

Regional School District 12
Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
September 8, 2014

The Business Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:02 p.m., on Monday, September 8, 2014, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Tony Bedini, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Emily Hibbard, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra, Susan Stumpf, and Peter Tagley. Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Superintendent was also present. Alan Brown arrived at 7:03 p.m. Valerie Andersen was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: Business Meeting – August 18, 2014 and Retreat – August 19, 2014.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chairman Hirschfield spoke about the successful opening of school and that the Board retreat was productive.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel: Dr. Cosentino reported on the new hires: Drew Barksdale, Paraprofessional at WPS; Vincent Cosentino and John Ferreira, Front Entrance Security at SVS; Kevin O'Neill, Educational Assistant at SVS. Dr. Cosentino reported that Nancy Knapp was transferred from Educational Assistant at SVS to Secretary at SVS. She also reported that Tina Maritano resigned from Remedial/Literacy Tutor at BS (effective 8/22/14). Dr. Cosentino reported two Leaves of Absence: Regina Cipri, Special Education Teacher at SVS (8/21/14 – TBD) and Emily Rhew, Special Education Teacher at BS (9/15/14 – TBD).

Enrollment Update: Dr. Cosentino gave an update on the enrollment. Burnham School – 55; Booth Free School – 78; Washington Primary School – 153 and Shepaug – 459; total students in district 745.

Superintendent's Goals: Dr. Cosentino read through her goals and gave additional details related to them.

Dr. Cosentino will be meeting with the president of ABC Wilton (A Better Chance) with Jennifer Pote on October 21, 2014. ABC is a national program that takes students with high academic achievement from disadvantaged neighborhoods and backgrounds and places them in public schools. Michael Sinatra gave more background and information on the program and shared how there would be a need for community support as this is a residential program needing host families.

Dr. Cosentino notified the Board that the annual lease walk with the first selectmen will take place tomorrow morning, September 9, 2014.

SVS Update: Kim Gallo gave an update about the future of Shepaug with emphasis on the transition to and from Shepaug giving details on the reasons for students leaving (i.e. moved out of district, attend private school, etc.) and students entering or returning to Shepaug. Mrs. Gallo spoke about maintaining rigorous and engaging programs as the population declines, and breaking the boundaries of the schedule by offering an expanded day.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education: Mrs. Gorra reported that a schedule has been put together for the year keeping with topics that were on the schedule last year. She requested that if anyone has a topic they would like included on the schedule to let her know.

Education Connection: Mrs. Gorra attended the meeting last week and gained a lot of information on all the services Education Connection provides to school districts. The Curriculum Council meets once a month. On September 16th there will be a regional mental health services meeting to coordinate benefits.

Facilities: Mr. Cava reported that the annual walk thru will be tomorrow. He noted that all future meetings will be at 6:00 p.m. for this year, not 5:00 p.m.

Finance: Mr. Giesen reported that the current year is at 10% which is where we should be. We were able to save \$4,000 with student accident insurance. Flood insurance is up 24%. At the end of the fiscal year; June 30th, the 1% Capital Reserve stands at \$501,947. The Elementary Lease currently has \$233,601 uncommitted.

Negotiations: Mr. Cava reported the administrators' negotiations have begun.

Policy: Mrs. Gorra reported the committee will meet September 15. She updated the Board on the review done by counsel on the policy for Non-resident Attendance.

Long Range Plan: Chairman Hirschfield appointed Alan Brown as Chair. Mr. Brown is anticipating when to schedule meetings and thought 5:00 p.m. before Board meetings would work best.

OLD BUSINESS

To consider motions to show support of schools.

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Susan Stumpf that "We, the Board of Education, are committed to supporting a comprehensive middle high school on the Shepaug campus and an elementary school in each town to educate our students in the Region."

Discussion followed that the motion needs to be stronger.

AMENDMENT

TO MOTION: made by Peter Tagley, seconded by James Hirschfield that "We, the Board of Education do not plan to close the middle high school building on the Shepaug campus and do support a school in each town to educate our students in the Region".

Discussion followed concerning the need for sending a united and unanimous message.

Amendment to the motion was removed by Peter Tagley and James Hirschfield.

AMENDMENT

TO MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Peter Tagley that “We, the Board of Education, are committed to a comprehensive middle high school on the Shepaug campus and an elementary school in each town to educate our students in the Region.”

Discussion followed.

VOTE: Unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

To consider and if appropriate, approve funds not to exceed \$20,000 for ice/snow guards on the roof of Burnham School. Dr. Cosentino explained that the three first selectmen have agreed to have the work done at Burnham School and paid for out of the elementary lease funds.

MOTION: made by Michelle Gorra, seconded by Jennifer Pote to approve funds from the Elementary Non-recurring Capital Lease fund not to exceed \$20,000 for ice/snow guards on the roof of Burnham School.

VOTE: Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.