

Seymour Board of Education

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES (Make up of 12/2/19)

December 10, 2019
Seymour High School
7:15 p.m.

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 12/18/19
TIME: 3 pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Kristen Bruno
Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Beth Nesteriak
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Zachary Braca, Student Representative
Ashley Sirowich, Student Representative

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Sherry Holmes, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SHS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BES
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Jessica Albertson, Assistant Principal, CLS
Dawn Adams

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Strumello called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:39 p.m.

The Board observed a moment of silence for LeRoy Hibbart, former Seymour Board of Education member who served in the 1960's and 1970's, Bill Jarvis, Sr., longtime electrician for the Seymour Public Schools, and Caroll Spinney, puppeteer for Big Bird character (some of our Board members have met him).

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Correspondence

1. Letter dated November 14, 2019 to Dr. Edward Hendricks from Michael Wilson on behalf of the Board of Education members thanking him for his service.

Mr. Wilson said he was able to have lunch with Dr. Hendricks this week and he sends his regards and again apologizes for having to resign. Mr. Wilson reports he is getting better with each day.

B. Recognitions

1. Presentation of the National School Development Council Award to Joseph Adams and Rhea Koyambreth – Mr. Mike Wilson, Mr. Jim Freund

2. Congratulations to Seymour Middle School student Jainna Marcinczyk and Seymour High School students Nicholas Marchetti and Ashley Sirowich as the 2019 recipients of the CAPSS Superintendents' Award of Excellence. They will be honored at a dinner on December 5, 2019
3. Congratulations to all the Seymour High School students who took the Advanced Placement Exams and shined!
Mr. Strumello said it was nice to see recognition of academic work. It was mentioned that student Nick Marchetti wrote the newspaper article.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment provides the opportunity for the public to make a comment. It is not a dialogue between the Board and the public. Based upon what is heard during Public Comment, the Board may choose to add a topic to the agenda. If questions are posed that the Chairman is able to answer those questions may be addressed under the Chairmen's Report portion of the agenda. The Board will not discuss personnel matters. Comments should be respectful and be no longer than two minutes in length so that all who wish to comment may have the opportunity to do so. All public wanting to comment will need to state their name and address for the record prior to addressing the Board.

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2019
- B. Nutrition Services Financial Report – October, 2019
- C. Unified Cheer Team of One – Juanita Aremas, Shelton High School
- D. Policy to Adopt – Approved Regular BOE Meeting, November 6, 2019
 1. Policy #3524.1 – Hazardous Materials in Schools
- E. Out of State Field Trips
 1. New Amsterdam Theater, New York, NY
Seymour Middle School Students Grade 6 to the New Amsterdam Theater in New York, NY on April 8, 2020 to see the Broadway play Aladdin
- F. Staff Hiring – Non Certified
 1. Capozziello, Danielle
 - Monitor Paraprofessional
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Replacing Alyson Hartshorn
 2. Felizardo, Rowena
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
 - Replacing Rebecca Argonese
- G. Staff Hiring – Appendix E
 1. Cunningham, Thomas
 - Assistant Coach, Indoor Track
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Chris Jeanette

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

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. 2020-2021 BOE Meeting Schedule

MOTION: (Mr. Kubik/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the 2020-2021 BOE Meeting Schedule as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

B. Creation of a new Special Education Teacher position at Chatfield-LoPresti School

Dr. Boyle was unable to attend this meeting so Mr. Olechna stepped in to explain the process that was used and the reasons why there is a need for an additional special education teaching position at Chatfield-LoPresti School. The number of Special Education students at Chatfield-LoPresti continues to grow. Teachers' caseloads are at the maximum and we are constantly adjusting teachers' schedules to cover the needs. Mr. Olechna said we are no longer able to meet the IEP hours with the existing staff we currently have. They have had many meetings to discuss the situation and try to find a solution. We are at the point where we have rotated some new students to Bungay School because Chatfield-LoPresti School is fully saturated. We have looked at staff in all four buildings with the hope of finding a solution. Mr. Wilson, Dr. Boyle and Mr. Olechna are not making this recommendation lightly but find that this is the only solution to get us in compliance with our IEPs. There is the hope that with another certified teacher, we may be able to trim the number of paraprofessionals currently on staff. Ms. Harmeling asked about actual numbers but Mr. Olechna did not have this information available. Mr. Wilson explained that there is no other option other than to hire a special education teacher so that IEP service hours can be met. He confirmed that we did look at current staff with the hopes of being able to move staff around but this was not possible. Mr. Garofolo asked if we would be violating the law if we did not hire another special education teacher and Mr. Olechna responded yes. Ms. Harmeling said that is why having the numbers would make the decision easier. She said it is difficult to make this decision. Mr. Wilson said it included the number of hours that students require not just the increase in the numbers. Ms. Harmeling asked how we would pay for this. Mr. Strumello said paraprofessionals cannot do this work. Mr. Stanek said he would like to see the budget analysis. Mr. Strumello asked about the urgency of this hiring. Mr. Olechna said we are out of compliance. Ms. Harmeling had questions on how this teacher would be used and what the plan was. Ms. Bruno asked about the projection for kids in the SRBI program and Mr. Wilson said it could be provided. She also asked if there is a consideration for less than full time. Mr. Olechna said students are receiving services during morning meetings and all special education teachers are providing services during meetings. He said CLS is at the breaking point. There was some discussion about hiring from an agency and also a suggestion that it may be time to take a good look at converting to a K-2, 3-5 school format. Mr. Stanek requested that more information be provided to the Board on any future requests.

MOTION: (Mr. Kubik/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to approve the recommendation of Dr. Kris Boyle to create a new Special Education Teacher position at Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

VII. REPORTS and DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. HS Student Representative Report – Miss Sirowich, Mr. Braca
Mr. Braca reported that this year’s Spirit Week was great and they had good participation. Homecoming was a success and Student Council decorated the hallway from the start of the science wing to the cafeteria. Thanks to the many volunteers that showed up to help. Student Council is beginning to have its officers do the morning announcements and soon will set up a committee of about six to have a rotation. Next week is spirit week: Monday – Pajama Day, Tuesday – Twin Day, Wednesday – Winter White, Thursday – Ugly Sweater, and color wars on Friday. Miss Sirowich reported that recently business leaders came in to talk to the juniors and seniors about their jobs and answer questions related to their job and what they do on a daily basis. The National Honor Society ran this and it was a huge success. Seymour High School hosted a debate tournament over the weekend. It was a big success with many participants from all over the state. Several Seymour debate participants have already made it to States. Hope Club is hosting a trivia night tomorrow for students, parents, and faculty. Proceeds will be donated to St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital. The Hope Club is selling snowflakes ornaments during lunch waves that will include little notes for the special person who receives them. The Swim Team got second in NVLs and 3rd in States. The Volleyball Team won their state championship for the third time in a row. Tryouts for Girls and Boys Basketball have concluded. The teams are excited for the new season. Indoor Track has started. There was a field trip to the Apollo Theater. Ms. Sirowich invited everyone to attend the music concert that is being held on Monday at 7:00 pm.
- B. Committee Reports
1. Finance Committee Meeting – November 6, 2019
 2. Curriculum & Technology Committee Meeting – November 11, 2019
Mr. Strumello thanked Mr. Garofolo for coming to this meeting on Veterans Day and thanked him for his military service.
- C. Board of Education Report
1. Chairman’s Comments
Mr. Strumello talked about Paul Lucke being...
 2. Board Member Comments
Ms. Harmeling thanked the high school for the brochure that was sent home about “Why Seymour High School?” She said it was well done; great. Absolutely dynamite. Mr. Hatfield gave a shout out to Coach Federowicz on the volleyball championship and welcomed Ms. Nesteriak and Ms. Bruno to the Board. He also thanked the Board for electing him as Vice Chairperson. Ms. Nesteriak said she was happy to be part of the Board and looking to learn. Mr. Strumello suggested that both new Board members take advantage of what CAFE has to offer. Ms. Bruno reported that she was at CAFE today and learned a lot. She said from the letter about Dr. Hendricks she has big shoes to fill and asked Miss Sirowich about what the team to beat was a Trivia Night since she was participating. Miss Sirowich said it was Ms. Scozzafava who shines her trivia trophy daily.
- D. Superintendent Report – Mr. Wilson
Mr. Wilson welcomed the new Board members, Ms. Nesteriak and Ms. Bruno and said it’s all about the students. He thanked Mr. Fred Stanek for inviting our students to participate in the annual Christmas Parade. Last week, Mr. Wilson had the pleasure and honor of escorting the Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Heather Brown, in Hartford for her formal recognition at this year’s Teacher of the Year ceremony. Mrs. Tencza, Mrs. Holmes, and Mr. Wilson attended our Veterans recognition award ceremony at SMS. We are very proud of our students and staff for receiving this wonderful recognition.

Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Tencza have continued to be visible in our schools in order to witness all of the hard work and dedication of both our teachers and our students. He attended the CABA Conference with Mr. Strumello and Mr. Hatfield. The workshops were very informational. Next week, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Tencza, and Mrs. Holmes will be attending the Town of Seymour annual Budget Summit. Next week, all building Administrators will present their budget to Central Office. Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Tencza had the pleasure of attending the CAPSS awards dinner to recognize three of our students, one from the Middle School and two from the High School. Mrs. Roden and Mr. Freund also attended to recognize these students for all of their hard work. A Doodle poll will be sent out with the possible dates listed for our budget meeting. Mr. Strumello reminded the Board members to get their committee choices to him by December 21, 2019.

VIII. INFORMATION

A. Activities and Recognitions

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

B. Special Education Monthly Enrollment Update – Dr. Kris Boyle

C. Athletics Report – Mr. Ernie DiStasi

Mr. DiStasi reported the current participation for Girls' Basketball (25), Boys' Basketball (33), Indoor Track (89), Boys' Swimming (14), Conditioning (36), Cheer (15), Dance (12), Unified Cheer (4 not including mentors). Volleyball State Championship (Second Consecutive), Swimming 2nd Place NVL/Undeclared Regular Season, All Teams finished with a record of .500 or better, Girls Soccer. Congratulations to Tom Cunningham-NVL Coach of the Year (first year coach), and numerous students have received All-State, All-NVL, and All-Division selections. Indoor Track opens this weekend, Girls' Basketball opens Tuesday, Boys on Thursday, Teams of 1 (Derby Wrestling-2/Oxford Gymnastics-2). Mr. DiStasi spoke briefly on the Athlete Expectations – Sportsmanship, Conduct (coaches' first line of monitoring/AD's support when needed) and 65 average or better for academic eligibility. Mr. DiStasi spoke about the need to hire a second assistant coach for Indoor Track (in budget-not filled last year due to lack of applicants and low numbers-2 assistant coaches in prior years) since we have such a large participation. He would like to get the Assistant Coach hired quickly since the first meet is this weekend. The Board decided to do an electronic meeting tomorrow in order to get the hiring approved. Mr. Champagne asked Mr. DiStasi if things are going smoothly with the Athletic Director position. He said this was a big topic during the discussion about the position. Does he feel he is getting the support he needs? Are you stressed? Mr. DiStasi said the partnership with Cathy Federowicz is going well, they meet on a daily basis, have the same goals and she is able to pick up when I'm busy with other things. He said he also gets the support he needs from Mr. Freund and Mr. Lucke. He said his team of 2 is solid while his team of 4 is very successful and he couldn't be happier with this partnership.

D. Staff Resignations (Retirement) – Certified

1. Sherman, Bonnie
 - Elementary Teacher, Computer
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Effective June 30, 2020

Ms. Harmeling asked if this position has to be filled as she thought we would be phasing out UA computer teachers.

E. Staff Resignations (Retirement) – Non Certified

1. Pannone, Mary
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective November 18, 2019

F. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Bohuski, Rachel

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Effective November 15, 2019

Ms. Harmeling said that since the hiring of an additional Special Education teacher was approved, do we need to replace this position?

G. Staff Resignations – Appendix E

1. Jeanette, Chris

- Assistant Coach
- Indoor Track Team
- Seymour High School
- Effective November 4, 2019

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Champagne/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Kubik, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk