



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

February 11, 2015
Chatfield-LoPresti
Cafeteria
7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Jennifer Magri
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Julian Falcioni, Student Representative
Daniel Robinson, Student Representative

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Saundra Gesek
Theodora Klarides
Allison Sobieski-McAndrew

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Snopkowski, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Ginny Tagliatela, Director of Special Services
Rob Dyer, Systemwide Technology Coordinator
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Kristopher Boyle, Assistant Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Roxanne Melaragno, Assistant Principal, CLS
Catherine Katrenya
Lori Robinson

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations to Bungay School 5th grade students Sarah Webb, Alexa Tamburrino, Anthony Buono, Nektaria Karagiannis and Jacek Ingiant and Chatfield-LoPresti 5th grade students Julianna Blanding, Constantine Lampronikos, Joseph Budnick, Jake Chacho, Jason Ouellette and Mikayla Zedek. They were chosen to attend The Connecticut Association of Schools Leadership Conference at the Naugatuck Valley Community College on Tuesday, January 13, 2015: The leadership conference teaches students leadership skills, how to be a team player, how to communicate your ideas and thoughts, and how to utilize the resources available to you to solve a problem.

2. Chatfield-LoPresti School Grade 5 students Jackson Hannon (Art) and Juliana Blanding (Music) and Bungay Grade 5 students Gabrielle Sand (Art) and Alexa Tamburrino (Music) are the Arts and Music Festival recipients. They will be honored with a ceremony at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington on February 24, 2015.
3. Ms. Harmeling recognized Dante Criscio who advanced to the state competition for Math Counts. Ms. Hamad said the Math Counts competition that was held on Saturday. She said more detail would be shared in the next agenda.
4. Mr. Putorti said he attended the Rise up Event held by Ernie DiStasi and it was a fantastic event. He believed about \$1500 were raised for the mentoring program.

B. Correspondence

1. Letter dated January 5, 2015 to Christine Syriac from Rick Belden reporting the audit of the Town and Board of Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 has been completed
2. Letter dated January 30, 2015 to First Selectman Kurt Miller from Mary Sue Feige thanking him for his participation in the National Geographic Bee on Friday, January 23, 2015

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting – January 5, 2015
2. Special BOE Meeting – January 8, 2015

B. Finance Committee Meeting – January 5, 2015

1. Financial Management Summary - ending December 31, 2014

C. Nutrition Services Financial Report – December, 2014

D. Donation of Games from Chatfield-LoPresti PTA

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

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

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. REPORTS

A. Chairman's Report

1. Chairman's Report
None
2. Board Member Comments
None

B. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac reported that after researching the cost of doing a town wide mailing of the Citizens Academy information, it was found to be too expensive to do. We will continue to communicate and disseminate information the best that we can, send home to families, leave in various town locations. She also reported that as a follow up to the meeting with the Police Commissioners and the Board of Selectman, the security firm that offered to assist us would be too costly to use, we will continue to do what we have been doing with regard to school security.

C. Student Representatives

1. High School Student Representative Report
Julian Falcioni reported that January was a slow month due to mid-term exams and bad weather. He said underclassman have completed the online course selection. Winter Concert took place on January 15, 2015. The Cheer and Dance teams placed second at competition at Danbury and Torrington High School. The Mr. Seymour Contest will take place before March 20. Daniel Robinson reported that March 4 is "Spread the Word to End the Word" Day. A sign language wooden hand will be signed by everyone as a pledge not the use the word. The Decades Show is on March 6.

D. Workers' Compensation – Discussion and Possible Action

Ms. Harmeling said this topic was the focus of the Finance Committee meeting. We are experiencing a “perfect storm” with regard to Workers' Compensation. Claims have been building up over time and decisions have been going against us. She said her feeling was since we don't have a reserve fund we should ask the town to pay like they do for other departments. Responsible businesses would have a savings account but we are not a separate business; we are a department of the Town of Seymour. She suggested a thoughtful appeal was in order. Mr. Putorti said we have a major liability that we cannot cover. We will have a dialogue with the First Selectman and the Chairman of the Board of Finance. Mr. Belden talked about developing a Internal Services Account which would be built up when we have a good year and in bad years could use the funds to pay. Mr. Hatfield asked if this dialogue would take place before or after the budget presentation and after we pay off this year, what is the amount we will still owe? Mr. Belden said we have budgeted \$160,000 but there are too many unknowns to know how much we will pay or what, if anything, will be left. Ms. Harmeling said we may have to take from other line items. Mr. Belden said we will be in a deficit situation by the end of the year. He will have a better idea after he knows the excess cost amount in March. Mr. Strumello asked if the town is aware of this possibility and Mr. Belden confirmed the town is aware of this situation. He said last year we were able to cover this deficit with the savings from the creation of the HSA program.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to authorize the Superintendent of Schools and the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to begin a dialogue with First Selectman and the Chairman of the Board of Finance to address the payment of Workers Compensation claims.

SO VOTED

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

E. Technology Maintenance Plan – Rob Dyer

Mr. Dyer presented the draft of the Technology Maintenance Plan. This plan provides a replacement schedule for devices. In the past, the focus was the infrastructure, wires and switches. We are in a good place now and cost savings have been realized. This plan can be followed to replace and sustain devices. Some of the work has been done through grants. Mr. Hatfield wanted to see more justification on why we are not going more toward Chromebooks. Mr. Dyer explained that while Chromebooks are \$300 and laptops are \$500, laptops come with a warranty. Screen repairs on Chromebooks start at \$250. We cannot look at only the initial cost; we have to look at the whole life of the computer. Ms. Snopkowski said many courses require software that does not run on Chromebooks. Ms. Harmeling said many high school students have their own devices but those who use school devices, are they able to take them home? Mrs. Syriac said we are not yet at a place where students can take devices home. Mr. Dyer said it is preferable to have a cart in the classroom. There is far less damage than students transporting devices from classroom to classroom. Mrs. Syriac said we are not ready at this time for 1:1 and this is financial concern. We are unable to afford the replacement costs. Teachers are not in a place to embrace this yet. This is a five year vision/plan. Mr. Hatfield said the use of devices is not standard from elementary to middle to high school. Mr. Strumello reminded the Board that there is a committee for this. The middle school and high school have been involved. Objections should have been addressed. Mr. Strumello asked Mr. Freund if he was satisfied. Mr. Freund said we are not sure of the future so we need to be open. Mr. Strumello said the administration is behind the Technology Maintenance Plan. Ms. Hamad confirmed there has been lots of discussion on this. Ms. Snopkowski said the committee got input from the middle school and the high school. Daniel Robinson, student representative, said there is lots of diversity with laptops, with Chromebooks, you are stuck; cannot grow from there. Elementary students will adapt to any device you give them, that is just part of our world. We need laptops, not necessarily 1:1. Teachers may not be able to teach if every student has a device.

F. Technology Grant – Nancy Snopkowski

Ms. Snopkowski shared the Technology Grant with the Board. She reminded the Board that we received \$245,000 from the last technology grant. There is no way to know if we will receive the \$270,000 we have applied for but this round will be matching funds. The rate would be 63%. We hope to use these funds to supplement our district devices. The matching funds would come from the Technology line item and we have until the end of the fiscal year to match the funds.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the submission of the Technology Grant to the State

SO VOTED

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

VII. INFORMATION

A. School Activities and Recognitions

1. Middle School (see attached)
2. Bungay School (see attached)
3. Chatfield-LoPresti School (see attached)

B. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum and Technology Committee – January 20, 2015
Mr. Strumello spoke about Mr. Freund's vision to make Seymour High School a destination school. He said the new courses are a great of the school moving forward and we should note this.
2. Finance Committee – January 5, 2015

C. Staff Hiring – Appendix E

1. Willadsen, David (a correction was made)
 - Student Council Advisor
 - Seymour Middle High School
 - Replacing John Reilly Kelly Flannery

D. Staff Resignations – Appendix E

1. Georgia, Kyle
 - Assistant Coach, Baseball
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective January 16, 2015
2. Osieski, Sandy
 - Assistant Coach, Baseball
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective January 8, 2015

E. Staff Resignations – Non-Certified

1. Fleming, Ivy
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective January 27, 2015
2. Reilly, John
 - Part Time Custodian
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Effective January 10, 2015

VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Curriculum – New Courses

1. Accounting III

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to add a new course entitled Accounting III at Seymour High School in the 2015-16 school year

SO VOTED

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

2. Zoology
MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to add a new course entitled Zoology at Seymour High School in the 2015-16 school year

SO VOTED

3. **AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Film, Narrative and Techniques
MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to add a new course entitled Film, Narrative and Techniques at Seymour High School in the 2015-16 school year

SO VOTED

4. **AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Journalism
MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to add a new course entitled Journalism at Seymour High School in the 2015-16 school year

SO VOTED

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

B. Dedication Ceremony – CLS Playground and Library Media Center

Several dates were discussed for the Dedication Ceremony for the Vincentena Kobasa Playground and the Kenneth Ewaskie Library Media Center at Chatfield-LoPresti School. The date that was agreed upon was May 12, 2015 at 6:30. Mr. Stanek asked Mr. Olechna to involve the students in the program by doing something such as writing an essay or having a choral group or something that will involve the children. Mr. Hatfield wanted to make sure the plaques will be in by this date. Mrs. Syriac confirmed they would be ready for the dedication ceremony.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to set the date of May 12, 2015 at 6:30 pm for the dedication ceremony of the Vincentena Kobasa Playground and the Kenneth Ewaskie Library Media Center at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

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

*** C. *Superintendent of Schools Mid-Year Review**

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) move that the board enter Executive Session for the mid-year review of the Superintendent of Schools. The Board invites Christine Syriac into the Executive Session

SO VOTED

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

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

Into Executive Session: 8:30 pm

Out of Executive Session: 9:22 pm

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to adjourn

SO VOTED

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk