

## STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 30, 2014

Frank Todisco, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were Deborah Downie, Secretary, Faith Leitner, Alisa Morrison, Craig Esposito, Alexa Garvey, and Terry Stefanski.

Also present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Frank Todisco asked that a motion be made to add an item to the agenda.

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Faith Leitner:

**Motion 1: To add the item Deans Mill Roof to the first item on the agenda.**

**All: Aye**

### Deans Mill Roof

Frank Todisco noted that the Board's Finance Committee met to discuss the recommendation to bring to the Board of Finance the issue of the Deans Mill roof, which is scheduled to be an item on the BOF's agenda for the Wednesday, February 5 meeting. Craig Esposito summarized the long-range plan and discussed replacement options for the DMS roof.

Van Riley explained that all active leaks in five different sections, which include the cafeteria, library, gym, classroom B, and office, are being considered for repair under quotes from three different roofing companies for an estimated cost of \$569,000.

The Board discussed the particulars of the quote regarding labor and material costs.

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Alisa Morrison:

**Motion 2: To move to present the "DMS Roof Replacement Schedule Plan C" for a cost of \$569,000 to the BOF for their consideration.**

**All: Aye**

### Comments from Citizens

Steven Small thanked the Board for their hard work on behalf of the students of Stonington. Mr. Small voiced his concerns about adding money for the SEED program to the budget proposal and believes the funding for this should be used to fill teaching positions and items that directly affect the students instead.

Robert Canova commented on the SEED program in regards to looking at using existing staff rather than hiring new staff to do the process. Mr. Canova also commented on funding of SAT/PSAT testing, contractual increases, health insurance increases and overall budget proposal increase.

Sarah Lewandowski requested that the Board reconsider the elimination of the 1.0 DMS Librarian position from the budget proposal and expressed her concerns for the need of this important position.

Tori Gimple commented on the funding of SAT/PSAT testing reimbursement and the DMS Librarian and believes that both items should be funded in the budget proposal.

Ellen Gilbert thanked the Board for their work. Ms. Gilbert commented on the continuing need for a music teacher at PMS, the lack of instructors for technology and would like to see both be funded.

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John Flaherty spoke of the importance of getting books into the hands of students and commented on his concern regarding the need for a DMS Librarian and feels this should not be cut from the budget.

Rob Marseglia commented on an item in the CIP budget regarding vestibules in the elementary schools, advocated for the DMS Librarian position, and is a supporter of reading at the early school levels.

Sue Jones commented on staffing proposals, class sizes, expressed that she would rather see added kindergarten teachers at WVSS instead of the funding for SAT/PSAT testing, and feels that the DMS Librarian position is also very important.

Cindy Nadeau spoke on increases in Special Education and Magnet School tuition, funding for SAT/PSAT testing and staffing.

Paul Sartor thanked the Board for allowing taxpayers to speak and feels this is very important. Mr. Sartor is in favor of funding PSAT/SAT testing and the DMS Librarian. Mr. Sartor believes in teacher evaluations, but feels the SEED process should be slowed down and not hire more administrators to support this program unless State mandates change making the district forced to hire more staff. Mr. Sartor encourages the Board to once again send a transparent budget to the BOF. Mr. Sartor recommends that the Board compare data from last year to this year and within our ERG in order to put a cost effective plan together.

Amy Hambly commented and agreed on all the positive comments that have been said about keeping the DMS Librarian position in the budget.

Judy Scully also agreed not to cut the DMS librarian position from the budget proposal. Ms. Scully commented on the staff cuts, comparison of last year's adopted budget to this year's, class sizes, library book budget line, and media supply budget line. Ms. Scully thanked the Board for all they do.

John Denard commented on the loss of nine teaching positions and is concerned that this will increase class sizes. Mr. Denard spoke on the new evaluation process timeline, importance of paras, the need to put back teachers, technology personnel, and does not support funding for PSAT/SAT testing unless there is a hardship. Mr. Denard would like to see a 4.0 budget be brought to the BOF instead of cutting anything.

Ashley Gillece commented on the need of a DMS Librarian, cutting teachers and paras, maintaining funding for PSAT/SAT testing and the addition of administrators for the SEED program.

**Continued Review of 2014-15 Budget**

Van Riley addressed some of citizens' questions regarding:

- Surplus
- Budget format
- Long range budget impact
- Walls installed in DMS and WVSS at entrance for safety
- Music position at PMS
- DMS Librarian position
- Magnet school tuition increase \$188,000
- Funding for PSAT/SAT testing
- Para and staff cuts and combining of positions

Van Riley spoke in regards to funding of the SEED program and staffing. Dr. Riley gave his recommendation on the budget proposal overall increase and recommended preserving funding for DMS Librarian and teacher position.

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The Board discussed options for the SEED program funding and how it would affect the budget proposal. The Board discussed fuel and natural gas costs and how this impacts the budget proposal. The Board came to a consensus to preserve funding in the budget proposal for the SEED program as planned making the overall budget proposal increase at 2.96%.

**Comments from Citizens**

Sue Jones commented on the teaching reductions and .5 Assistant Principal position for DMS.

Paul Sartor commented on the Common Core Standards and itemized costs.

Steve Small commented on SEED funding.

Ellen Gilbert commented on the Common Core Standards and long term projected costs.

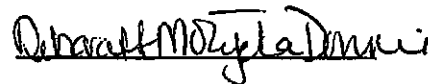
**Board Member Comments**

Frank Todisco reminded all of the BOF meeting on Wednesday, February 5.

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Faith Leitner:

**Motion 3: To adjourn at 8:45 p.m.**

**All: Aye**



Deborah Downie, Board Secretary