

Seymour Board of Education



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 11/9/15
TIME: 10:25AM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Daniel Robinson, Student Representative
Cassandra Quintiliano, Student Representative

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Sandra Gesek
Theodora Klarides

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator
Ginny Tagliatela, Director of Special Services
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Tara Yusko, Asst. Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Kristopher Boyle, Assistant Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Roxanne Melaragno, Asst. Principal, CLS
Judith Fabozzi
Louis Fabozzi
Agnieszka Kulak

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:33 p.m.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations to the students of the Electrathon program at Seymour High School who competed in races at Lime Rock Raceway on Friday, October 23. Our Electrathon cars placed first and second in the expert class of the CT Electrathon race. Great job Mr. Perrucci and Mr. Stock!
2. Congratulations to Justin Fabozzi and Julia Pietruszka who received a letter of commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Program. They are two of approximately 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation who are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Mrs. Syriac and Mr. Freund presented Justin Fabozzi and Julia Pietruszka with a certificate recognizing their achievement of being named a Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program.
3. Mr. Hatfield recognized the members of the Turf Committee and students who participated in the dedication ceremony of the turf field at Seymour High School
4. Mr. Hatfield thanked the members of the High School Student Council for their great discussion during our Special Meeting tonight

B. Correspondence

1. Letter dated October 26, 2015 to Mr. Justin Fabozzi from Christine Syriac on behalf of the Board of Education inviting him to attend the November 4, 2015 BOE meeting so he can be presented with his Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation
2. Letter dated October 26, 2015 to Miss Julia Pietruszka from Christine Syriac on behalf of the Board of Education inviting her to attend the November 4, 2015 BOE meeting so she can be presented with her Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation
3. Letter dated October 13, 2015 to Christine Syriac from CAFE informing the Seymour Public Schools that our district has won Honorable Mentions for two of our submissions for the CAFE Award of Excellence for Educational Communications Award

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Minutes – October 5, 2015
2. Special BOE Minutes – October 19, 2015

B. Finance Committee Meeting – November 4, 2015

1. Financial Management Summary - ending October 31, 2015
To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee meeting to accept the October 31, 2015 Financial Management Summary as presented

C. Nutrition Services Financial Report – July through September, 2015

D. Staff Hiring – Non Certified

1. **Orosz, Melissa (Missy)**
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Katherine Szabo

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, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. REPORTS

A. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac distributed the cohort data as requested by Ms. Magri at the last BOE meeting and said if there are questions please send to her. She noted that students who attended school K-5 in Seymour had higher continuous improvement than those students who transferred into Seymour. Mrs. Syriac invited the Board members to attend the CAPSS Superintendents Award of Excellence Dinner on December 3. An invitation will be sent to them tomorrow.

B. Student Representatives Report – Daniel Robinson, Cassandra Quintiliano

Mr. Robinson described the activities at the high school for spirit week. October was a big month with lots of activities tied to the unveiling of field. Spirit week was held and this lead up to the homecoming dance. We won the game and had a pep rally. In the future there is a possibility of a powder puff game and a bonfire. A motivational, guest speaker who was a former wrestler presented to the freshman and sophomore classes. Clubs are booming and having lots of events. Everywhere you look, clubs are underway. He shared the standings for the fall sports. All sports did a great job.

C. Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee Meeting – October 8, 2015
 - a. Policy Revision - 5141.21 - Administering Medication
Mrs. Syriac shared that there was a long discussion on policy #5141.21. She said the Board attorney worked on this policy to be sure it supported the regulations. If needed, future changes will be made in the regulations section of the policy. She said the policy was also shared with the district physician. Mr. Strumello said he felt it was good to have this feedback.

MOTION: (Ms. Magri/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to revise Policy #5141.21 – Administering Medication as presented

SO VOTED

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

D. Softball Field Committee

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to allow the Softball Field Committee to address the Board regarding the Softball Field project

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Mr. Ken Pereiras said they have heard that the Board was left in the dark regarding the project and wanted to apologize to the Board for the oversight. He introduced Chris Adamo who explained that the committee was made up of a bunch of volunteers who wanted to do something great. He asked for some guidance on how to proceed. He said there is a \$265,000 bond that was originally slated for lights at the softball field. The committee made a wish list and came up with additional projects such as the lights, permanent fences, bull pens, replacement of the clay, a press box, and bleachers. Their goal is to give the softball field a "real stadium feel". We feel the girls are deserving of this. Bids will be opened tomorrow for site work only. The estimated completion date is March 31, 2016. But will have a contingency plan should it not be completed before games begin. Mr. Putorti asked about the warranty on the lights and Mr. Adamo said it was 25 years. Mr. Strumello asked if other teams will be using the field and who is paying for this. Mr. Belden confirmed that the energy cost of the lighting will be absorbed by the Board of Education. Mr. Strumello asked if this project will have any impact on physical education classes. Mr. Belden said the turf field can be used. The softball field will be used for softball only. Mr. Stanek told Mr. Pereiras and Mr. Adamo that there was no need to apologize to the Board, that they were doing a fine job and were educating themselves with regard to the process. He said it was an oversight by another Board. Mr. Strumello said the Board of Education needs to thank Representative Conroy for getting the grant which will allow this project to move forward.

VII. INFORMATION

A. School Activities and Recognitions

1. Bungay School
2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
3. Seymour Middle School

B. Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes (Revised) – September 8, 2015

C. Staff Appointments – Appendix E

1. Gilbert, Jeffrey
 - Head Coach, Baseball
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Robert Kelo

D. Staff Resignations – Certified

1. Welch, Cheryl
 - Art Teacher
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective November 30, 2015

Mr. Strumello said Mrs. Welch was the best art teacher he ever worked with. She is an outstanding educator.

E. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Kiwanis, Cynthia
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective November 5, 2015
2. Oleksiak, Alane
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective October 23, 2015

3. Botelho, Laura
 - Monitor Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Effective October 8, 2015

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. **Voluntary Corrective Action Plan Update** – Rick Belden

Mr. Belden shared the updated Voluntary Corrective Action Plan that was submitted to Dr. Wood with the Board. Mrs. Syriac, Mr. Putorti, and Mr. Belden met with Dr. Wood and he did a great job in guiding us. The Permanent Building Committee also met at the high school and did a walkthrough of the school. They were able to make some suggestions for solutions to some of the items on the list. Dr. Wood has acknowledged receipt of this updated plan.

B. **Graduation** – Jim Freund

Mr. Freund said he felt the facility was gorgeous and they couldn't have asked for more. The Turf Committee did a wonderful job. Saying he wanted to get an early start on graduation to avoid problems similar to last year, he has done some initial research into what needs to be done in order to have graduation on the field. He distributed literature regarding covers. Mr. Freund noted that he felt the covers were ugly and had gathered some information on alternatives to using a cover. He said the company suggested $\frac{3}{4}$ " ply board under the staging and chairs that cannot sink more than one inch. He said he would also ask that the graduate girls wear flats or wedges because although heels will not damage the turf, it can be very difficult to walk in heels on the turf. Mr. Freund said he was told that not using a cover would not void the warranty. He told the Board that he wanted to plan now for graduation and would like some direction from the Board. Mr. Hatfield said he felt the town and the engineer should be apprised of the warranty statement just to be safe. The next Turf Committee meeting is on November 10 and Mr. Hatfield would like someone from the Board of Education to attend to inform them of what is being discussed. Mr. Strumello said he reads the email differently and then asked, what is done when a team from another school who does not have turf wears their normal cleats on our field. Mr. Freund said cleats up to one inch are acceptable. Mr. Stanek asked if the information was from the manufacturer of the turf. Mr. Freund said it was. Mr. Stanek said he felt it was very important for us to hold graduation on the field. He said it is important to our students and we should do everything possible to make it happen. Ms. Magri asked if Oxford used their field for graduation, if they covered it, and if so, would they be willing to rent their cover to us for the day. Mr. Freund said one of his problems is how ugly the cover is, that he was hoping for a Kodak moment. Mr. Stanek asked where we stand with having a dedicated turf field employee from Public Works. That person should develop the knowledge on how to preserve and maintain the field. Ms. Harmeling asked what other schools with turf fields do and could we just cover the part of the field where the stage and chairs are so the aesthetics of the field could be seen. Mr. Freund reiterated that he wants to have graduation on the field and he wants to do it properly. Mr. Hatfield asked about the cost of the cover and Mr. Freund said he does not have the cost. Mr. Putorti said the consensus is we would like to have graduation on the field and that Mr. Freund should come back to the Board of Education with what other towns do, the cost of the cover, and the cost of the ply board solution. Mr. Hatfield said that the Turf Committee has no money for this. Mr. Strumello said at the last Turf Committee meeting a breakdown of the costs was shared and there is not much money left. Ms. Harmeling said she felt the Director of Facilities should be looking into this and wondered why Mr. Freund is doing it. Mr. Freund responded that he feels as principal he is responsible for everything. Mrs. Syriac said Mr. Freund had taken this on and took the initiative to begin looking at this. She said she will have Mr. Natzel gather the requested information and report to the Board. Mr. Hatfield stated there was training given to the people maintaining the field. Mrs. Syriac said the training was cancelled the first time then rescheduled. Our people showed up the second time but the trainers did not and now a third training session has been scheduled. Mr. Stanek asked that Mr. Natzel should also be asking for a dedicated public works person for the care and maintenance of the turf field. Public Works has always been responsible for the care and maintenance of the fields so why our facilities people being trained. Mrs. Syriac said they were being trained for knowledge, not to do the work.

