

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING APRIL 9, 2009

Mr. Bolduc, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were John Bolduc, Chairman, April Smith, Secretary, Rob Cary, Doug Rea and Kevin Bornstein, Sam Agnello.

Member Absent: Gail MacDonald

Late Arrivals: John Bolduc arrived at 7:23 and Sam Agnello arrived at 7:30 p.m.

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

Communications

John Bolduc, Board Chairman, acknowledged receipt of a letter signed by coaches regarding the newly revised drug and alcohol policy, a petition from the West Broad Street School community regarding class sizes, a packet of six letters from PMS students and a letter from Terry Logan, PMS custodian.

Recognitions

Mr. McKee publicly recognized Elizabeth Henry and James Leigh. Both teachers have successfully taught in Stonington Public Schools for 40 years.

Comments from Citizens

Michael Freeman, SHS teacher, publicly commended Dr. Stephen Murphy, SHS principal, for successfully acquiring several grants.

Gretchen Noonan, SEA President, addressed the board regarding Stonington teachers pay schedule and where it ranks in comparison to other towns in the Connecticut. She also asked the board to consider rescinding their request for teachers to forego their raises and instead consider the \$365,000 in suggested reductions included in the April board packet.

Faith Leitner, Mystic parent, thanked Rob Marseglia and John Nickerson for their efforts at the Board of Finance Budget Public Hearing on April 8. She also spoke in support of teachers and expressed concerns regarding class sizes. Mrs. Leitner urged the board to consider cutting Mandarin and use the savings somewhere else.

Charles Estabrooks, Pawcatuck parent, spoke in support of the swim team and golf. He asked the board questions regarding the budget cuts to the swim and golf teams.

Dr. Karen McWilliams, Pawcatuck parent, stated she is concerned with the board's proposal to have one administrator running two schools. She also said that she feels it is a safety concern and that an administrator with a 092 certificate should be in each building at all times and that is a basic need not an extra.

Debby Downing, Pawcatuck parent, spoke in support of the golf team and the need to make cuts more equitable in sports.

Marika Heughins, Pawcatuck parent and SPS teacher, asked the board to look at 1st grade literacy paraprofessionals and the importance of having support staff to help with implementing learning. Also suggested that the books and bid supplies might be an area to find \$25,000 to cut.

Lisa Konicki, Mystic parent, spoke in support of reading and stated that teaching reading is a basic need. She is concerned that Title I schools will have extended summer school programs and Deans Mill will not be able to provide the same program to DMS students.

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

Annie Hoops, Mystic parent, spoke in support of the "Crickets" program at Mystic Middle School.

Tom Lakale, Pawcatuck parent, suggested that the board make other cuts in sports not just to golf and swim and make the cuts to sports more equitable.

Natalee Denard, SPS teacher and SHS parent, spoke in support of the golf and swim team.

Rachel Labelle, Pawcatuck parent, spoke regarding cutting teachers and in support of the Looping Program. Concerned if teachers are cut the Looping Program will not be available in years to come.

Rob Marseglia, Mystic parent, told the citizens in the audience that the work has just begun. That everyone must get the word out to get people to vote. He suggested that everyone talk to their neighbors, teachers and friends.

Student Government Report

Nianyi Hong reported on behalf of the Student Government:

- Student Government has been working on planning its annual Mr. SHS talent show.
- The Student Government is planning their annual Induction Ceremony for late May.
- Planning is underway for a community yard sale that will give clubs and teams an opportunity to raise money.
- On April 2-4 several students from the SHS Band and Chorus department attended the All-State Music Festival.
- The National Honor Society is working on planning its annual Induction Ceremony for the Class of 2010 National Honor Society members.
- The National Honor Society is planning a blood drive for the end of May.
- The Law & Government Forum group is planning to debate the Electoral College.

Consent Agenda

A. Minutes

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

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

Aye: All

B. Checks and Bills

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

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

Aye: All

C. Intra-account Transfers

The following motion was made by Kevin Bornstein and seconded by Doug Rea:

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

Aye: All

Finance and Operations

A. Monthly Financial Report

Judy presented the monthly financial report.

B. Project Updates

Bill King reported to the Board on the following:

- a. First Student has purchased a spare mini-bus with lift.
- b. Bus depot location may be in the parking lot behind the Human Service building.
- c. Updated the board on the remaining funds from the SHS building project.
- d. Bill reported on the police access to the security cameras at the high school.
- e. Bill reported that this is bid season for supplies such as paper, medical and custodial supplies.

Budget 2009-2010

The board chairman addressed several of the questions raised by audience members during citizens comments earlier in the evening regarding budget cuts. The board also discussed the budget cut to golf and swim teams and strategies for passing the referendum.

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

- **Motion 4: To reinstate \$13,044 for swim and golf teams from \$20,000 savings in suggested reductions from reducing the number of athletic events per sport to those required by CIAC (#5 of attachment 7a).**

Aye: All

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

- **Motion 5: To use from savings of \$37,000 for substitute teacher at PMS (#3 of attachment 7a) and savings of \$8,100 from reducing .2 FTE of Mandarin at high school for Summer School Extended Learning Program for Deans Mill Students at a cost of \$9,000.**

Aye: All

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

- **Motion 6: To schedule a Special Board Meeting for April 16, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the high school commons to discuss budget reductions.**

Aye: All

Curriculum and Instruction

A. SHS Grant Awards

Mrs. Masterjoseph updated the board on the grants that have been received by SHS for the coming year.

Policy

- A. Revised Policy and Regulations 4152.6 & 4252.6 – Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Personal Leaves; Family and Medical Leave Act – 1st Reading

This was a first reading and therefore no action was taken.

FOI Request

The board discussed a request from a local reporter.

The following motion was made by Rob Cary and seconded by April Smith:

- **Motion 7: Move to contact the offices of Freedom of Information for ruling on the request by local reporter and ask Stonington Education Association if they object to the request.**

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

- **Motion 8: Amend motion #7 as follows:
“To ask the Stonington Education Association if the Board of Education can release the letter from SEA as requested by reporter and if SEA has any objections contact Freedom of Information for ruling.”**

Aye: All

Superintendent’s Report

- A. Personnel

Added Teaching

New Appointment

Jennifer Ross	Girls Outdoor Track Head Coach	SHS
---------------	--------------------------------	-----

Volunteer Appointments

Leslie Gomes	Girls Outdoor Track Assistant Coach	SHS
Charles Balchunas	Girls Lacrosse Assistant Coach	SHS
Alice Soccia	Crew Assistant Coach	SHS

Superintendent's Report continued...

Volunteer Appointments

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

- **Motion 9: To approve the volunteer appointments of Leslie Gomes as Girls Outdoor Track Assistant Coach, Charles Balchunas as Lacrosse Assistant Coach, and Alice Soscia as Crew Assistant Coach.**

Aye: All

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action

Patricia DeLapp, SPS teacher, asked the board to look at the Looping Program and class sizes. Stated that grades K-2 are very important years.

Daryl Sentell, parent, commented that this is a difficult year for the Board of Education and Board of Finance and thanked both boards for all their efforts. He also suggested that the Board of Education look into consolidating some of the functions amongst boards in towns. Also stated that getting parents involved early in the budget process would be helpful.

Jill Main, Pawcatuck parent, asked the board questions regarding account #133 in the budget.

Selena Duer, citizen, stated that parents do not want to hear of inequities between schools and board should clarify.

Charles Estabrooks, Pawcatuck parent, thanked the board for reinstating the golf and swim teams.

John Nickerson, SHS parent, concerned about board's strategy and with first action taken tonight to restore sports. Mr. Nickerson stated he was happy with the board restoring the summer extended school program.

Annie Hoops, parent, suggested that email be used to contact parents to inform them of what happens when they vote "no" on the budget,

Rob Marseglia, parent, will send e-mail regarding April 16 Special BOE Meeting and what happens when voters vote "no" on the budget.

Ed Haberek, First Selectman, thanked the Board of Education and several parents for all their efforts at the Board of Finance meeting held April 8.

Rachel Labelle, parent, suggested that the Board of Education form a education committee and spoke again about the importance of the Looping Program.

Barbara Becker, parent, stated that parents need a budget to believe in and support. Also stated that teachers and support staff should come before anything else in the budget.

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

- **Motion 10: To adjourn at 9:45 p.m.**

Aye: All

April Smith, Board Secretary