

Regional School District 12  
Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes  
Shepaug Valley School  
July 14, 2014

The Business Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:02 p.m., on Monday, July 14, 2014, by James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, James Hirschfield, Emily Hibbard, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Susan Stumpf, and Peter Tagley. Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Superintendent was also present. Michelle Gorra arrived at 7:05 p.m. Michael Sinatra was absent.

**BOARD REORGANIZATION**

**Election of Officers**

Dr. Cosentino welcomed everyone and opened the floor for nominations for Board Chair.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Emily Hibbard to nominate James Hirschfield as Chair.

**MOTION:** made by Kelly Lott, seconded by Valerie Andersen to nominate Alan Brown as Chair.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Valerie Andersen to close nominations.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

Dr. Cosentino asked members to cast their written vote for Chair.

**RESULTS:** James Hirschfield – In favor: nine (9) votes; Alan Brown – In favor: two (2); Absent: one (1).

Dr. Cosentino announced Mr. Hirschfield as the Chair and turned the meeting over to Chairman Hirschfield.

Chairman Hirschfield thanked those who voted for him and opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

**MOTION:** made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Emily Hibbard to nominate Alan Brown as Vice Chair.

Chairman Hirschfield closed the nominations seeing there were no others and asked members to cast their written vote for Vice Chair.

**RESULTS:** Alan Brown – In favor: eleven (11), Absent: one (1).

Chairman Hirschfield announced Mr. Brown as Vice Chair and opened the floor for nominations for Secretary.

**MOTION:** made by Alan Brown, seconded by Valerie Andersen to nominate Susan Stumpf as Secretary.

Chairman Hirschfield closed the nominations seeing there were no others and asked members to cast their written vote for Secretary.

**RESULTS:** Susan Stumpf – In favor: eleven (11), Absent: one (1).

Chairman Hirschfield announced Mrs. Stumpf as Secretary and opened the floor for nominations for Treasurer.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Alan Brown to nominate Valerie Andersen as Treasurer.

Chairman Hirschfield closed the nominations seeing there were no others and asked members to cast their written vote for Treasurer.

**RESULTS:** Valerie Andersen – In favor: eleven (11), Absent: one (1).

Chairman Hirschfield announced Mrs. Andersen as Treasurer and congratulated everyone. He then passed around a sign-up sheet for committees.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

*Approval of Minutes:* Education Committee Meeting, June 16, 2014.

### **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chairman Hirschfield recognized the tragic loss of Joseph Awlasewicz; a student who lived in Roxbury, and thanked the administrators and staff who showed support to the family the night of the accident and the days that followed. Emily Hibbard also commended Dr. Cosentino, the administrators, counselors, and staff for their immediate outpouring of support and kindness to the family and the students in the Region that night and the days following.

Chairman Hirschfield spoke about looking forward to the year ahead and the need for a plan to move forward.

**MOTION:** made by Michelle Gorra, seconded by Valerie Andersen to add an item to the agenda under new business; 9.2 Discussion on Shepaug Referendum.

**VOTE:** Unanimous.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*Correspondence:* Dr. Cosentino expressed sadness over the loss of Joey. She commended the staff on the way they came together in this tragedy. Dr. Cosentino was proud of the way all the PTOs from all three towns, Barbara Henry, and the Pastor all came together to support the family and students.

Dr. Cosentino shared that Lil Winter had fallen about a month ago and that she is in rehab in Litchfield Woods Health Care in Torrington. Dr. Cosentino also shared the sad news of Leticia's husband passing away recently.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the enrollment numbers for the school year coming up (handout) subject to change. She gave an update on the families that were on the REACH waiting list and that the program will remain 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM with an option to leave at 12:00 PM.

Dr. Cosentino gave an update on the aftercare program. Unfortunately, there were not enough students to conduct the program at Burnham School. Dr. Cosentino will meet with PTOs next week. Busing is being considered for next year's budget for the program but a plan will need to be devised in order to move forward.

Dr. Cosentino updated the board on the publicity proposals that she is seeking. An RFQ will go out tomorrow. She is also working with Sheila Gambino to have something available for the Bridgewater Fair and for real estate agents.

Dr. Cosentino handed out The Advantage hardcover book and requested the board members read it before the August retreat. She explained that the book had also been given to each of the First Selectmen, the Board of Finance Chairs and the administrators. The book deals with organizational health put into four goals: build a cohesive leadership team; create clarity; over communicate clarity; reinforce clarity.

Dr. Cosentino handed out an article regarding information from CAPSS on NextEd (Education for the next economy). It talks about the education system and where it is going. She spoke on how she is using it as a guideline for developing her plan and putting her goals together to move the middle high school forward.

Dr. Cosentino reminded the Board about the CABE conference in November and encouraged them to attend. She spoke about Resolution Proposals that are submitted by school districts to CABE for them to send to the legislature.

*Personnel:* Dr. Cosentino reported on the new hires: Victoria Boretsky, Music Teacher at BFS, BS and WPS; Cathleen Brooks, Elementary Teacher (grade 3) at BFS, Caren Carpenter, Technology Education Teacher at SVS; Nicole Dabros, Elementary Teacher (grade 5) at WPS; Brooke Faison, Library Clerk at WPS; William Hosking, Elementary Teacher (grade 2) at WPS; Adam Nanavaty, Instrument/Strings Teacher, District wide.

Dr. Cosentino reported that Jody Schroeder, Special Education Teacher at SVS retired (effective 6/30/2014). She reported on staff that resigned effective 6/30/2014: Kevin Klepacki, Band Teacher at SVS; Lauren Hunt, Library Clerk at WPS; and Christopher Tiesler, Physics Teacher at SVS.

Emily Hibbard left the meeting at 7:43 p.m. and returned at 7:45 p.m.

Discussion followed on the enrollment and recommendations for the resolution proposal that the Board could put forward to CABE.

*BOE Meeting Schedule:* Schedule of the meetings for the 2014-2015 school year were in Board packets and available for public.

*Board Retreat – August 19, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.:* The First Selectmen, Finance Board Chairs will be attending the retreat. A light dinner will be provided at the retreat.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Communications:* No report.

*Education:* No report.

*Facilities:* Mr. Cava reported that the time of the committee meetings will be later than 5:00 PM.

*Finance:* No report.

*Negotiations:* Nurses negotiations have been taking a while but they are very close to being complete.

*Policy:* Mrs. Gorra reported the committee met in June and reviewed the Nonresident Attendance policy.

*Long Range Plan:* This committee will start up again in the fall. A chairperson is needed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

*Second Reading – Policy 5118.3 – Nonresident Attendance:* Chairman Hirschfield reported the policy was shared after the first reading with the Board's attorney who felt it needed some changes. Mrs. Gorra shared that the policy has been reviewed by CABA's lawyers and if the Board approved the policy for a second reading and later want to change it as their attorney recommends, they can.

**MOTION:** made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Alan Brown to approve Policy 5118.3 – Nonresident Attendance for a second reading.

Discussion followed.

**MOTION:** made by Gregory Cava, seconded by Peter Tagley to postpone indefinitely the approval for a second reading.

Discussion followed.

**VOTE:** In favor: Tony Bedini, Gregory Cava, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield and Peter Tagley.

Opposed: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Michelle Gorra, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote and Susan Stumpf.

(5 – 6) Motion failed.

Discussion followed on the motion to approve Policy 5118.3.

**VOTE:** In favor: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Michelle Gorra, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote and Susan Stumpf.

Opposed: Tony Bedini, Gregory Cava, Emily Hibbard, James Hirschfield and Peter Tagley.

Motion passed (6 – 5).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*To consider and if appropriate, set rate of tuition for out-of-district students:* Alan Brown spoke about setting a rate lower than the tuition currently charged for out-of-district students.

**MOTION:** made by Alan Brown, seconded by Valerie Andersen to set tuition rate to \$7,500.

Discussion followed. Some Board members felt this issue should be held off until the retreat with the town leaders to have their input. Some felt that time is of the essence for parents to plan.

Michelle Gorra left the meeting at 8:25 p.m. and returned at 8:30 p.m.

**VOTE:** In favor: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Michelle Gorra, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote and Susan Stumpf.

Opposed: Tony Bedini, Gregory Cava, James Hirschfield and Peter Tagley.

Abstained: Emily Hibbard.

Motion passed (6 – 4 – 1).

*Discuss Shepaug Referendum:* Michelle Gorra began a discussion about the Shepaug referendum and the reason why it failed. Some felt voters were fatigued, that the Board did not sell the project, bad feelings from the prior referendum, too soon after the last referendum.

Discussion then centered on planning another referendum in December / January for the repairs after the Long Range Planning Committee meets and plans a strategy on how to proceed on the Board's commitment to students in providing a nurturing, positive environment. NEASC will be coming in the spring.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No executive session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.