

Regional School District 12  
Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes  
Shepaug Valley Middle High School  
March 10, 2014

The Business Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m., on Monday, March 10, 2014, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf and Peter Tagley. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present. Tony Bedini was absent.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Valerie Andersen to amend the agenda to move items 5.4 and 7.3 to the beginning of the meeting because Mr. Cava needs to leave.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

**MOTION:** made by Alan Brown, seconded by Susan Stumpf to add two items to the end of the agenda to discuss two issues: 7.6 “Cool Schools” profiling at Burnham, and an after school childcare program at Burnham.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

*Facilities Committee:* Gregory Cava reported that a new employee in the facilities department has been hired to fill a vacancy for grounds/maintenance and he is a licensed electrician.

*HRRA Composting Initiative:* Mr. Cava reported that the committee met earlier with Ms. Jen Iannucci from the Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority (HRRA). She spoke about a pilot project within the Housatonic region to reduce the cost of waste disposal and assist the HRRA in removing organic material suitable for composting from the waste stream. The pilot is being run in Bridgewater and she requested that Burnham School (the only Region 12 school in the HRRA territory) participate. This program would not require on-site composting, rather, Region 12 would separate the waste streams with organic material being collected in biodegradable bags and placed in a separate waste container which would be collected separately by our waste hauler and transported to New Milford Farms for composting. The resulting material would then be available for use by Region 12, e.g., in providing compost to amend the soils in the Burnham garden. This program would be subsidized by HRRA for six months and then a rate would be negotiated or Burnham could withdraw from the program.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Michelle Gorra to participate in the HRRA Bridgewater Waste pilot program for the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year.

Discussion followed.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

Gregory Cava left the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

*Approval of Field Trips:* COLT Rhyme Celebration – Old Saybrook High School, Old Saybrook, CT, March 19, 2014 (Grade 3 – BFS, BS, WPS); Community Service Trip to ATC Kellogg Conservation Center, South Egremont, MA, April 12-14, 2014 (Grades 9-10); Senior Class Trip to Williamsburg, VA, May 2-4, 2014 (Grade 12); Museum of Modern Art, NYC, May 14, 2014 (Grade 11).

*Approval of Minutes:* Kelly Lott requested the Minutes of the Education Committee Meeting – February 24, 2014, be removed from the consent agenda because an update on the curriculum was not given as indicated in the first item under the EDUCATION heading.

**MOTION:** made by Kelly Lott, seconded by Peter Tagley to amend the minutes on page 1 under EDUCATION by striking out the words “and Curriculum Update” on the heading.

Discussion followed.

**MOTION** made by Kelly Lott, seconded by Valerie Andersen to amend the motion to have the **AMENDED:** heading read “AP Scores and Offerings:”

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

### **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chairman Hirschfield thanked all the Board members for attending the hearings and special meetings the other night and also thanked the public for attending and giving their comments.

### **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Cosentino passed out correspondence related to the after school childcare program which was intended originally for Burnham School only but now the request has extended to Booth Free School with a bus request. The next correspondence Dr. Cosentino spoke about was in relation to the WFSB Cool School program. Dr. Cosentino supports both programs but noted procedures need to be followed. She is concerned about the timing with SBAC and CMT testing.

*Personnel Matters:* Dr. Cosentino informed the Board of Daniel Huddy’s resignation (effective 6/30/14).

*Tuition Information:* Mr. Giesen spoke about the method developed to calculate tuition rates for non-resident students. It is figured primarily from the previous year’s audited ED001 state report, strictly educational costs, excludes special education costs, less transportation costs, and divided by the number of students and multiplied at a 90% rate. Sherman is figured at 75% of the rate on the SSP; as agreed to in the contract with Sherman, and the bus is paid by Region 12. Discussion followed with thoughts on reducing the rate to possibly 60%.

**MOTION:** made by Alan Brown, seconded by Kelly Lott to reduce the tuition rate to 60%.

Discussion followed with a point of order that tuition is not on the agenda as an action item. The motion and second were withdrawn. Mr. Brown requested the tuition be on the agenda as an action item at the next meeting. Further discussion followed that the town leaders should be included in the conversation.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Communications:* Mr. Brown reported that the submissions for the newsletter are due Friday.

*Education:* Mrs. Gorra reported that the next topic will be Project Lead the Way, the tech program at the middle school, and Sheila Gambino will present on it.

*Finance:* Mrs. Andersen reported that the committee met earlier. There are overages in the legal/auditing due to the costs for the architects. Mrs. Andersen explained that if the referendum is successful, those costs can be reimbursed by the State. There is \$60,000 left in the budget for heating. The current rate for oil is \$3.06 a gallon. The transportation contract with All Star will be presented at the next meeting for approval. Mrs. Andersen felt the budget presentation by the Superintendent earlier was outstanding. Another bank will be chosen to take care of the pension funds as Bank of American Merrill Lynch will not handle it any longer. The budget will be discussed at the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Alan Brown left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

*Negotiations:* Chairman Hirschfield reported that the negotiations will be starting for the nurses.

Alan Brown returned to the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

*Policy:* The committee has several policies on the agenda for first readings and second readings. The committee met last month and reviewed a letter from a parent regarding their student who has allergies.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

*Second Reading - Policy 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process:* Mrs. Gorra reminded the Board that changes were made under the “firearm” section at the first reading.

**MOTION:** made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Susan Stumpf to approve Policy 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process for a second reading.

Discussion followed.

**VOTE:** In favor: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: James Hirschfield.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

*First Reading – Policy 5131.6 – Alcohol Use, Drugs and Tobacco:* Mrs. Gorra explained that the language in red came straight from CABE.

**MOTION:** made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Michael Sinatra to approve Policy 5131.6 – Alcohol Use, Drugs and Tobacco (including Performance Enhancing Substances) for a first reading.

Discussion followed.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

*First Reading – Policy 5141.21 – Administering Medications:* Mrs. Gorra pointed out that this policy is updated frequently. This year it is updated to include the glucagon as shown in red.

**MOTION:** made by Michael Sinatra, seconded by Valerie Andersen to approve Policy 5141.21 – Administering Medications for a first reading.

Discussion followed.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

*Consider request of GUNN Memorial Library to use Washington Primary School for the Washington Connecticut Antique Show Waiving Policy Prohibiting Alcoholic Beverages:* Chairman Hirschfield spoke to Jean Chapin about the request and that it does require approval each year as alcohol is involved.

**MOTION:** made by Alan Brown, seconded by Valerie Andersen to allow the GUNN Memorial Library to use Washington Primary School for the Washington Connecticut Antique Show waiving the policy prohibiting alcoholic beverages for their event in October 2014.

Discussion followed. Dr. Cosentino spoke about how the WPS students were included in the show last year in putting together a mural on the wall which was visible at the entrance. Students from WPS and Shepaug art classes were allowed to view the show prior. Chairman Hirschfield stressed that alcohol will not be served while students are on the campus.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

*Discussion of FY15 Budget Proposal:* Will be considered at the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*WFSB “Cool Schools”:* Alan Brown spoke about the initiation of Burnham School to WFSB. Chairman Hirschfield reminded everyone that there is a process that needs to be considered. Dr. Cosentino went over the timeline of the request and that it would be best to wait until May or June for the WFSB promotion of Burnham School. Discussion followed.

Gregory Cava returned to the meeting at 8:56 p.m.

*After school childcare Education Connection program:* Valerie Andersen began the discussion on the Education Connection childcare program. She spoke about concerns about the liability, costs and the proper channels that it needs to go through. Alan Brown spoke on the specifics of the program to be held at Burnham School as a joint effort of the town of Bridgewater and the Burnham PTO. By offering the program to Booth Free students, bussing would need to be available. In order to put the program in place for the fall, it needs to be reviewed now. Dr. Cosentino explained the events from last fall when Carolan

Dwyer approached her about the program for Burnham only. It wasn't until last week that it was brought to her attention that Booth Free School was invited to participate and a bus was needed; which would impact the budget and Roxbury. Dr. Cosentino spoke about a visit she had that morning from Sarah Forman, the owner of Children's Station in Roxbury and her letter that was passed out earlier. Dr. Cosentino expressed that the request in the fall became an issue when other schools were being included. Discussion followed. Alan Brown requested that Carolan Dwyer and Sarah Forman be given an opportunity to give a brief statement. Ms. Dwyer spoke first giving details to the timeline, the need for childcare, the exchange of conversations with Sarah Forman, the Roxbury PTO and Education Connection. Ms. Forman spoke about her need for a bus that was rejected when she first opened up the Children's Station seven years ago. Education Connection will be invited to make a presentation on the program.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carolan Dwyer, Bridgewater – spoke about the “Cool Schools” promotion, microphones for Board meetings, and tuition.

Paula Conway, Roxbury – spoke about the after school childcare program and the Children's Station.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.