiconductor and Infineon were not immediately available for comment.

There have been a number of deals in the semiconductor industry this year as companies look to cut costs and expand their offerings.

Intel Corp. agreed in June to buy Altera Corp. for \$16.7 billion, while Avago Tech-

nologies Ltd. said in May that it would buy Broadcom Corp. for \$37 billion.

Anglo-German chipmaker Dialog Semiconductor agreed last month to buy U.S. peer Atmel Corp. for about \$4.6 billion. Last year in August, Germany’s Infineon announced its largest ever acquisition when it said it would buy U.S.-based International Rectifier for about \$3 billion.

Fairchild, which makes chips for power management as well as home appliances, cars, cloud computing and consumer electronics, had about 115.4 million shares outstanding as of July 26.

The company reported smaller-than-expected quarterly profit and revenue in July, hurt by weak demand from makers of mobile handsets and appliances.

Fairchild shares closed up 15.6 percent at \$16.35 on Wednesday. ON Semiconductor closed up 7.1 percent at \$10.74.

Reporting by Anya George Tharakan and Alan John Koshy in Bengaluru.

Suspect sought in theft of child’s tablet

BY DAWN GAGNON
BDN STAFF

DEXTER — Dexter police are hoping to identify a man who allegedly stole a child’s tablet from a convenience store.

The theft happened about 7 p.m. Thursday at A.E. Robinson convenience store, where a local man and his 5-year-old son had stopped to get something to eat, Dexter police Officer Warren Ackerman said Friday evening.

Also at the store at the time was a man who arrived on one of two all-terrain vehicles with two other riders, one of whom might have been a woman, the officer said. One of the ATVs is believed to have been black and red and the other was dark colored, he said.

Ackerman said police believe the man swiped the tablet, which was sitting atop a Bible, while the father and son got up from their table to

pick up their food order.

The officer said that several store items, including food products, also went missing about that time.

In an attempt to identify the man believed to have stolen the tablet, investigators obtained video surveillance system images from the store and posted them on the Dexter Police Department’s Facebook page.

On Monday, Officer Gary Morin said the move paid off.

As of late Monday afternoon, the department’s post had been shared by nearly 570 people and had gathered 24 comments.

“We have a person of interest,” Morin said.

He said that the tablet has yet to be recovered, but the investigation is ongoing.

Anyone with information about the man seen in the surveillance system images or about the missing tablet is asked to call the Dexter Police Department at 924-7622.

Tom’s of Maine settles suit for \$4.5 million

BY DARREN FISHELL
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — Tom’s of Maine has agreed to a \$4.5 million settlement to resolve claims that it mislabeled products as “natural.”

A U.S. District Court judge in Florida’s southern district last month gave preliminary approval to the settlement that stands to return to affected customers about \$28 per claim and up to about \$1 million in attorney’s fees and expenses, according to court records.

With the settlement, the Kennebunk-based Tom’s of Maine Inc. denied any wrongdoing.

Colgate-Palmolive Co. bought Tom’s in 2006 in a \$100 million cash sale.

The complaint from Florida resident Allison Gay alleged damages to customers who they argued in their complaint “paid more per ounce than they would have for toothpaste that does not claim to be natural.”

The claims related to a range of Tom’s products that contained the compounds lauryl sulfate, propylene glycol, poloxamer 355, aluminum chlorohydrate and titanium dioxide.

Preliminary approval of the class action last month opened the process for customers to file claims for any

such products purchased between March 25, 2009, and Sept. 23, 2015, according to a website set up by Dahl Administrators, at tomsproductsclassaction.com, to provide notifications about the case.

The company, employed to manage notification to possible class-action members, began issuing notices of the claims in late September and issued a news release about the class action suit Friday.

The terms of the \$4.5 million settlement will require final court approval at a hearing scheduled for January, and claims will be collected through May 7, 2016.

That hearing will deter-

mine whether the terms of the preliminary settlement are fair and whether the members of the class meet federal rules.

The court is accepting objections to the settlement in the meantime, as well.

One objection has been filed in the case so far, from Fremont, California, resident Rebecca Harris, who wrote that she has been a Tom’s customer since 2009 and has no problems with the labeling.

“While I have no expertise on these matters of fairness in advertising, I find this lawsuit to be a form of bullying,” Harris wrote, asking to be excluded from the class action.

Camden woman gets 6 months for crime spree

BY STEPHEN BETTS
BDN STAFF

CAMDEN — A 29-year-old Camden woman was sentenced Friday to six months in jail for a series of crimes that included breaking into a neighbor’s home and stealing a credit card from a potential employer during a job interview.

Sarah Havener pleaded guilty in Knox County Unified Court to burglary, two counts of theft, burglary of a motor vehicle, misuse of

identification, possession of drugs, trafficking in prison contraband and violating a condition of release.

Judge Patricia Worth accepted the plea agreement reached between Havener’s defense and the district attorney’s office. Worth sentenced Havener to three years in jail with all but six months suspended, followed by two years probation.

According to Assistant District Attorney Jeffrey Baroody, Havener in July had a job interview at a

Camden store and the owner later reported that her wallet was missing. Soon after, police received a report that Havener was trying to use the victim’s credit card.

Havener was charged for that incident but released on bail.

In September, she was charged with breaking into a neighbor’s home at an apartment complex in Camden. The victim reported to police that she allegedly saw some of the stolen items inside Havener’s apartment

while walking by her window.

Items taken included a television, toys and clothes.

When Havener was arrested for this burglary and taken to jail, she was found to have Adderall in her possession.

Defense attorney William Pagmano said that Havener committed all the offenses while under the influence of drugs. He said she has become a changed person while in jail. Havener told the judge she was working to earn her general education diploma.

Man shot during robbery

BY DAWN GAGNON
BDN STAFF

AUGUSTA — Augusta police are investigating an early Saturday morning shooting they say was related to an armed robbery, Deputy Police Chief Jared Mills said Monday.

The incident happened about 5:30 a.m. on Burns Road when a 43-year-old man was shot by an unknown male suspect, Mills said in a news release. The man’s injuries are not considered life-threatening, he said.

The victim provided only limited details about the inci-

dent. However, after interviewing witnesses and gathering evidence, investigators learned that the suspect was described as a black man wearing a ski mask and that the victim suffered his injuries during an armed robbery involving money and illegal drugs.

“Investigators do not believe that this was a random act of violence as it appears the victim was targeted specifically by the unknown male suspect during this incident,” Mills said.

Anyone with information should call Detective Sgt. Jason Cote at 626-2370, ext. 3424.