



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

NEW STAFF RECEPTION

October 7, 2013

Bungay Elementary School

7:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

October 7, 2013

Bungay Elementary School

7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Jim Garofolo
Saundra Gesek
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Jennifer Magri
Fred Stanek (8:41 p.m.)
Ed Strumello
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent
Nancy Snopkowski, Assoc. Super.
Rick Belden, Asst. Super. Fin. & Op
Robert Dyer, Systemwide Tech. Coord.
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Kris Boyle, Asst. Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Leslie Sojka, Asst. Principal, CLS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Glenn Lungarini, Principal, SHS
Agatha Parlak
Dawn Adams
Brian Webster

Kristen Woods
Jeff Gilbert
Catherine Hinckley
Mike Driscoll
Katie Riordan
Darlene Keeffe
Cheryl Collins
Cindy Dion
Lisa Mariano
David Willadsen
Florence Banks
Cassandra Banks
Elizabeth White

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Putorti with the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions at 7:30 p.m.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. None

B. Correspondence

Mr. Putorti noted the following correspondence:

1. Letter dated September 10, 2013 to Lucy McConologue and the Board of Police Commissioners from Yashu Putorti requesting an officer in our schools and police presence at each school during arrival and dismissal times.
2. Email dated September 20, 2013 to Food Service Workers Lisa Slotter, Larissa Shackett, Sandy Hokunson, and Barbara Tucci from Cindy Brooks congratulating them on the high scores of their Naugatuck Valley inspections and thanking them for their hard work.
3. Letter dated August 19, 2013 to Christine Syriac from the State of Connecticut Board of Education, Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education acknowledging the district's participation in the Healthy Food Certification program for 2013-14.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cassandra Banks, 12 Minor Road, East Haven – talked about her desire to schedule a parent meeting, attend parent visitation, and generally be involved with her children's school activities.

IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

A. REPORTS

1. Chairman's Report

a. Chairman's Report

Mr. Putorti said that it had been a busy month. He spoke about the Police Commissioners meeting and said they are still waiting on a response. There was a Policy Committee meeting that dealt with life threatening allergies. A Facilities Committee meeting was held to address the Middle School humidity issues. He spoke of the need for the Board of Education to market themselves to the public and the schools need to be more visible to the public. He spoke of the first Citizens Academy of the year and how well it has gone. He said the presentation by Kurt Miller will be tabled because Mr. Miller was unable to make the meeting and the two items that Fred Stanek wanted to discuss will be moved in the order of the agenda so that Fred will have time to arrive and participate in the discussion.

b. Board Members Comments

Ms. Magri said she has been able to participate in the Citizens Academy and has learned something new each time. It is a good tool to clarify misconceptions. She said she felt it was a wonderful program and a great way to market ourselves. Mr. Strumello agreed saying he liked the informal way participants get to learn things; they attend and are able to learn the real facts. Mr. Strumello said he has the latest ACES Yearly Report available for anyone who would like to read it.

2. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac reported the retirement of Jody Willis who is a clerical paraprofessional at Seymour High School and asked that it be added to the agenda for information purposes. She said Meet the Teachers was a success and reported that Bungay School had 462 parents participate, Chatfield-LoPresti had 483 parents participate, Middle School had 386 parents participate, and the High School had approximately 450 participants. Mrs. Syriac distributed the Staffing Report to the Board members. She spoke about the Citizens Academy and that next on the agenda was a tour of the schools on Wednesday, October 9. She reminded everyone that the School Improvement Plans for Seymour Middle and High Schools would be presented at a Special Meeting on October 21 and an executive session would be added to the agenda to discuss non union employee agreements. Secretary mediation has been postponed until a new representative can be found for them. Custodian negotiations are ongoing. Mr. Ernie DiStasi will be out from four weeks to three months. Mrs. Syriac will be hiring an interim assistant principal to help in his absence. She asked the board if we can donate one of our older computers to the Seymour Historical Society who has a desperate need for a computer.

