



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2012
Seymour Middle School
7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Saundra Gesek
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Garofolo
Jennifer Magri

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Snopkowski, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Glenn Lungarini, Principal, SHS
Jim Freund, Asst. Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Asst. Principal, SHS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Joan Gee

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Salute to the Flag

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations to the Seymour Middle School Band and their Director, Sarah Meek! They have again taken first place in the Seymour Christmas Parade. The Band also placed first in 2008, 2010, and 2011.
2. Congratulations to the Seymour High School Girls Volleyball team who won the NVL Championship and qualified for the CIAC tournament.
3. Congratulations to the Girls Soccer team, the Girls Swim Team, and the Cross Country team who have also qualified for the CIAC tournament.

B. Correspondence

1. Letter dated November 18, 2012 from Mr. and Mrs. Craig Rossetti commending Coach Tom Lennon for the work he is doing at the high school both on and off the field.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. Ms. Joan Gee, 5 Bassett Road – Has a daughter in Seymour Middle School and was surprised when her daughter was told she could not use the IPAD for reading. She had done this in the past. She called Mrs. Snopkowski who was very helpful and was pleased that Mr. DiStasi was able to revise the procedure. She also expressed her disappointment that the middle school will not have a ski club this year. She feels this is an excellent opportunity for kids who are not involved in sports to be involved in an organized activity. She knew a parent had volunteered but due to policy they were not able to do it. She thought parents would be willing to pay extra to pay a teacher to do the ski club. She understands that it probably too late this year. Ms. Gee expressed her support for developing a cross country team at Seymour Middle School and asked that anything that can be done to make it happen should be done.

Mr. Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal at Seymour Middle School said that the middle school had done everything possible to find someone to do ski club but no one was able. In the past everything is already planned by this point in time and they are unable to do it this year; it's just too far into the year to get started.

Mr. Putorti said the board would continue to look into the addition of a cross country team at Seymour Middle School.

IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

A. REPORTS

1. Chairman's Report

- a. Mr. Putorti asked board members to bring their "pluses and minuses" for the budget to the next meeting. He pointed out we have a shorter window to submit the budget. We have meetings scheduled on January 7, 2012 and January 14, 2012 with another one scheduled if we need it. The budget must be finalized by the 15th. Having board members bring their ideas for the budget will enable the administration to at least hear their opinions. He asked Christine to bring the rock bottom numbers on contractual obligations to the next meeting. Mr. Belden said the change in the charter says the budget must be submitted by the 3rd Tuesday of January (15th). The Board of Finance will be sending out a letter explaining the change in the charter. Mr. Putorti also asked the members of the board to think about possibly doing one meeting a month and he is looking for input. He asked that board members email him with their thoughts.
- b. Board Member Comments
Mr. Hatfield said he thought the letter from Mr. and Mrs. Rossetti was very nice and it was good to see positive comments. He also noted that it was nice to see Mrs. Syriac at the Seymour/Woodland football game. Mr. Stanek said he felt it was important to recognize the many students who were involved in the Seymour Christmas parade; saying the parade was very nice and all should be recognized for their work. Mrs. Harmeling said the parade was a very nice parade.

2. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac distributed the new contracts for the nurses so board members could update their contract notebooks. She reminded the board that the CAPSS Superintendents' Award of Excellence dinner was being held on Tuesday, December 4th at 6:00 at Villa Bianca. She also reminded everyone that the second meeting of the Citizens Academy was being held in Seymour Middle School on Wednesday, December 3rd.

3. Committee Reports

- a. Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2012
- b. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2012

B. INFORMATION

Mr. Putorti asked Mr. Stanek to take a minute to invite the student representative to take a more active role in the meeting. Mr. Stanek explained that when the position of student representative was created the intent was to have the student representative take a more active role in discussions especially when the discussions have to do with the high school. Mr. Stanek invited Ms. Mordowanec to participate as much as she feels comfortable and noted that if there is a subject that might come up after the time she wanted to leave, it can be moved up on the agenda.

1. Student Representative Report – High School

Miss Mordowanec reported on the following activities at the high school:

- a. Veterans Day Activities
Seymour High School celebrated Veterans Day with a variety of lessons and activities in each of our content areas. Highlights included the collaboration of a wall of honor produced by our social studies and art department; and the symbolism of the American flag lining the driveway and front of the school. Mrs. Heather Brown, SHS social studies teacher, was the leader for these activities and created an atmosphere of recognition and reflection throughout the day.
- b. Benchmark Assessments
The first marking period ended in mid November and the second marking period is under way. Students will engage in the second administration of our benchmark assessments in early to mid December. The first administration of benchmarks identified the following areas for improvement: (a) skill of annotating text to identify what information is given, what information the student needs to calculate and what problem is the prompt asking the student to solve; (b) students ability to produce in depth responses to writing and open ended prompts. As a result teachers across the disciplines have provided strategies for improving these areas such as the use of sticky notes and/or highlighting text to identify key points within a prompt. Teachers have worked with students to increase the depth of responses by challenging students and providing guiding questions that lead students to think about their thinking. For example in an English class students may be asked to identify the theme of a story. However, to deepen their response students are then asked to think about why they believe their answer is accurate and provide specific examples from the text that led them to their answer.

- c. **Fall Sports Report**
The fall sports season has come to close. The Wildcat Girls Volleyball team won the NVL championship and qualified for the CIAC tournament. Joining the volleyball team as a CIAC qualifier was the Girls Soccer team, Girls Swim team and cross country. We had a number of Athletes recognized with All-League honors
 - d. **Talent Show**
Mr. Schneider organized the fall talent show at SHS. Over 150 supporters attended the event to cheer on the acts the performed. The evening was a great success and demonstrated the many talents that our SHS students possess.
 - e. **Team Building for Faculty**
Mr. Freund led a group of faculty on a spelunking expedition. The trip provided a shared experience for faculty members that deepened their relationships and allowed them to bring that experience back to their classrooms.
2. **Student Activities and Recognitions – Seymour Middle School**
- a. **Gold Club Turkey Drive**
Through the generosity of so many people the Gold Club collected 176 turkeys, \$30 in cash, gift cards and a large assortment of canned vegetables and boxed food items. Thanks to the generous donations of so many, we were able to provide frozen turkeys to our Seymour school community, the Seymour/Oxford Food Bank, and Spooner House. With this generosity and support we are able to once again help those families that are less fortunate by giving them a memorable Thanksgiving.
 - b. **The Student Council Food Drive**
The food drive has been extended to December 10th. Suggested items for donation are: gravy, boxed stuffing mix, canned cranberry sauce, canned pumpkin "all ready" mix, cherry or apple pie filling, "ready to serve" pie crust, canned peas, canned carrots, canned corn, Pillsbury quick breads, instant mashed potatoes, canned yams or sweet potatoes, evaporated milk, pudding, and applesauce
 - c. **The SMS Hope Tree**
The Hope Tree is located in the Guidance Department lobby. Everyone is welcome to stop in and choose a tag found on the tree. All gift requests should be returned by December 14th, wrapped with the angel tag attached.
3. **Student Activities and Recognitions – Bungay School**
- a. None
4. **Student Activities and Recognitions – Chatfield-LoPresti School**
- a. None
5. **2013-2014 School Calendar Note Discussion – Christine Syriac**
Mrs. Syriac asked the board for direction as to the wording at the bottom of the 2013-2014 school calendar. She specifically was looking for guidance on the number of days to use before going to the April Break. Mr. Strumello asked what we have done in the past and Mrs. Syriac indicated the most days missed was when we were closed for 10 days and last year we were closed 4 days. Mr. Putorti said we need to pick a number of days we will use in June before going to the April Break. Mr. Stanek said he felt we should use all 14 days in June and then go to the April Break.

Mrs. Harmeling suggested not going to the very end of June and possible saving a couple of days so that SONCCA and other summer activities have time to set up. Mrs. Syriac was asked what the feedback was when she sent her eBlast regarding April Break and she said it was mixed; some parents were fine with it and others were disappointed. Mr. Hatfield said he felt we were giving parents a big window to plan. Mr. Strumello said all board members would have to be strong if we start getting complaints from parents that it is too hot at the end of June and Mr. Putorti agreed.

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/Mr. Stanek) to add to the agenda the approval of the 2013-2014 school calendar with the addition of a note that states in excess of 14 days will be added to April Break.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mrs. Gesek, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mrs. Harmeling

6. Teacher Team Building Activities – Jim Freund

Mr. Freund shared a short Power Point on his first team building activity which was spelunking with Seymour High School teachers. Three teachers (Mrs. Burton, Mrs. Shelinsky, and Mr. Zeppetello) were up to the task and Mr. Freund used his experience as a wilderness guide to lead the teachers on an expedition to Tory's Cave in New Milford. The teachers especially enjoyed the silence and listening to the sound of dripping water which they found very relaxing. All three want to go again. Mr. Freund said the next activity is a proposal for a ski trip and he would like to open it up to all faculties across the district. He feels it would be an excellent way to get to know each other and become closer as a team. He asked the board for an ok to proceed with the ski trip which is out of state. He also said some other activities that have been talked about include spelunking, white water rafting, hiking, cross country skiing and rock climbing. Mr. Putorti asked board members if there were any concerns with the ski trip and there were none; all board members approved the faculty ski trip. Mrs. Harmeling said she felt these team building activities were a wonderful idea.

7. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) – Paul Lucke

Mr. Lucke did a Power Point presentation on PBIS which was put in place to improve school culture. He noted there have been more than 50 hours of training in Professional Development. He took a minute to explain the PBIS logo which is based on a moral compass. Advisory classes are utilized to teach students the PBIS expectations and Mr. Schneider did some PBIS videos which are being used. Mr. Lucke developed a way to digitally submit discipline data which will be utilized as training data. He spoke of the reward programs which must be low or no cost. Monthly raffles occur; there are behavior and academic tickets given to each teacher and students who wish to participate in the raffle must bring their tickets to the main office. Of the 600 tickets given out; 300 have come back. This year PBIS is at Tier 1 and 80% of students are successful at this level. Tier 2 and Tier 3 are currently being developed for those students who need it. Mr. Lucke feels we are making gains overall. Students are talking about it. Mr. Lungarini talked about the Wildcat All Star Scholars Program which will recognize the high achievers.

He said the discipline data down over 60%. First honors are up 7% and second honors are up 30%. Mrs. Harmeling said she felt these are the type of statistics that should be communicated to the public. Mr. Hatfield suggested the next time we do a raffle the Valley Indy be called; maybe they will cover the story. He also asked if the posters were the same at the middle school and Mr. Lucke responded that respect is a central theme and many of the expectations are the same. He said Mr. Nimons has gotten very involved and the middle school staff is very supportive. Mrs. Syriac said the middle school will do a presentation on PBIS in January. Mr. Lungarini congratulated Mr. Freund and Mr. Lucke saying great things are happening at the high school because of their work. Mr. Strumello encouraged the high school to share good news with other papers beyond the Valley Indy. He said if they do not publish our good stories, let the board know so we can approach the papers and ask why they don't print the "good stuff."

8. Staff Retirement – Certified

- a. Sabatini, Patricia
- Teacher, 5th Grade
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective June 30, 2013

Mr. Stanek noted that this retirement is a real loss to the district and requested the board send a letter congratulating her.

V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Minutes – Regular BOE Meeting – November 19, 2012

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the Regular BOE meeting minutes for November 19, 2012 with the following corrections:

5A Regular meeting should be Special Meeting.

5B Ms. Gesek opposed the motion.

SO VOTED

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

B. Lighting Upgrade

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Kubik) to approve the upgrade of parking lot and exterior lighting fixtures as proposed by DBS Energy Inc. and to authorize the Superintendent of Schools to enter into an agreement with DBS Energy to perform all work as necessary utilizing Option 1 in the proposal. Further, to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a grant agreement with CL&P to offset the costs of the upgrade and to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a 60 month financing agreement at 0% financing with CL&P for the balance of the project

Mr. Kubik asked how many fixtures were in the proposal. Mr. Belden said he was unsure of the number but they were for the high school parking lot, the middle school parking lot and fixtures on the buildings. Mr. Belden said he would report back to the board with the number of fixtures. Ms. Gesek asked why we went with Option 1. Option 1 was chosen because it works best with CL&P. Mr. Stanek asked if we went to bid and if not should we?

Mr. Belden said we would have to get back to CL&P for the recommended vendors list before going out for bids. We must use the recommended vendors list in order to get the grant. Mr. Stanek expressed his concern that we are going out for bid less and less.

MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to table to the motion to the next meeting in order to provide Mr. Belden time to gather the Board's requested information

SO VOTED

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

C. Staff Hiring – Appendix E

1. Willadsen, David
 - Student Council Advisor Split Position
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Lisa Cheney

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint David Willadsen as Student Council Co-Advisor at Seymour High School

SO VOTED

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

Mr. Strumello complimented Mr. Lungarini and Mrs. Syriac on upgrading the paperwork for these positions.

2. Flannery, Kelly
 - Student Council Advisor Split Position
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Lisa Cheney

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint Kelly Flannery as Student Council Co-Advisor at Seymour High School

SO VOTED

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

VI. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE ASTERISKED ITEMS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ◆ 1. None

◆ *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session*

VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk