

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Education Committee Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley Middle High School
April 21, 2014

The Education Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., on Monday, April 21, 2014, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf, and Peter Tagley. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, Robert Giesen, Director of Finance were also present.

Also in attendance were: Teresa DeBrito, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Don O'Leary, Director of Facilities; Cathy Colella, Principal, BFS and BS; Emily Judd, Principal, WPS; Lori Ferreira, Assistant Principal, SVMHS; Sandi DiBella, RN, BFS and Lisa McQueen, RN, BS.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items approved:

Approval of Minutes: Business Meeting, April 7, 2014
District Budget Hearing, April 7, 2014
Special Meeting, April 7, 2014.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chairman Hirschfield thanked everyone for their effort with the referendum and hopes that it will result in a good and healthy vote. Mr. Hirschfield also reminded everyone of the School Budget vote May 6 between 12:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A Review of the Projected Enrollment for Booth Free and Burnham Schools was handed out by Dr. Cosentino. Board member Kelly Lott asked for the same projection for Washington Primary School. Mr. Tagley requested a presentation be made to the Board on multiage classes.

EDUCATION

Dr. Cosentino introduced teacher, Heidi Edel with highlights from the French trip to Quebec. There were 19 Shepaug students who traveled to Quebec. The students stayed with host families in Quebec. The students presented a slideshow of their trip and commented on their pictures. Remarks by the students were that along with it being fun, it was a great experience, they were able to practice their French and that they learned about the culture. Mrs. Edel shared how she had received many positive compliments in regard to our students. Mrs. Edel also thanked the American Legion for providing a scholarship and the Connecticut Community Foundation for grant money to help with scholarships.

An update on the Region's Vision/Mission was presented by Emily Judd, WPS Principal. A new semi-formal draft of the Vision/Mission was handed out to the Board. Mrs. Judd stated that the process began last June and has included input from staff, administration and parents.

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen and seconded by Emily Hibbard to approve and adopt the new Vision/Mission statement presented.

VOTE: In favor: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Greg Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf and Peter Tagley.

Abstained: Kelly Lott.

(11 – 1) Motion passed

Information regarding the upcoming referendum with a Question & Answer session began with Petina Killany, ARCADIS. Also giving an informational summary were Angela Cahill, Fletcher-Thompson, Anthony Amato, Volunteer, Washington and Barry Bernabe from Webster Bank. The Board had an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Killany followed the end of discussion with a brief timeline involving grants should the referendum pass. If it were to pass, the EDO49 grant form would need to be completed by June 30, 2014.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading: Policy 6142.101 – Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy)

MOTION: made by Greg Cava and seconded by Susan Stumpf to accept as a second reading, Policy 6142.101 – Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy)

Discussion followed the motion with explanations and thoughts on the policy by Board members and Lisa McQueen, RN, Burnham School nurse, also spoke on behalf of this policy.

MOTION: made by Peter Tagley seconded by Michael Sinatra to move the question.

VOTE: In favor: Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Greg Cava, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf, and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: Valerie Andersen, Michelle Gorra and Kelly Lott.

Motion passed (9 – 3)

VOTE: In favor: Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Greg Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, and Susan Stumpf, and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: Valerie Andersen and Kelly Lott.

Motion Passed (10-2)

NEW BUSINESS

To consider and if appropriate, revise School Calendar – last day for students on June 18 (1/2 day) and Professional Development for staff on June 19 and 20.

MOTION: made by Tony Bedini and seconded by Peter Tagley to approve the revised school calendar making June 18 a half day and the last day for students with June 19 and 20 Professional Development days for teachers.

VOTE: Unanimous

To approve the expenditure of funds for the printing of the brochure, explanatory text, posters/signs to inform the public of the vote as recommended and approved by the voting advisory committee, April 8, 2014. Dr. Cosentino explained that a committee had been formed with each of the three towns being represented by a Board member. The committee consisted of Dr. Cosentino, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Susan Stumpf and the Board's attorney, Gary Brochu. As copies of each of the printings were handed out to Board members, Dr. Cosentino explained that these had already been approved by legal counsel and SEEC, and that she (Dr. Cosentino) said they had been approved previously in March but was asking the Board to approve them one more time before being printed.

Discussion followed. Valerie Andersen asked for a change in paragraph two. It should read Prek to 5. During discussion, Dr. Cosentino stated that all three Board members had approved the three documents. More discussion followed with the concern of having pictures of the new Prek to 5 consolidated school as part of the mailing.

MOTION: made by Alan Brown and seconded by Susan Stumpf to amend the explanatory text by adding that a yes vote would mean "and the closing of the elementary schools in each of the three towns."

Discussion followed with concerns about the legality of changing the wording of the explanatory text, paragraph two.

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen and seconded by Peter Tagley to move the question.

VOTE: In favor: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Greg Cava, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: Alan Brown, Michelle Gorra, Kelly Lott, Susan Stumpf, and Michael Sinatra.

Motion passes: (7 – 5)

VOTE: In favor: Alan Brown, Kelly Lott, and Susan Stumpf.

Opposed: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Greg Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, and Peter Tagley.

Abstained: Michael Sinatra.

Motion failed: (3 – 8 – 1)

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen seconded by Tony Bedini to approve the expenditure of funds, not to exceed \$5150.00, for the printing of the brochures, explanatory text, posters/signs to inform the public of the vote as recommended and approved by the voting advisory committee on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

AMENDED: by Valerie Andersen and seconded by Peter Tagley to amend her motion to: to approve the explanatory text, brochure and flyer and to approve the expenditure of funds, not to exceed \$5150.00, for postage and printing of brochure, explanatory text, and posters/signs to inform the public of the vote as recommended and approved by the voting advisory committee on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

VOTE: In favor: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Greg Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield, Jennifer Pote, and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: Kelly Lott and Michael Sinatra.

Abstained: Alan Brown and Susan Stumpf.

Motion passed: (8 – 2 – 2)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carolyn Dwyer (Bridgewater) – Questioned who Dr. Cosentino spoke with at SEEC; asked about staff reductions; Ms. Dwyer remarked on hot lunch at Burnham School.

Julie Stuart (Bridgewater) – Remarked on the referendum April 29, on S.O.S., and on some of the comments made during the evening by BOE members.

Kim Lindeman (Marbledale) – Remarked how impressed she was with Dr. Cosentino, that she was able to meet in a timely matter with the Superintendent, was able to get information and that being a new resident in the region, with the information she was able to obtain, she is a yes/yes on the upcoming vote.

Carrie DeMilio (Roxbury) – Spoke in regard to information available about the referendum and that she is a yes/yes vote.

Frannie Caco (New Preston) – Said that we should be thinking of making education better for our children. She believes we should adapt and move forward. Mrs. Caco reminded the BOE that they are an entity of the state and represent every child. She will be a yes/yes vote on the 29th.

Christine Hardy (Roxbury) – Said she is for consolidation and spoke on behalf of it. She is new to the region and will be a yes/yes vote.

Paula Conway (Roxbury) – Brought with her a handout put together by Gary Lord regarding taxes, that will be handed out at the Roxbury Town Meeting that will be held tomorrow night. Copies were given to BOE members. Mrs. Conway remarked that Barbara Henry had already spoken at a previous town meeting of the possible uses for Booth Free School should the referendum pass.

Linda Schneider (Roxbury) – Spoke in favor of consolidation and that we are fortunate to have Dr. Cosentino to guide us. She remarked on being embarrassed by some of the statements Board members made during the evening.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen and seconded by Tony Bedini to adjourn.

VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.