Mrs. Syriac talked about assessments and that she has been looking into MAP K-12 Language Arts and Math as a tool to track assessments. She is having conversations with NWEA which is a highly respected company who has been in business for 40 years. Their program is aligned with the Common Core and would give us the ability to do online interim assessments. In addition, ACES is part of a consortium and we will be able to get a reduced consortium price. This program will provide assessment data for students from K-12; that can be maintained longitudinally something we have never had before. With regard to funding, there will be no need to make changes we will take from some of the other software we have been using and some from the instructional supplies or textbooks line item. Mrs. Syriac shared that the Superintendents Leadership Conference she recently attended was the best organized conference she has ever attended. Workshops included Blended Learning, Adapted Learning, and Building Community Support. She said she will share more at a later date. Kristen Harmeling asked about the interim assessment. Christine said she is looking to make a long term commitment to the software because she cannot wait for the state to develop something. The assessment would be three times a year at the beginning, mid-year, and end. The assessments are adaptive and not timed. Most students may be done in under one hour. This program gives the student the ability to pause the test and continue later. This will greatly help the data team because it will provide timely data.

3. **Committee Reports**

Mr. Putorti reviews the list of committee reports and asked if there were any questions or concerns.

- a. Athletic Committee Minutes – August 28, 2013
- b. Finance Committee Minutes – September 3, 2013
- c. Policy Committee Minutes – September 4, 2013
- d. Facilities Committee Minutes – September 26, 2013
- e. Finance Committee Agenda – October 7, 2013

B. **INFORMATION**

1. **School Activities and Recognitions**

- a. **High School** Student Representative Report
Miss Izabella Guzzo reported on the following topics: 1) Instructional Rounds, 2) Homecoming week, 3) PSAT tests, 4) 8th grade open house, 5) Fall athletics are approaching the mid season point, 6) SAT tests, 7) American Red Cross Blood Drive, 8) Camfel "Dare To Dream" assembly, 9) Class visitation
- b. **Middle School** Activities and Recognitions
- c. **Bungay School** Activities and Recognitions
- d. **Chatfield-LoPresti School** Activities and Recognitions

2. **Staff Resignations – Appendix E**

- a. David Willadsen
 - Head Coach
 - Boys & Girls Indoor Track
 - Effective September 20, 2013

Mr. Putorti added Ms. Willis' retirement to the agenda at Mrs. Syriac's request

3. **Staff Retirement – Non Certified**

- a. Ms. Jody Willis
 - Clerical Paraprofessional
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective October 7, 2013

4. **Grounds Keeping/Technology – Kurt Miller**

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to table Item B3 "Grounds Keeping/Technology – Kurt Miller" to the next regularly scheduled meeting

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

5. **Elementary Report Cards and Language Arts** – Nancy Snopkowski
Mrs. Snopkowski shared with the Board the English Language Arts portion of the report card has been revised so it is aligned with curriculum. Speaking/Listening was added. She explained the Committee gathered comments and gave them to the teachers to review and choose which ones they wanted added to a drop down menu. Ms. Harmeling asked about bring back “A for Effort” and Mrs. Snopkowski said “effort” was one of the choices on the new drop down menu.
6. **Seymour Middle School Air Quality Report**
Mr. Belden briefly went over the Air Quality Report for the Seymour Middle School. The report included a synopsis and summary of the testing that was done on the lower level. The results showed no indoor air quality issues which means there was no significant difference between the outside air and the indoor air. Humid weather has caused moisture issues. Mr. Belden said we will continue to do what we are doing and hopes to bring in a third party to make recommendations on a permanent solution. He noted there were no issues in the upper level. Mr. Kubik explained that since the humidity issues have been ongoing, the Facilities Committee felt it would be prudent to bring in a consultant to do a whole analysis of the Heating/Cooling system and make recommendations. This will enable us to fully understand the problem and hopefully mitigate the problem if possible.
Items 7 and 8 were moved out of agenda order so that the discussion could await the arrival of Mr. Stanek.

V. **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

A. **Minutes**

1. **Regular BOE Meeting – September 3, 2013**

MOTION: to approve the minutes of the Board of Education meeting on September 3, 2013 as presented

Mr. Strumello asked that the motion be changed for the Intra District Transfers to read “to accept”. Mr. Putorti asked that the minutes be corrected and placed on the next agenda for approval.

B. **Financial Management Summary**

MOTION: to approve the Financial Management Summary ending September 30, 2013 as recommended by the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Operations and approved by the Finance Sub-Committee

There was no quorum for the Finance Committee meeting; therefore this item was removed from the agenda.

C. **Transfer of Funds**

MOTION: to review and recommend to the full Board the transfer of funds from Technology Equipment account to Equipment Lease Rental account for the Cisco Wireless Access Points as presented by the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Operations

There was no quorum for the Finance Committee meeting; therefore this item was removed from the agenda

D. **Policy #5141.25 Regulation Change**

1. **This is a change to the regulation *only***

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to change Policy #5141.25 regulation as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

E. **Comprehensive Analysis and Report**

Mr. Hatfield asked if there was a cost associated with this request. Mr. Belden explained that they hoped to be able to do a walk through with Sliver/Petrucelli + Associates before this meeting so they would have a rough idea of the cost. However it was not possible. He suggested the Board place a cap on the amount that can be spent. Mr. Kubik said he preferred not to wait since the humidity season was coming to an end and the moisture problem would be harder to diagnose.

Mr. Garofolo said he was not comfortable with putting a range in and he was reluctant to approve the motion. Giving a number is a concern. Mr. Belden said putting "not to exceed" would be a possible solution. Mrs. Syriac said the cost of this report can come out of the Professional Services line item. Mr. Strumello said he understood what Mr. Garofolo's concern was and he agreed. Mr. Kubik explained that Silver/Petrocelli + Associates had not been in the middle school so they don't have a cost estimate. They said it would be between \$5,000 and \$10,000. We want to move forward with this. Humidity problem will resolve when the heat comes on. This is a problem at the Middle School every year. He continued by saying they would come in and make recommendations, they will not be the ones to do any necessary remediation. Mr. Putorti said they will not try to sell us something. Ms. Magri said this is the same firm that worked on the CLS building renovation and they are a very professional group.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Kubik) to approve the recommendation of the Facilities Committee to hire Silver/Petrucelli + Associates to do a comprehensive analysis and report on solutions to eliminate the moisture issue at Seymour Middle School with the cost not to exceed \$5,000

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Garofolo

F. Out of State Field Trips

1. Close Up – Washington DC

Mrs. Syriac noted that this field trip was approved by the Board previously but was being brought back because the high school would like to include Grade 10 students in AP Government classes.

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/Ms. Harmeling) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an out of state field trip for selected students to attend the Close Up Washington DC trip on March 16 through March 21, 2014.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

G. One Man Team

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Athletic Director to allow Ansonia High School students Noah Falkowski and Michael Shortell to participate with the Seymour High School Swim team as a one man team.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

H. Staff Hiring – Non Certified

1. Renee Efthymiou

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Replacing Renee Palumbo
- Step 2, Paraprofessionals Contract

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Renee Efthymiou for the position of Instructional Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

2. **Danielle Harwood**

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Replacing Laura Stec
- Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Danielle Harwood for the position of Instructional Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

3. **Benjamin Kaufman**

- Part Time Computer Technician
- District wide
- Replacing Matt Vayda

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Benjamin Kaufman for the position of Part Time Computer Technician, District wide

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

4. **Jessica Marulli**

- Part Time Clerical Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Replacing Christian Perry
- Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Jessica Marulli for the position of Part Time Clerical Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

5. **Elizabeth O'Neill**

- Monitor Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- New Position
- Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec. Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Elizabeth O'Neill for the position of Monitor Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

6. **Mitsuko Washington**
- Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - New Position
 - Step 3, Paraprofessionals Contract

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Mitsuko Washington for the position of Instructional Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

I. Staff Hiring – Appendix E

1. **Devan LaBaire**
- Head Coach
 - Cheerleading Team
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing Marissa Scinto

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Devan LaBaire for the position of Head Coach, Cheerleading Team at Seymour Middle School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

2. **Patrick DiCaprio**
- Head Coach
 - Boys Swim Team
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Chris Durette

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Patrick DiCaprio for the position of Head Coach, Boys Swim Team at Seymour High School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

J. Home School Notification

1. **Ms. Kathy Gardecki has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her child, Nicole Gardecki, for the 2013-2014 school year**

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to acknowledge the receipt of Ms. Kathy Gardecki's notification of intent to home school her child, Nicole Gardecki, and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION (continued after meeting recess 8:42 p.m.)

7. **Chatfield-LoPresti Naming the Playground Discussion**

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello) to table items 6 and 7 to the next regular meeting scheduled since Mr. Stanek has not yet arrived to participate in the discussion.

After the audience voiced their disappointment in not going forth with these two items, Mr. Putorti called for a ten minute recess at 8:29 p.m. to wait and see if Mr. Stanek will arrive to participate in the discussion. The meeting was reconvened at 8:42 p.m.

Mr. Strumello rescinded his motion.

Mr. Stanek explained that at the last meeting we decided to donate the Anna LoPresti sign to the family and this brought up the matter of whether we wanted to carry the name forward to Chatfield-LoPresti school since she was a great teacher, BOE member, served on other Boards in town and was highly respected. He does not want her forgotten. Ms. Magri asked about other parts of the LoPresti School that were named for people. She has a concern that there will be a problem if we don't look at it all. Mr. Strumello agreed with Mr. Stanek that it would be a shame to let her fade away. She worked with many agencies for kids. Mr. Putorti asked what was named at LoPresti School and also what is named at Chatfield-LoPresti. He suggested we gather the information and report back at the next BOE meeting. Mr. Stanek agreed.

8. Police Officers/SRO's in Schools

Mr. Stanek apologized for being late explaining another obligation ran late. He asked if the Board had heard anything back from the Police Commissioner after our last meeting with them. Mr. Putorti said we have not heard back but as he recalled they were going to look at the budget and possibly reconfigure it. Ms. Harmeling said no action had occurred and that it was a staffing issue and she wished they would have gotten back to us. Mr. Hatfield said he was unable to attend the Police Commissioners meeting and asked what transpired. Mr. Putorti said they discussed an SRO and an officer at the schools. We were told it was a staffing issue and a budget issue. They were going to go back and look at it. We have had no further response. Mr. Strumello talked about how in Shelton an officer drives around each school building and walks through each school. This makes the officer familiar with the school layout and makes him recognizable to the staff and students. This will be valuable in an emergency situation. We asked for something similar from our Police Chief and he didn't want this. Mr. Stanek concurred with Mr. Strumello's comments. He said having an officer in the schools was deemed necessary by the Security Committee after December 14 and suggested we go to the next Police Commissioners meeting to find out where they are with our request. Perhaps a retired officer can be hired; this would be a reduced pay amount since there would be no benefits required. Mr. Strumello said he felt they would ask us to pay half. Ms. Harmeling said there is no clear answer on the money and wondered why they can't hire a retired officer. Mr. Strumello asked didn't he say they wouldn't look at it until March when Workers Compensation and training issues are resolved? Ms. Harmeling said their minutes say the item is tabled for further information. Mr. Putorti asked if we know what we want and suggested an Ad Hoc committee be formed including Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, and Mr. Stanek. At some point, they might want to bring in Mrs. Syriac, Mr. Kearns, Chief Metzler, and the Police Commissioners. After checking online the next Police Commissioner agenda, Ms. Harmeling noted that this item is not on the agenda. Mr. Stanek said they have a public comment portion and we should attend and make a statement. Mr. Stanek said he would attend the meeting.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*** A. Discussion and possible action on the contract of Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools**

*** *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session from which the public will be excluded***

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Kubik) move that the board enter Executive Session to discuss matters concerning the discussion and possible action on the Contract of Christine Syriac., Superintendent of Schools.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Enter Executive Session at 9:03 p.m. and out of Executive Session at 9:46 p.m.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Kubik) to extend the contract of Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools by one year to June 30, 2016.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Stanek

Mr. Hatfield would like the record to indicate that he voted NO due to the contract language. To be in favor he would need the language changed. Mr. Stanek stated that the entire bizarre process of education contracts is why he has consistently voted NO. It is too much one sided to the superintendents. This is in no way a reflection on the job that done by Mrs. Syriac. Ms. Gesek stated that she agreed with Mr. Stanek's comments.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to direct the Liaison committee to discuss with Superintendent Christine Syriac amendments to her current contract to address tightening language around process and timeline of evaluation and contract extension by the first meeting in December. Mr. Kubik, as chair of the committee, would like to see mark-ups submitted for review by Liaison committee prior to meeting with Christine. Yashu will check with Fred Dorsey on how to proceed with these discussions

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Stanek

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to adjourn the meeting

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk