

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Education Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
May 23, 2016

The Education Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:40 p.m., on Monday, May 23, 2016, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Anthony Amato (6:42), Alan Brown, Gregory Cava (9:08), Rebecca Devine, Michelle Gorra (6:47), Emily Hibbard, Jennifer Pote (6:42), Michael Sinatra, Peter Tagley and Sydney Worobel. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D. Superintendent, was also present. Valerie Andersen was absent.

Also present were: Cathy Colella, Principal, BS/BFS, Teresa DeBrito, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Lori Ferreira, Associate Principal SVS; Kim Gallo, Principal, SVS, Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations; Emily Judd, Principal, WPS; Allyson O'Hara, Director of Pupil Services; Don O'Leary, Director of Facilities.

Invited Guests: Arthur O'Neill, State Representative; Chuck Boos, Kaestle Boos; and Ken Biega, O&G Industries. Invited from CABE were Warren Logee and Nick Caruso.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Volunteers recognized were: Brooke Faison, Region 12 Volunteer, recognized for Minds in Motion, Sue Sibbitt, BS, and Linda Schneider, SVS (high) were recognized as the Region's Volunteers for the school year 2015/2016. Dr. Cosentino acknowledged each volunteer with a gift and words of thanks for their contributions to our schools and to our students. To be recognized at a future Board meeting will be Marina O'Malley, WPS, Sean Murphy from BFS and James McVay, SVS (middle).

Marianne Maher will be recognized as Region 12's Teacher of the Year at the June 6th Board meeting.

Board member Emily Hibbard who will be leaving the Board was recognized for her dedication and time that she has spent as a BOE member.

Recess for refreshments at 6:47 p.m.
The meeting reconvened at 6:57 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Randy Carreira, New Preston – Spoke in regard to the Agriscience Program and data information. Mr. Carreira also commented on item #9 on the agenda.

Chairman Hirschfield stated that item #9 on the agenda would be tabled due to the vote to delay funding for the Agriscience STEM program by the State.

Ed Wainwright, Bridgewater – Handed out a flyer he put together consisting of dollar amounts showing a subsidy computation (related to Agriscience STEM program) and spoke on his figures.

John Bonaiuto, Washington – Commented on the Agriscience STEM Program, funding and enrollment numbers.

Erica Ryland, Washington – Commented on the Agriscience STEM Program.

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Fran DeSimone, Washington – Had questions about how two of the three towns voted down the budget but yet it passed. Mr. Hirschfield explained the process.

Tammy Wyant-Rill, Washington – Spoke in regard to the REACH program enrollment and how it has affected the decision to close Judea Nursery School in Washington as of June 3, 2016.

Tim Laughlin, Washington – Spoke in support of the Agriscience STEM Program.

Jim McDonough, Washington – Spoke in support of the Agriscience STEM Program.

Mark Lyon, Washington First Selectman – Commented on the Agriscience STEM Program and hopes the Board will pursue the program.

Diane Decker, New Preston – Spoke in support of the Agriscience STEM Program.

Samantha Steinis, Roxbury – Spoke in support of the Agriscience STEM Program.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of minutes: Annual District Budget Meeting – May 9, 2016
Business Meeting – May 9, 2016

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chairman Hirschfield reported that Representative Arthur O’Neill had been invited to tonight’s Board meeting. Rep. O’Neill would be explaining the decision that had been made to delay the vote on the Agriscience STEM Program at the State level.

Chairman Hirschfield also stated that Chuck Boos, Kaestle Boos and Ken Biega, O&G Industries would be attending tonight’s meeting but would be a bit later in the agenda.

Chairman Hirschfield complimented the Spring Sports teams. Recognition was given to Caroline Kelly, who won the Berkshire League Singles Tennis Tournament. Also mentioned for their Berkshire League personal accomplishments in Track and Field were Quinton Walsh and Samantha Moravsky.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Correspondence – Dr. Cosentino shared a letter from Kaleigh McKay thanking the Board for the scholarship she received. This is for the Center for Creative Youth at Wesleyan University this summer. Kaleigh is a member of the Class of 2019 and was nominated by art teacher, Donna Wright.

Personnel: Dr. Cosentino reported that Lori Ferreira had decided not to retire. She also reported the resignation of Cassandra Morrow, Elementary Teacher at WPS, effective June 30, 2016.

Tag Sale: Dr. Cosentino mentioned the Tag Sale on June 4, 2016. The tag sale follows the guidelines of the District’s Policy 3260, Sales & Disposal of Books, Equipment & Supplies.

Jennifer Pote left the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and returned at 7:45 p.m.

LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

Dr. Cosentino introduced Warren Logee and Nick Caruso from CAFE who had been invited to speak on the Lighthouse Project. This is a project to benefit the Boards of Education around the state, to help student achievement and that it is of no cost. A trifold pamphlet, Strengthening School Boards – Improving Achievement, had been handed out which contained information explaining the Project. Mr. Logee referenced different slides off a Power Point that also showed information explaining the Project. Mr. Caruso followed up and then spoke about the number of sessions that would be needed. Mr. Caruso stated that within a year it would be possible to do 8-10 sessions at 2 hours per session. Discussion followed which focused on a survey that would involve administration, teachers, central office staff and Board of Ed members. The survey could be taken either before the end of school or at the beginning of the next school year. Mr. Caruso stated that the critical part would be for Board members to take the survey prior to training so that it could be determined how the training has influenced the Board. Mr. Caruso also stated that follow up sessions could be done a year or two out.

DISCUSSION OF AGSTEM

State Representative Arthur O’Neill was in attendance to help explain the delay of funding by the State Legislature. Mr. Hirschfield asked Rep. O’Neill to speak on the Bill. It was thought that due to this project not being “Shovel Ready”, our request under House Bill #5304 was put on delay until the Legislative Session resumes in 2017. Representative O’Neill explained, to the best of his ability, the status of this Bill. Rep. O’Neill stated that although this Bill is delayed, the Region would not have to resubmit paperwork but would only need to write a letter stating the Region is still interested in proceeding with the project. Discussion. Conversation followed with Rep. O’Neill. The question had been asked if possible, to have someone come in and explain to the Board what “Shovel Ready” meant and to explain the process of getting to that point? More discussion.

Chuck Boos spoke on the current status of the Agriscience STEM project and also addressed “Shovel Ready”. Ken Biega of O&G Industries also spoke in regards to the project and handed out information showing a graph of schedule options. Option 1 being to continue with the design. Option 2 to wait for funding. The question was asked in regard to the amount of money spent and money owed. It was noted that the Region owes a balance of \$100,000.00 to Kaestle Boos as of this date. Discussion followed with questions pertaining to being “Shovel Ready”, the different phases, and thoughts as to what to do as the next step.

Discussion – Alan Brown suggested that we check with private donors to see if they might be willing to take a risk and help with the funding. A reminder of the referendum question had been referred to by both Mr. Brown and Mr. Amato. Mr. Amato suggested to put the project on hold, but to continue working with committees to advance the project and that this would not be putting any cost into the project.

CONSIDER MOTION TO DELEGATE CERTAIN AUTHORITY WITH RESPECT TO THE BUILDING PROJECTS TO THE BUILDING COMMITTEE.

This agenda item has been tabled to a date yet to be set.

**CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, AUTHORIZE PURCHASE OF PANORAMA
EDUCATION PRODUCT FOR SURVEYS IN PREPARATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING.**

Alan Brown explained the Panorama Education Survey Program. Mr. Brown stated that this program would fit in with the Lighthouse Project and should the Board decide to use this program, it would be at a cost of \$2000.00 per year. Mr. Brown said that he would like to request the purchase of this program. Mr. Hirschfield had asked if this request should be discussed with the Long Range Planning Committee and then come to the Board as a recommendation. Dr. Cosentino commented on who would be receiving the information and stated her concerns as to who would be receiving that information. In discussion, Dr. Cosentino also reminded the Board of confidentiality in the collecting of the information. Dr. Cosentino suggested bringing this request to the Long Range Planning Committee so that the administrators could have a chance to research the program and how it could best be used. Discussion continued.

Greg Cava arrived at the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Emily Hibbard left the meeting at 9:18 p.m. and returned at 9:23 p.m.

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Anthony Amato, to approve the purchase of The Panorama Education product for surveys in preparation for strategic planning at a cost of \$2000.00 per year.

Discussion followed. Concern was expressed in bringing it to the Long Range Planning Committee prior to the purchase of the product.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Amato withdrew their motion and requested that The Panorama Education product be put on a future agenda once it has been researched.

POLICIES

First Reading – Policy 5111– Students – Placement/Admissions. Michelle Gorra reviewed the policy stating that this policy had been listed on the CABE audit. Mrs. Gorra noted that the blue highlights were added by CABE based on State Law and that legal reference listings had also been updated.

MOTION: made by Emily Hibbard, seconded by Jennifer Pote, to approve Policy 5111 – Students – Placement/Admissions, as a first reading.

VOTE: unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business brought before the Board of Education, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:48 p.m.