



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 4, 2015
Seymour Middle School
Library Media Center
7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Saundra Gesek
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield (7:48 p.m.)
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski-McAndrew
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Daniel Robinson, Student Representative

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Theodora Klarides

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Snopkowski, Assoc. Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Rob Dyer, Systemwide Technology Coordinator
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, Seymour High School
Tara Yusko, Assistant Principal, Seymour High School
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, Seymour Middle School
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, Bungay School
Kris Boyle, Assistant Principal, Bungay School
David Olechna, Principal, Chatfield-LoPresti School
Vonda Tencza

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations to the Seymour Middle School Student Council who held a breakfast on March 29, 2015 and raised \$500 for Treasured Time who will sponsor a trip for Josh Dwyer and his family to visit Disney World
2. Congratulations to Grade 11 students Julia Pietruszka and Justin Fabozzi who are being reviewed for National Merit acknowledgements
3. Thank you to the Seymour Lions Club for doing its part to help students celebrate Arbor Day. The Seymour Lions along with their mascot, Seymour the Lion, visited grade 4 classrooms in Bungay and Chatfield-LoPresti distributing pine tree saplings for each student to take home and plant

Board Member Recognitions:

1. Mr. Fred Stanek recognized the Seymour High School actors, including Student Representative Dan Robinson, on their fine performance in the play "12 Angry Jurors". Mr. Stanek said it was a privilege to attend this production.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting – April 6, 2015
2. Special BOE Meeting – April 7, 2015

B. Finance Committee Meeting – April 6, 2015

1. Financial Management Summary - ending April 30, 2015

To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee meeting to accept the April 30, 2015 Financial Management Summary as presented

C. Nutrition Services Financial Report – March, 2015

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

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. REPORTS

A. Chairman's Report

1. Chairman's Report

Mr. Putorti reported that the Board of Education budget failed and on Tuesday, we will present our case to the Board of Finance. He said he hopes they will not cut too much. Mr. Putorti said he disagrees when people say the public spoke because there were far too many people who did not vote.

2. Board Member Comments

Ms. Magri asked for a brief meeting after the Board meeting to go over contracts. Mr. Stanek said the Board of Education vote was not taken at the last Board meeting for the location of graduation. He has heard at a town meeting that Smoke in the Valley wants to hold their festival on the Seymour High School grounds. He said it is important that the Board retains jurisdiction over all of our buildings. Whether we vote yes or no doesn't matter but we must decide as a Board. Mr. Strumello said he understand we cannot beat people up about voting but we need to say something to get out the vote. He said he was so disappointed on the amount of people who voted. He relayed one conversation he had with a resident who said they did not vote because there were no vote signs. When he asked the person if he received Kurt's Code Red call, he said he did but he forgot to vote. Mr. Strumello also expressed his extreme disappointment with the media coverage regarding the vote. He said other than the Valley Independent Sentinel; no one covered the vote prior to the date. We as a Board need to contact people personally to get them to vote. The Board of Finance is going to cut us more and we cannot continue to move this district forward. Ms. Harmeling agreed with Mr. Strumello saying if each Board member got 12 people to vote, the budget would have passed. We need to be positive about what is in the budget. We need to try harder in our personal circles. She said it is agonizing and unfair to go before the Board of Finance. We are responsible for getting out the vote.

B. Superintendent's Report

Ms. Syriac explained that the teacher who resigned did not quit in the middle of the year, she has been on child rearing leave for a year and has decided not to return to her position. Mr. Ernie DiStasi has requested that the middle school social studies department be representatives at the State when they develop a new Social Studies curriculum. We are not sure if we would be chosen but our middle school is interested. She reported that Mr. Freund is not here tonight because he is out of district doing a NEASC visit in Lyme/Old Lyme. Mrs. Syriac let the Board know that she is in frequent contact with Vonda Tencza, our upcoming Associate Superintendent. She said that she had heard that DeBarber Field may be available for graduation but is not sure if this is true or not. Ms. Harmeling asked if telling people Mr. Freund will be making the decision regarding the location of graduation is correct. Mrs. Syriac said she and Mr. Freund have made the decision to have graduation on the softball field if DeBarber field is not available. Mr. Strumello said he knew of no official notification on delaying the work on the field and said he was shocked by this statement.

MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda a discussion regarding the location of graduation

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Hatfield reported that there has been a little extension on the bids for the field project and they will be having a meeting next Monday. He said the extension was probably only a week or two due to some logistical things. There is talk that there is not a need to have so many layers on the field. This could lower the cost.

C. High School Student Representatives Report – Daniel Robinson

Mr. Robinson reported that all the spring sports (baseball, softball, tennis, and track) are well into their seasons. There was a Cinco de Mayo celebration sponsored by the Spanish classes. Upcoming events include the prom, awards, Smarter Balanced Assessment testing, and AP testing. He said the play *"12 Angry Jurors"* went well and this was the first drama at Seymour High School in many years. A judge for the HALO Awards was in attendance. It is possible that the chorus and/or some actors may be nominated for a HALO Award and will be going to the event being held at the Palace Theater. He said he thought the chorus would perform but was not sure if any other Seymour students would be performing. Mr. Strumello asked if the HALO Awards were open to the public and Mr. Robinson confirmed they were and the admission was \$20 per person.

VII. INFORMATION

A. School Activities and Recognitions

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

B. "Espressions" Art Show, Seymour High School at Greenwich Workshop Gallery

C. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee – April 6, 2015
2. Nutrition, Health & Safety Committee – April 20, 2015
3. Awards Advisory Committee – April 21, 2015

D. Staff Resignations – Certified Staff

1. Straniti Schmolz, Jennifer
 - School Psychologist
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective end of school year

2. Smith, Sarah
 - Teacher - Kindergarten
 - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
 - Effective April 22, 2015

E. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Vetro, Cristina
 - Clerical Paraprofessional, P/T
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective April 24, 2015

F. Changes to Health Insurance Coverage – Rick Belden

Mr. Belden explained that he was notified that certain provisions of the Affordable Care Act need to be included in our Century Preferred PPO Comprehensive Mix health plan for the 2015-16 plan year. The cost is approximately the same as well as the coverage; we would be required to negotiate with all bargaining units but the teachers have the most participating with approximately 38 members. Mr. Belden indicated the cost increase to the Board is insignificant and Attorney Dorsey indicated the potential legal costs would exceed the cost increase. Ms. Gesek asked how this affected retired teachers and Mr. Belden said it would be a little better coverage and about a 15¢ increase.

G. Townwide Technology Department Report – Rob Dyer

Mrs. Syriac explained that the Board asked to revisit this item. She asked Mr. Dyer, Systemwide Technology Coordinator to do a brief overview of the Townwide Technology Plan. One of the first needs to be addressed for the town was to implement e-mail archiving as the town was not in compliance with FOIA laws regarding retention of email. An appliance was installed to control the vast amount of SPAM emails that town employees were receiving each day. Another immediate need for the town was to consolidate technology line items into one comprehensive budget and eliminate unnecessary spending. After doing this a fiber optic upgrade was possible for a minimal cost. This fiber optic rollout is in the rollout phase and the project will take approximately six months to complete. Once complete, the fiber optic project will allow the town and school district to integrate technology even further by utilizing existing licensing with our camera systems as well as key fob access. Further projects include integration of the BOE's current work order system for IT requests as well as a new firewall that was recycled from the BOE, and will move toward standardization of purchased computers. Mr. Dyer talked about the time demands of the job saying they are significant but due to the nature of IT and the ability to work remotely, he has not been taken away from his original job duties for a significant period of time. He said the majority of the work that has been done on the town side has been project based, which can be done from remote sites. There have been some things that require Rob's presence such as the "GasBoy" project at Public Works, the install of the three Barracuda appliances, and the moves at the Community Center to accommodate the new Director of Community Services. He said the work hours have increased but the work load is manageable. At some point in time, however, the town will need a part-time IT-Person. Mr. Dyer concluded his presentation by saying he does not believe the current additional work load is having a negative impact on the quality of work on the BOE side. Mr. Putorti said he felt the biggest question is how much time is taken away from the BOE job and said it sounds like it is minimal. Mr. Dyer confirmed that he has checked and there are no significant problems in the district. Mr. Miller said the town is award that Mr. Dyer's first priority is to the Board and that he is not the "fixer". The town is very flexible with deadlines. He said the biggest impact with having Mr. Dyer is the saving of budget costs by looking at what was truly needed. There have been a lot of positives. Once the town gets caught up, their needs will drop substantially. We will be purchasing equipment together with the Board of Education. He said the \$15,000.00 was very well spent.

Mr. Strumello asked if we need to add a person to the IT would the cost come from the town portion of the budget. Mr. Miller confirmed that it would come from the town side whether it be a full time or part time new employee. We would work this out with the Board of Education. We treat Rob as one of our department heads; he attends our meetings every Monday. Ms. Syriac said when we have conversations about this arrangement one area of concern is if a change in leadership occurs. If at some point, the arrangement does not work with new leadership, Mrs. Syriac has shared with Mr. Dyer that the Board can always revisit the arrangement. We have a very good and positive relationship with Mr. Miller and we would hope that will continue. Mr. Miller talked about a culture change on the municipal time. The 10 year planning commission will also be pushing to include this arrangement and any changes that would be made in the future would have to be justified to the 10 year strategic planning commission. Mr. Miller asked that this arrangement be revisited with the Board. Mr. Stanek reminded everyone that we did a motion in the past for this arrangement. Mr. Miller said he did not want to make a motion at the Board of Selectman meeting until motion was made by the Board of Education. Mr. Belden reminded the Board that the agreement included an increase in salary from \$15,000 to \$20,000 and that should be part of the motion.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to continue with the agreement regarding the Board of Education Technology Director merged position with the Town of Seymour in accordance with the recommendation and proposal of the First Selectmen presented to the Board of Education on August 18, 2014 for the period of 7/1/15 through 6/30/16 inclusive, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Approval by the Board of Selectman;
- b. Payment of the sum of \$20,000.00 from the Town of Seymour to the Board of Education for said period;
- c. Review of the combined position by the Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen annually; and
- d. The right of either the Board of Education or the Board of Selectmen to terminate the combined Technology Director position as of June 30, 2016 by providing notice to the other Board on or before June 15, 2016

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Putorti asked if this was something we had to look at each year. Mr. Strumello said he thought looking at it each year gave us some protection. Mr. Miller reminded them that the position continues to be a Board of Education position. Mr. Miller thanked Mr. Dyer for the hard work and said this has been a great thing for the town. He thanked him for stepping up to help. He also thanked the Board of Education for the support they have given the town with this merger. Ms. Harmeling asked if the Board of Finance was aware that this merged position helps the town realize savings. Mr. Miller said the Board of Finance is aware.

VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Awards Advisory Committee Awards

Mr. Hatfield said he found it interesting that the Awards Advisory minutes were redacted and Board members did not know the names of the recipients until this meeting. Mrs. Syriac and Mr. Stanek explained that the nominees were kept secret because the nominations needed to be approved by the Board of Education before they can be made public.

MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Ms. Gesek) to accept the recommendations of the Awards Advisory Committee regarding the 2015 recipients of the David A. Brumer Excellence in Education Award (Michael Kearney), the John J. Gallagher Memorial Athletic Award (Missy Orosz), the Vincentena Kobasa Excellence in Teaching Award (Louellen Pagliaro), and the Thomas J. Petruny Memorial Education and Environment Award (Kaelyn Brezina)

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

B. Policy Revisions (second reading)

1. 6146.2 Instruction – Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Magri) to adopt Policy #6146.2 Instruction – Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations that was approved by the Board of Education at the regularly scheduled meeting of April 6, 2015

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

2. 5121 Students – Examination/Grading/Rating

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Magri) to adopt Policy #5121 Students – Examination/Grading/Rating that was approved by the Board of Education at the regularly scheduled meeting of April 6, 2015

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

3. 5131.911 Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Magri) to adopt Policy #5131.911 Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy that was approved by the Board of Education at the regularly scheduled meeting of April 6, 2015

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

C. Healthy Food Certification Program

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Director of Nutrition Services to participate in the State of Connecticut Healthy Food Certification program for the 2015-2016 school year

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

D. Elimination of Part Time Athletic Director Position

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to eliminate the Part Time Athletic Director position at Seymour High School from the 2015-2016 school budget as previously discussed

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Stanek

The motion passes

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Gesek) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk