



MEETING MINUTES

SEYMOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR MEETING:

LoPresti School

September 19, 2011

7:30 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ed Strumello, Chairman
Bruce Baker
Judith Flood
James Garofolo
Peter Kubik
Jeanne Loda
Yashu Putorti
Fred Stanek
Patricia Gillis, BOE Clerk

ABSENT:

James Ward

OTHERS PRESENT:

MaryAnne Mascolo, Superintendent
Christine Syriac, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent of Finance & Oper.
Mary Lavoie, Director of Instruction
Nancy Snopkowski, Director of Special Education
Roberta Pratt, System-wide Technology Coordinator
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, Seymour Middle School
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, Bungay School
David Olechna, Principal, Chatfield/LoPresti Schools
Leslie Sojka, Assistant Principal, Chatfield School
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, Bungay School
Meagan Krushinski, SEA President & SMS Teacher
Lukacz Grabowski, SHS Student Representative
Reba Putorti, SHS Student Representative
Paul Roy, First Selectman, Town of Seymour
Saundra J. Gesek, Board of Selectman, Seymour
Kristen Harmeling, Seymour Board of Finance
Jay Hatfield, Seymour Board of Finance
Jennifer Magri, Seymour Public School Parent
Paul Sponheimer, Seymour Resident
Suzanne Rafferty, LoPresti School Parent
Theresa Dunlop, LoPresti School Parent
Dawn Adams
Colleen Maguire

I) CALL TO ORDER

A. Ed Strumello, Chairman, called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 P.M.

Introductions were made by Chairman Strumello and Ms. Mascolo.

II) BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. 21st Century Learning

Ms. Mascolo handed out a report for BOE members reading and gave a synopsis of information in the report.

II) BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS (continued)

B. Recognitions

1. Ms. Mascolo thanked all the participants of the 19th Annual Seymour Kick-Off Club Golf Tournament on August 8, 2011. Ms. Mascolo noted Rick Belden and Wayne Natzel participated in this tournament.
2. Ms. Mascolo passed around a beautiful calendar from the Ansonia Public Schools

C. Correspondence

1. Letter from Ansonia Superintendent Carol Merlone to MaryAnne Mascolo dated August 8, 2011 requesting the Seymour Public School District accept students on a tuition basis
2. Letter to Ansonia Superintendent Carol Merlone from MaryAnne Mascolo dated August 25, 2011 responding to the request to accept Ansonia Students on a tuition basis
3. Letter to all parents/guardians from MaryAnne Mascolo dated September, 9, 2011 regarding CMT test scores
4. Letter from Seymour Deputy Fire Marshall Timothy Willis to the Seymour Board of Education dated September 6, 2011 regarding the inspection reports for all Seymour Schools
5. Chairman Strumello received a communication to invite high school students to the CABA Conference

Ms. Mascolo explained acceptance/non-acceptance of students from other districts on a tuition basis, which involves the "No Child Left Behind" legislation. Both requests were denied due to large enrollment numbers in Seymour's schools this year. Chairman Strumello inquired if the inspection report issues from Fire Marshall Timothy Willis would be a burden to the town. Mr. Belden indicated the District is going through each item now and there is no financial burden at this time, but if something does come up he will let the BOE know.

III) PUBLIC COMMENT

LoPresti School parent and employee Theresa Dunlop, 13 Highland Street, asked if anything been decided on the replacement of the playscape that burned earlier this month at LoPresti School. Ms. Mascolo indicated the replacement cost will be covered by the District's insurance policy after a \$10,000.00 deductible, and an estimate has already been received of \$15,000.00. Mr. Natzel has some less expensive solutions which Ms. Mascolo will be bringing to the Facilities' Committee meeting in October. Ms. Mascolo asked Mrs. Dunlop to make an appointment with her office to meet with her and Mr. Natzel to go over options to replace the playscape.

Meagan Krushinski, SMS teacher, thanked Fran DiVito for all her years of service and strong representation she provided to the teachers of Seymour as President of the SEA. Ms. Krushinski noted Ms. DiVito's experience and leadership will be missed. By the laws of the SEA as First Vice President, Ms. Krushinski stated she will assume all responsibilities as the new President of the SEA. She stated her goal is to attend at least one BOE meeting a month, give the highest level of professional teacher representation, and work collaboratively with BOE members, administrators, and the SEA to make Seymour Public Schools a great system.

LoPresti School parent Sue Rafferty, 54 Maple Street, stated their crossing guard is a retired police officer who wore his retirement jacket, but has now been told he cannot wear it anymore by the Police Department. She asked the BOE's support to get a stipend for him to wear a uniform. She and other parents feel when motorists see a crossing guard in a uniform (policeman/retired officer) they are more cautious driving in school zones versus the standard yellow crossing guard vest/jacket. Discussion was held. Mr. Putorti, as Secretary of the Board, stated he would write a letter to the Seymour Police Department asking them to change the uniform of the crossing guard.

Selectman Paul Roy arrived at 7:51 p.m.

Mr. Paul Sponheimer, 25 Falcon Drive, asked, "How long one needs to be employed by the Seymour BOE to be eligible for early retirement?", and "Do all three bargaining units fall under just one early retirement this time around?" Chairman Strumello explained there are two certified bargaining units, Principals and Teachers. Mr. Sponheimer replied he wanted to know about those two. Chairman Strumello stated he would be able to give some information during his report later on in the meeting.

III) PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

Jennifer Magri, 16 Union Street, indicated she attended a CAFE seminar, "So You Want to Be a Board Member", and shared information and insights she learned at this meeting. She now has a greater appreciation for what BOE members do. Ms. Magri also indicated she is concerned after reading in the paper that Seymour has not adequately made yearly progress in the area of reading as a district, and asked if Mary Lavoie was going to touch upon it during her presentation later on in the meeting. Chairman Strumello stated this would be reviewed during Ms. Lavoie's presentation.

Student Representative Reba Putorti arrived at 8:06 p.m.

Jay Hatfield, 25 Patton Avenue, asked if all members of the general public are invited to attend the Associate Superintendent Focus Group meeting this Thursday, September 22nd, at 7:00 p.m. to be held at Seymour Middle School. BOE indicated the general public is invited to attend. Mr. Hatfield attended two "Meet the Teachers' Night" at Chatfield and LoPresti schools and complimented the administration, the principals and teachers on all the great things going on at each school.

IV) CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting – September 6, 2011

B. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Clements, Kathy
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Special Education
 - Bungay School
 - Effective August 30, 2011
2. Teixeira, Lisa
 - Clerical Paraprofessional
 - Bungay School
 - Effective September 8, 2011

C. Staff Hiring – Non Certified

1. Ewaskie, Roxanne
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Special Education
 - Middle School
 - Step 1, Para Contract
 - Replacing Michelle Mazzerise
2. Thompson, Merissa
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Special Education
 - LoPresti School
 - Step 1, Para Contract
 - Replacing Lisa Bernegger

D. Staff Hiring – Appendix E

1. Williams, Victoria
 - Advisor, Best Buddies Program
 - High School
 - Replacing Pat Humeniuk

F. Finance Committee – September 19, 2011

1. To accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the Financial Management Summary for July/August, 2011
2. Student Activity Bank Accounts

MOTION: to approve the resolution for Student Activity Bank Accounts at T.D. Banknorth for Seymour Middle School, Bungay School, Chatfield School and LoPresti School

IV) CONSENT AGENDA (continued)

Mr. Stanek asked to remove Items A 1. and F 2 from the Consent Agenda

10-3516: MOTION: (Mrs. Loda, sec. Mrs. Flood) moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented with the removal of Items A 1, F 2.

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

Item A 1: Mr. Stanek stated there is an error in the wording of Motion 10-3512 in the BOE minutes from September 6, 2011. The motion should read to eliminate the Math Department Chair position.

Mr. Stanek stated Motion 10-3514 should state the reason(s) for going into Executive Session and noted the Motion does not reflect Ms. Mascolo was also invited into Executive Session

Ms. Mascolo will review the tape from the September 6, 2011 BOE meeting.

10-3517: MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo, sec. Mr. Stanek) to table the acceptance of the minutes from the September 6, 2011 BOE meeting

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

Item F 2: Mr. Stanek asked for a report as to what is happening with these particular accounts, and if this was a change of banks, and is so, why? Mrs. Flood indicated it is not a change of banks and asked Rick Belden to explain further. Mr. Belden explained due to several personnel changes new signature cards needed to be obtained for the bank accounts.

10-3518: MOTION: (Mrs. Flood, sec. Mrs. Loda) to approve the resolution for Student Activity Bank Accounts at T.D. Banknorth for Seymour Middle School, Bungay School, Chatfield School and LoPresti School

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

Chairman Strumello asked for someone to make a motion to adjust the agenda so the student representatives can make their report.

10-3519: MOTION: (Mr. Stanek, sec Mrs. Flood) moved to go out of the regular order of business, and at this time consider Agenda **Item VII, B, BOE Student Representatives**

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

10-3520: MOTION: (Mrs. Loda, sec. Mrs. Flood) to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint Rebecca Putorti and Lukacz Grabowski as the BOE Student Representatives for the 2011-12 school year

Mr. Stanek asked if the SHS Student Council elected both representatives. Lukacz Grabowski indicated they were both elected by the SHS Student Council.

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

VI) INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. INFORMATION

1. Student Representatives

- a. Block Schedule (both reps. explained schedule to BOE members)
- b. Senior Day, 9/9/11 (lunch, relay races, music by D.J. etc.)
- c. Blue and Gold Day, 9/16/11 (every other Friday)
- d. Pumpkin Festival, 9/18/11 (Student Council had a fun booth for kids)

Mr. Garofolo asked if students are allowed to do homework during block schedules. Both reps explained the process during block schedules.

Ms. Putorti reported class meetings are being held once every quarter and Homecoming is the week of Columbus Day.

2. Staff Hiring – Certified

- a. Salem, Sasha
 - Biology Teacher (part time)
 - High School
 - Replacing Fran DiVito
 - Step 6, Masters

Chairman Strumello commented he was very impressed with the candidate's resume.

3 Griffin Hospital Childhood Obesity Program Invitation – October 6, 2011

BOE members are invited to attend

4. BOE Meeting Schedule Revised

5. CMT Results – Mary Lavoie

Mary Lavoie gave a comprehensive slide show report on Seymour's CMT's scores and answered all BOE members' questions. Ms. Mascolo also answered several BOE members' questions

B. REPORTS

1. Minutes

- a. Athletic Committee – August 25, 2011
- b. Finance Committee – September 6, 2011

2. Chairman's Report

- a. CABE 211 Education Law Summary (please refer to your CABE book)
Chairman Strumello reviewed several items, e.g. education grant caps, cameras on busses. Chairman Strumello also stressed our staff needs to be updated on bullying laws/safe school climate plans. Ms. Syriac indicated several administrators from Seymour are going to an in-service on School Climate on September 28th. She also indicated JoAnn Frieburg, State Department of Education, will be at the SMS on October 25th to meet with parents on bullying/school climate. Ms. Syriac will report back to BOE after the in-service. Chairman Strumello indicated early retirement is for certified staff per their contract. Mr. Belden stated there is specific language in the administrator and teacher (about 12-15+ years) contracts for early retirement.

b. Board Members' Comments

Mr. Baker shared an article on "The Trouble with Homework" from **The New York Times**. Also, he invited BOE members to take a tour of the Mechanical Room at Chatfield School held on Saturday morning. He explained what the Mechanical Room is and suggested possibly having a drafting class from the high school do a project this year by setting up a display explaining how this system works at Chatfield. Mr. Baker will let the BOE know when the tour will be. Ms. Mascolo stated a tentative day of December 13, 2011 has been set up for the community to tour Chatfield School.

Mr. Garofolo asked Chairman Strumello if documents from a CABE Board email he sent to BOE members could be made available to all BOE members in order to look at what the New Haven Schools have put together in terms of teacher evaluations and surveys, e.g. student information, student input etc. Ms. Mascolo indicated this information can be

VI) INFORMATION AND REPORTS (continued)

b. Board Members' Comments (continued)

found on the New Haven Public Schools' district website. Mr. Garofolo asked to revisit the P/T Science teacher at Seymour High School. He asked if the P/T Science teacher would be required to maintain her CEUs. Ms. Mascolo indicated she had a valid State of Connecticut teaching certificate and it is acceptable to our district. Ms. Syriac indicated teachers are not required to earn CEUs until they are working under their Professional certification; she is still on her Provisional certification. Mr. Garofolo asked why we are doing a Focus group for the Associate Superintendent's position since this BOE never solicited input from the community when it decided to make its decision regarding the new Superintendent. Chairman replied he encouraged Ms. Syriac to do this since we did not do it the first time.

Mr. Stanek inquired about the filing of minutes from the last meeting being received just this past weekend, and they should be posted on the website seven days after the meeting excluding weekends. Ms. Mascolo explained on the BOE Clerk's behalf there were extenuating circumstances preventing the last meeting's minute being posted within the allowed time. Mr. Stanek asked that we be mindful of this in order to avoid a complaint being filed against the BOE.

Mr. Putorti commented on how fast and furious the Associate Superintendent's position is being looked at. He stated they had discussed not looking into this until December 2012 at a previous meeting. Chairman Strumello stated this is a procedure the BOE has done in the past and it is a managerial position done by the Superintendent.

Mr. Garofolo asked if the BOE has the prerogative whether to retain all existing positions. Chairman Strumello stated he is correct. Mr. Garofolo stated there was no discussion at all as to whether, due to budget constraints or problems associated thereto, the BOE was going to retain such a position or downgrade it.

Mr. Stanek commented it should be noted that we don't follow this procedure and there should be some discussion in this area, and could require the Superintendent to present three recommended candidates for this position under 10-151. Ms. Mascolo noted Mr. Stanek is correct, but stated that the Superintendent must say the candidate is qualified in order to be considered for this position. Further discussion was held.

3. Superintendent's Report

Ms. Mascolo noted it was a great start to the new school year. Ms. Mascolo, Chairman Strumello and First Selectman Roy welcomed the students back on September 6th. She attended "Meet the Teacher's Nights" at Seymour High School and Seymour Middle School. Ms. Mascolo reviewed the details of her report, including meetings and activities of the previous two weeks, Eblasts she sent out, upcoming meetings and events, and she also attended the Pumpkin Festival. She noted October is School Bus Safety month and Mr. Kearns along with All Star Bus Company will be doing some bus evacuations with our students. Ms. Mascolo was asked by an employee, who is a Zumba instructor, if she could give some free Zumba lessons because then she could assess whether she would put in a Facilities request and pay us for the use of our facilities for Zumba classes. Discussion was held as to a Certificate of Insurance being provided for this. It was decided to refer the request to the Recreation Commission. Ms. Mascolo asked the BOE if they could meet at Central Office on Monday, October 24th at 7:00 p.m., to do her evaluation. All BOE members agreed on the date, location and time.

Chairman Strumello requested the Superintendent get the number of parents who attended "Meet the Teachers Night" at all schools.

VII) RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Ms. Jennifer DeBlasio has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her child, Benjamin DeBlasio, for the 2011-2012 school year

10-3521: MOTION: (Mr. Putorti, sec. Mr. Baker) to acknowledge the receipt of this form and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program

VII) RECOMMENDED ACTIONS (continued)

10-3521: MOTION (continued)

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

VIII) EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

IX) ADJOURNMENT

10-3522: MOTION: (Mrs. Loda, sec. Mr. Baker) to adjourn at 9:37 p.m.

SO VOTED:

AFFIRMATIVE: Chairman Strumello, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Flood, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Mrs. Loda, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek

Submitted,

Patricia Gillis, Clerk