C. **PowerSchool** – Rob Dyer, Rick Belden

Mr. Dyer talked about moving forward with PowerSchool as our student information system. He explained that the student information system is the hub. Our current system, Rediker has not been updated in some time and that information needs to be pulled out in order to make it work. IT is finding more and more problems with Rediker.

Mr. Dyer said he actually has experience with transitioning from Rediker to PowerSchool because he did it in Oxford. PowerSchool has more functionality and less cost. Mr. Belden said they have been able to secure a lease option over three years. Mr. Dyer explained that there is a 90 day timeline for implementation but this is for the basic "vanilla" version. His suggestion is to target a longer install time for anything extra. We want to do the 90 day install and then step back and see what else we need. The question was asked if Mr. Dyer would be the data collector and he responded that we have a person on staff to do this but he would be working closely with him initially. PowerSchool is different in that they require one or two point persons. This is their requirement. Mr. Strumello asked about the longevity and Mr. Dyer explained a brief history of PowerSchool, how it was developed and that PowerSchool is the major system used across the state. The state actually works with PowerSchool so state reporting is comparable. PowerSchool is used by 70% of the schools in the state; Rediker is used in 10% of the schools. PowerSchool is part of Pearson Learning. Mrs. Harmeling asked about transitioning to a new website. Mr. Dyer said the teachers would be first to be trained so they can use Gradebook, then we would roll out to parents, the website would be toward the end of the process. Mrs. Syriac said we will have the Edline website until the transition is complete. When asked why the website couldn't be built at the same time, it came down to planning and time. Mrs. Syriac said she, Mrs. Tencza, and Mr. Dyer would sit down and develop a timeline which will be shared with the Board at a future meeting. There will be improvements such as elementary teachers being able to post assignments, grades, etc. but this will be new to them so they will need more intensive training. The target completion date will be July 1, 2016 to allow for schedules to be built in Rediker and then transitioned into PowerSchool. The folks who do the scheduling will then have a year to learn the PowerSchool scheduling process. In closing Mr. Dyer said the roll out must be a methodical and slow process.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to authorize the Superintendent to enter into an agreement to purchase the PowerSchool Student Information System at a one time initial cost of \$48,212 and to enter into a 36 month operating lease with First American Education Finance to finance the one time initial cost

SO VOTED

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

D. BOE Retreat

Mr. Putorti said this is on hold for now.

IX. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Early Retirement Incentive – Certified Staff

Discussion and possible action on an early retirement incentive for certified staff

As part of the Teachers contract we are obligated to offer an Early Retirement Incentive Package one time during each contract cycle so we must do it this year. Mr. Hatfield asked if we knew how many people can participate. Mr. Belden explained the cost savings if replacement teachers were hired saying there is a range of potential savings. Mr. Strumello asked if we knew the number of people who may be interested. Mrs. Syriac said fourteen (14) teachers would qualify but she felt not all of them will retire at this time. We could also have teachers who have credit from previous districts that we would not know about. Mr. Stanek said he does not like this program and wished it could be removed from the contract. Ms. Harmeling confirmed that this happens once during every teachers contract cycle so the teachers must know it is coming.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to offer an early retirement incentive to certified staff for the 2015-16 school year at a rate of \$2000 for a five year period. Teachers wishing to participate will be required to notify the Board by December 16, 2015.

SO VOTED

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

OPPOSED: Mr. Stanek

B. Policy #7551 Revision

Mr. Strumello said he likes this policy a lot.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Stanek) to adopt the revision to Policy #7551 - Naming of Facility Areas that was approved at the Board of Education meeting on September 8, 2015

SO VOTED

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

C. CABE Delegate General Assembly

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda a discussion on the CABE Delegate General Assembly on Thursday, November 19.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Mr. Hatfield reminded the Board that they talked about someone from the Board attend the CABE Delegate General Assembly on Thursday, November 19. Ms. Harmeling said she attended last year and found it informative and factual. She said it is actually a voting body. Mr. Strumello said he has attended this in the past. Mr. Hatfield said he was available to attend. Mr. Putorti said we needed to discuss what is to be voted on at the November 16 special meeting. Mr. Strumello said he will also be attending.

D. Board member Comments

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda a discussion on Board member comments

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Stanek, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Harmeling, Ms Magri

MOTION FAILED

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk