

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 8, 2009

Gail MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Board of Education Meeting Room.

Members present were Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, April Smith, Secretary, Sam Agnello, Rob Cary, Doug Rea and Kevin Bornstein.

Member excused: John Bolduc

Also present were Paul Smotas, Interim Superintendent of Schools, Michele Melia, Recording Secretary, Amanda Coffey, Student Representative, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Communications

Gail MacDonald updated the Board on the following communications she received:

- Flyer for CABE conference to be held at the Mystic Hilton November 20 and 21, 2009
- Letter from a parent about services for her child
- Letter about cultural exchange students
- Enrollment and class size document
- Letter from Stonington Prevention Council
- Letter about fundraising program at Stop and Shop
- Notification re: Homecoming Dance time change
- Email from a parent about the amount of paper usage
- Notice re: meeting on October 28, 2009 with cable TV

Recognitions

Dr. Paul Smotas recognized the following:

- Laura Fast (student), Tyler Homand (student), Pat Derouin (paraprofessional), Lorraine Szewc (paraprofessional), Randy Grimes (bus driver) for their assistance with the mass mailing of policy 5145.5 and regulation 5145.5(a-c) – Students; Sexual Harassment;
- Kevin Duignan, 17, a senior from Stonington High School who obtained the rank of Eagle Scout
- Lateasha Powell, Nianyi Hong, Nicole Heylmun, Mia Grills, Kevin Agnello, Matthew Paige; Mystic Scholars that were honored by the Rotary and given a college scholarship;

Gail MacDonald recognized the following:

- Numerous students at the high school for academic achievements
- Allison Van Etten and the guidance staff at Stonington High School for the Stonington High School College Fair that received kudos from various colleges in attendance
- Two Board members who would be retiring from the Board. April Smith has served eight years on the Board. Mrs. MacDonald noted that April has been instrumental in improving the Board's relationship with the Board of Finance. Mrs. MacDonald also recognized John Bolduc who has served two terms on the Board and the School Building Committee. She appreciated and respected John's ability to look at rows and rows of numbers and blueprints to which he could draw conclusions and come up with appropriate questions. Mrs. MacDonald also recognized the time Mr. Bolduc spent with the students coaching community leagues and said that his style will be missed as well as his hard work, selflessness and commitment to this Board.

Robert Cary agreed with Gail MacDonald's statement concerning April Smith and John Bolduc and how during the last eight years the Board had struggled with a lot of difficult issues. Mr. Cary noted that the two people leaving the Board of Education have been very powerful members and that they never hesitated to discuss and display their ideas. Mr. Cary stated that the Board will miss both retiring members and he will miss interacting with them.

Leanne Masterjoseph, Assistant Superintendent, recognized Mary Lou Devine for her receipt of honorable mention in the Rattle Poetry Contest.

Comments from Citizens

There were no comments from Citizens.

Student Government

Amanda Coffey reported on behalf of the Student Government in the following areas:

- Twenty seven students at Stonington High School earning AP Scholar awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP exams.
- National Merit Scholarship Commendations
- Pawmystonianian Yearbook Recognition

- Global Playground
- 2009 Girls Soccer Team
- Four Students artwork printed in the Westerly Airport's Associations' yearly calendar
- Stonington High School Band
- Students interning with the Westerly Sun

Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes – July 9, 2009 (Regular)

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Sam Agnello

Motion 1: To approve, with amendments, the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 9, 2009.

Aye: All

B. Minutes – September 10, 2009 (Regular)

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Sam Agnello

Motion 2: To approve the minutes, as amended of the Regular Meeting of September 10, 2009.

Aye: All

C. Minutes – September 10, 2009 (Special)

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Rob Cary

Motion 3: To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 10, 2009.

Aye: All

D. Minutes – September 14, 2009 (Special)

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Rob Cary

Motion 4: To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 14, 2009.

Aye: All

E. Minutes – September 22, 2009 (Special)

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Kevin Bornstein

Motion 5: To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 22, 2009.

Aye: All

Consent Agenda

A. Checks and Bills

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Kevin Bornstein

Motion 6: To approve the Consent Agenda items A, B, C and D as presented.

Aye: All

Financial

Judy Samokar presented the following as part of her financial report:

- Special Education Tuition Expenditures for 2009-2010
- End of year financial report ED001 submitted
- Calendar of Preparation for Budget Year 2010-2011
- ARRA Expenditures and Reporting

Operations

A. Project Updates

Bill King provided project updates on the following:

- Stonington High School intercom system
- Stonington High School electrical modification
- Stonington High School track resurfacing
- Stonington High School signs for the use of the track and grounds
- Mystic Middle School elevator
- Mystic Middle School gym floor
- District wide Emergency AlertNow System

B. Municipal Energy Block Grant Program

Bill King explained the \$78,000.00 in stimulus money that was allocated to the Town of Stonington. Bill provided details on the Daylight Harvesting proposal at Deans Mill School and let the Board know the Town is looking for uses for the stimulus money as well. He stated that this will be a joint effort between the Schools and the Town.

Curriculum and Instruction

A. Kindergarten Readiness Fair

Leanne Masterjoseph provided the Board with background and details concerning the Kindergarten Readiness Fair. She provided the Board with a copy of the flyer and invited Board members to attend. She also acknowledged Brandy Bunnell, Coordinator of Student Supports, for spearheading this year's event.

B. Staff Development Day – Friday, October 9, 2009

Leanne Masterjoseph reviewed the professional development plans for October 9, 2009 and provided descriptions of the activities that would be held at each of the schools. She explained how the activities are geared toward the improvement plans that were discussed at last month's special meeting.

Policies

- A. Review Policy 5145.61(a) – Gender Discrimination – 2nd Reading

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Kevin Bornstien

To approve policy 5145.61 – Gender Discrimination – as amended

Aye: All

- B. Review Policy and Regulation 141.321 – Telecommunications Acceptable Use – 2nd Reading

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Doug Rea

To approve regulation 6141.321(a-d) – Telecommunications- Acceptable Use as presented

Aye: All

- C. Review Policy 5136(a-j) – Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Sam Agnello spoke to the Board about the Athletic committee meeting. He asked that Dr. Paul Smotas share his thoughts.

Dr. Paul Smotas addressed the Board about the accountability of students in off-campus situations and parameters around when you can suspend or expel students under current law. Board policy is absent in this area and perhaps future discussions should take place.

Sam Agnello asked that this be put on the agenda for next month, as Bryan Morrone will have an individual from the American Athletic Association come and talk first to the Athletic Committee and then to the Board. Sam Agnello also recommended that the Board put the Friends of Stonington Crew on next month's agenda.

Committee Reports

- A. Finance – Rob Cary

Rob Cary told the Board about a meeting with the Board of Education Finance Subcommittee and the Board of Finance. He also updated the Board about the on-going meetings.

B. Superintendent Search Update – Gail MacDonald

Gail MacDonald updated the Board about the full day session that was held on Saturday, October 3, 2009, at which seven candidates were interviewed.

Proposed Contract Renewals

Dr. Paul Smotas spoke about finalizing the salaries for the last two employees working without a contract for 2009-2010 (Judy Samokar and Bill King). He recommended a three percent increase and noted that this was budgeted for in the 2009-2010 budget process.

The following motion was made by April Smith and seconded by Sam Agnello

Motion 7: To approve the salary increase as presented for Judy Samokar.

Aye: All

The following motion was made by April Smith and seconded by Sam Agnello

Motion 8: To approve the salary increase as presented for Bill King.

Aye: All

Superintendent Report

A. Personnel

Dr. Paul Smotas updated the Board on the following:

- One long-term substitute appointment
- Process for updating the personnel report
- Open positions

B. Enrollment Report

Dr. Paul Smotas presented the enrollment report and explained given the economy more students appear to be coming back to public school versus continuing attendance at private schools.

C. Local Revenues from Property Taxes

Dr. Paul Smotas reviewed a recent report outlining how Stonington ranks in the state relative to the Town's ability to pay, and the percentage of the Town's budget which is supported by local property taxes.

D. Pawmystonian Yearbook

Dr. Paul Smotas recognized the Pawmystonian Yearbook and thanked Student Council Representative, Amanda Coffey, for bringing this to the attention of the Board.

E. Stonington High School Press Release

Dr. Paul Smotas stated that this press release was covered by Amanda Coffey, Student Council Representative, earlier in the meeting.

F. Other

Dr. Paul Smotas discussed a program at Stop and Shop called "A+ Bonus Bucks" and what it could mean for Stonington Public Schools. This program has already been implemented at West Vine Street School, as noted by Principal Ginny Brown.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

There were no comments from Citizens.

Board Comments/Concerns

Gail MacDonald mentioned that there is a joint SBIT meeting on November 4, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at Stonington High School.

The following motion was made by Sam Agnello and seconded by Rob Cary:

Motion 9: To adjourn at 8:26 p.m.

Aye: All

April Smith, Board Secretary