

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 29, 2009

Mr. Bolduc, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Meeting Room.

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

Comments from Citizens

Ed Hart, resident, Stonington, wants the Board of Education to consider transferring the cost of non-educational costs, i.e. maintenance of buildings, grounds, finance department, etc., to the town budget.

Breanna Jones, 6th grade student, PMS, asked that middle schools sports programs not to be cut, but initiate pay to play. She suggested eliminating cross-country transportation. She has started a petition not to cut middle school sports.

Cindy Nadeau, parent, Pawcatuck, asked that the bus contract be reopened to examine additional reductions. Bill King explained that the bus routes are reviewed yearly and the fuel contract is renewed each year and has been reduced by \$40,000 from last year. The contract with the bus company was renewed this year with a zero percent increase.

Budget Preparations

The Board discussed the necessity to reduce the budget to no more than a 3% increase, approximately \$900,000.

Mr. Bolduc recommended the Board consider Mr. Hart's suggestion about transferring the cost of non-educational costs to the town. Bill King will work on the numbers for that. Bill King and Judy Samakor will also create a query to examine the cost feasibility of pay-to-play.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

Breanna Jones, 6th grader, Pawcatuck Middle School, voiced her concern about West Vine Street and West Broad Street sharing a Principal. She asked, "How would an emergency evacuation of both schools be possible?" She was also concerned about the elimination of a 5th grade teaching increasing class sizes because 28 students in a class would make harder to learn resulting in lower CMT scores.

Cindy Nadeu, parent, Pawcatuck, does not want one principal for two schools, voicing the same concern as Breanna about what happens in an emergency evacuation or any other emergency that a principal would have to be present to handle. She also would like to see the late buses and pay-to-play in sports cut before eliminating a teacher position. Ms. Nadeau was adamant that 25 students in a middle school classroom was too many.

John Nickerson, parent, Pawcatuck, discussed the pay-to-play and AP exams cuts. He suggest cutting Physical Education costs by $\frac{1}{2}$ percent instead of $\frac{1}{4}$.

Jill Main, parent, Pawcatuck, does not want increased class sizes at West Vine Street School. She would rather see pay-to-play sports.

Natalee Denard, parent and teacher, Mystic Middle School, commended the Board of Education for not considering cutting library.

Sharon Mueller, Library Media Specialist, Stonington High School, commented on the packet that the school district Library Media Specialists distributed to the Board of Education members to explain the importance and necessity of Library services in a school district.

Rob Marseglia, parent, Pawcatuck, expressed that he did not want to see two schools share a principal because all schools need a leader present at all times. He asked the Board of Education to consider pay-to-play and actually create a query to better envision on how it might work. He thinks the focus should be education and safety first.

Betty Pacelle, Library Media Specialist, West Vine Street School & Deans Mill School, explained the scope of responsibilities held by the Library Media Specialists of the district, i.e. budget preparation, keeping inline with library conducts, teaching technology, etc. She said the district should consider cutting supply budgets and that the Library Media Specialists would consider a moratorium on their supplies for a year. Ms. Pacelle also suggested cutting library paraprofessionals to part-time positions. Another suggestion was to charge students for parking at Stonington High School.

Adjournment

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

- **Motion 1: To adjourn at 8:35 p.m.**

Aye: All

April Smith, Secretary