

## **STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MARCH 12, 2009**

Mr. Bolduc, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Board of Education meeting room. Members present were John Bolduc, Chairman, April Smith, Secretary, Gail MacDonald, Rob Cary, Doug Rea and Kevin Bornstein.

Late Arrival: Sam Agnello arrived at 7:58 p.m.

Also present were Michael McKee, Superintendent of Schools, Jackie Garvie, Recording Secretary, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

### **Communications**

The Board Chairman acknowledged receipt of 5 emails from citizens regarding the budget cuts

The Broad Street Bears performed three musical acts from their spring musical "Into the Woods". The musical production will run from March 27 to March 29 at the high school.

### **Comments from Citizens**

Faith Leitner, Mystic parent, thanked the Board for their efforts regarding the budget. She also asked about the upcoming trip to China in April. She asked, Who will be going? Where will they be going? How were people selected to go on the trip? Ms. Leitner also asked how many student currently take Mandarin course? Mr. McKee explained that the China trip is his vacation and that all participants are also on their vacation. The Board Chairman will get the participation numbers regarding Mandarin to Ms. Leitner.

Caroline Wall, Pawcatuck parent, requested that the Board not increase class sizes in grades K-4. She also stated that parents are frustrated by the boards budget process and that when citizens are allowed to comment on board decisions relative to the agenda the board members have already made up their minds.

Judy Whewhell, Pawcatuck parent, spoke regarding class sizes and that larger classes are not a productive learning environment. She also stated that she cannot support the cut of a grade 3 teacher at WBSS.

Rachell O'Dell, Pawcatuck parent, stated that she is confused about voting on the budget. She said she feels that the Board is not listening to parents or giving parents feedback.

Breanna Jones, PMS student, asked the Board to cut sports not teachers.

### **Student Government Report**

Catherine Schmitz reported on behalf of the Student Government:

- During this past month the Student Government has been working on planning its annual Mr. SHS talent show which will be held on April 30.
- The Student Government is planning their annual Induction Ceremony for late May.
- The band will perform in the Mystic St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 22.
- The spring musical "Into the Woods" will be held on March 27-29.
- The spring band concert is April 1 and the spring choral concert will be held on April 7.

Student Government Report continued...

- Congratulations to Martha Chudy who was selected as Stonington's music recipient of the Connecticut Association of Schools Award. She will be honored at a banquet in Southington on April 8.

Consent Agenda

A. Minutes

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

- **Motion 1: To approve the minutes of the Special Meetings of February 12, 2009 and March 4, 2009.**

**Aye: All**

B. Checks and Bills

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

- **Motion 2: To approve the disbursement of checks and bills for the month of February 2009.**

**Aye: All**

C. Intra-account Transfers

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Doug Rea:

- **Motion 3: To approve the intra-account transfers for the month of February 2009.**

**Aye: All**

Finance and Operations

A. Monthly Financial Report

Judy presented the monthly financial report and gave the board a copy of the audit report.

Finance and Operations continued....

B. Project Updates

Bill King reported to the Board on the following:

- a. Met with First Student and requested that they purchase a spare mini-bus.
- b. Continuing to work on zoning permits to locate First Student offices at the SPS administration building.
- c. Held a conference call with Fletcher Thompson regarding high school infrastructure improvements to be made with remaining funds from renovation project.
- d. Ken Donovan gave a presentation on the maintenance plan for the school district.
- e. Bill reported on the settlement agreement between SPS and Council 4, AFSCME regarding custodian grievance.
- f. Reported on insurance and the proposed student 5k run fundraiser.

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

- **Motion 4: To approve the grievance settlement between Stonington Board of Education and Council 4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, Local 1303-170 as presented.**

**Aye: All**

The following motion was made by Doug Rea and seconded by Gail MacDonald:

- **Motion 5: To approve allowing the sophomore class to hold a 5k run fundraiser on May 25, 2009 and obtain appropriate sponsors for the event contingent upon obtaining insurance.**

**Aye: All**

C. Excess Costs Update

Judy Samokar reported on the receipt of the first excess cost reimbursement by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Curriculum and Instruction

A. Tradebook Adoptions

On behalf of the Language Arts Committee, Mrs. Masterjoseph, presented four books for adoption by the Board. They were The Soloist by Steve Lopez, The Body by Steve King, Snow Falling On Cedars by David Guterson and Letters to a Young Poet by Rainer Maria Rilke. This was a second reading.

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Gail MacDonald:

- **Motion 6: To approve the following tradebooks, as recommended by the Language Arts Committee, for adoption:**  
**The Soloist by Stephen Lopez for Grade 12**  
**The Body by Stephen King for Grade 10**  
**Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson for Grade 10**  
**Letters to a Young Poet by Rainer Rilke for Grade 10, 11, 12**

**Aye: All**

B. Communications Tool

Mrs. Masterjoseph spoke to the board regarding “SPS; On the Air”, a monthly public access channel event hosted by Comcast. The show will air once a month on Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m. starting on March 18 and will feature the superintendent, assistant superintendent, student talents and accomplishments as well as school events.

C. Stonington Academy for Teaching and Learning

Mrs. Masterjoseph presented the “Spring 2009 Stonington Academy Offering Guide” to the Board and welcomed the board members to participate.

Student Field Trip Request to Italy

Tina Eisenbeis and Bevin Winner, PMS teachers, addressed the Board requesting permission to sponsor a student field trip to Italy during the April break in 2010.

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

- **Motion 7: To approve the Pawcatuck Middle School Field Trip to Italy during spring break in 2010.**

**Aye: All**

Retirements 2008-2009

The Board of Education accepted the retirements of the following certified staff:

James Doherty	MMS	35 years
Patricia Jeffrey	SHS	31 years
David Parkinson	SHS	34 years
Susan Prentis	PMS	35 years
Lenore Stepanishen	WBSS	35 years
Maureen Tierney	WBSS	28.5 years

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

- **Motion 8: To accept the following 2009 retirements with regrets and appreciation for their many years of service. To spread across the minutes resolutions commemorating the retirements of James Doherty, Patricia Jeffrey, David Parkinson, Susan Prentis, Lenore Stepanishen and Maureen Tierney.**

**Aye: All**

Annual Contract Non-Renewal Authorization

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by Doug Rea:

- **Motion 9: To authorize and direct the Superintendent of Schools, in his capacity as Chief Executive of the Board of Education, to make and communicate decisions concerning the non-renewal and termination of certified professional staff in the Board's employ and to furnish written notices of non-renewal and termination and, where required, reasons therefore, to affected non-tenured teachers, as provided in provisions of the Connecticut Teacher Tenure Law applicable to non-tenured teachers.**

**Aye: All**

Cooperative Town/BOE Opportunities

The Board discussed the possibility of cooperative ventures between the Board of Education and the Town of Stonington. Rob Cary provided information to the Board regarding the towns of Clinton and Madison who are currently sharing services between their Board of Education and Town. The Board agreed that there is a lot of information worth investigating in the towns where this is currently being done effectively.

Policies

- A. Policy 9400 – Bylaws of the Board; Delineation of Responsibilities Between Board of Education and School Based Improvement Teams.

The Board discussed the responses from the school SBITs regarding combining SBITs into three – one per level. The SBITs were not in favor of combining but were interested in holding a joint meeting once or twice a year.

- B. Policy – 5131.6 – Students; Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco.

Sam Agnello reported on behalf of the Athletic Committee regarding the recommendation of the committee to amend the Athletic Handbook and that there was no need to amend the board policy and regulations.

Committee Reports

- A. Building Committee

The committee did not meet and therefore had no report.

- B. Athletic Committee

The committee did not meet and therefore had no report.

- C. SEF

Gail MacDonald reported that she has resigned as the board liaison to SEF. Gail asked other board members to please consider becoming the liaison to SEF. SEF meets the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Superintendent's Report

- A. Personnel

**Certified Staff**

**Leave**

Christine Mercier

March 17, 2009 – June 30, 2009

DMS

Superintendent's Report continued...

**New Hire**

Kristen Landry	Long-term Substitute	DMS
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**Added Teaching Appointments**

Michaela Lamb	Boys Tennis Assistant Coach	SHS
Michael O'Neill	Crew Head Coach	SHS
Sarah Buck	Crew Assistant Coach	SHS
Janis Mink	Crew Assistant Coach	SHS

**Volunteer Appointments**

John Bolduc	Outdoor Track Assistant Coach	SHS
Tom McCoy	Outdoor Track Assistant Coach	SHS
Bill Gibney	Boys Lacrosse Assistant Coach	SHS
Abby Gibney	Boys Lacrosse Assistant Coach	SHS
Dave Parkinson	Golf Assistant Coach	SHS
Jay Macko	Golf Assistant Coach	SHS
Adrian Massengale	Golf and Baseball Assistant Coach	SHS
Dane Lewis	Golf Assistant Coach	SHS

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

- **Motion 10: To approve the volunteer appointments of John Bolduc and Tom McCoy as Outdoor Track Assistant Coaches, Bill and Abby Gibney as Boys Lacrosse Assistant Coaches, and Dave Parkinson, Jay Macko, Dane Lewis as Golf Assistant Coaches and Adrian Massengale as Golf and Baseball Assistant Coach.**

**John Bolduc recused himself from the vote.**

**Aye: All**

**B. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

Mr. McKee gave the Board a copy of the letter from Commissioner McQuillan regarding ARRA. This is the first official document superintendents have received concerning the stimulus package. Mr. McKee will be attending the first meeting with the commissioner regarding ARRA on March 17.

**C. NEASC Report**

Mr. McKee shared a letter from the Commission of Public Secondary Schools regarding the review of SHS's Two-Year Progress Report and the continuation of the school's accreditation.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action

John Nickerson, SHS parent, spoke regarding the SHS Student Handbook. He stated that he was confused by some of the language and the intent of the language. Also stated that none of the material in the handbook was explained to parents.

Judy Whewell, parent, commented about crew appointments,

Breanna Jones, PMS student, asked the board to cut teachers as last resort and cut sports first.

Sue Jones, Pawcatuck parent, said her daughter speaks from the heart. Her daughter is an athlete but her priorities are teachers then sports.

Dave Pierce, SHS employee, asked the Board if they have considered furloughs versus layoffs.

John Nickerson, parent, stated that there is a lot of confusion regarding the budget process. Not sure if the community understands the severity of the cuts by the Board. Also stated that parents need to get the word out to other parents and vote. He also stated he feels 0% growth cannot be sustained, teachers will be cut every year.

Board Comments

John Bolduc, Board Chairman, explained the reasoning and philosophy for current cuts in the budget. Rob Cary explained that the Board reviewed many documents and combed through information regarding the impact of class sizes on student learning before the Board made any cuts.

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

- **Motion 10: To adjourn at 9:15 p.m.**

**Aye: All**

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April Smith, Board Secretary