

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 7, 2010

Gail MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Commons of Stonington High School. Members present were Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, Doug Rea, Secretary, Sam Agnello, Rob Cary, Faith Leitner, Kevin Bornstein and Alisa Morrison.

Also present were Leanne Masterjoseph, Superintendent of Schools, Michele Melia, Recording Secretary, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Comments from Citizens

There were no comments at this time.

Gail MacDonald took the opportunity to summarize the entire budget process for those in attendance and indicated a written explanation of this process would be made available shortly.

2010-11 School Calendar

The Board discussed the three draft calendars that were presented to them and Leanne Masterjoseph answered questions.

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

Motion 1: To adopt the new Draft A Calendar

More discussion took place between the Board members. Leanne Masterjoseph answered the Board’s questions and Sam Agnello rescinded his motion to adopt the revised Draft A Calendar.

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

Motion 1: To adopt Calendar Draft B

The vote was as follows:

Faith Leitner – Yes

Rob Cary – Yes

Doug Rae – No

Sam Agnello – Yes

Kevin Bornstein – No

Alisa Morrison – Yes

The motion carried.

2010-2011 Budget Discussion

Gail MacDonald described the nature of the discussion that would follow and reminded the public of a formal presentation to be given to the Board by the Superintendent Leanne Masterjoseph next week.

The Board members discussed the following:

- Class sizes
- World Language program
- Library Media Specialists
- Technology
- Special Education costs
- Athletic program and extra curricular activities
- Cuts to maintenance, staffing and supplies
- Field trips
- Ramifications of losing federal stimulus dollars
- Administration levels and reorganization of principals
- Early retirement incentives for teachers
- Consolidation of services with the Board of Finance
- Improving communication to the public

Comments from Citizens

Mark Wallace asked questions about why new sports could not be started for students in the schools and explained to the Board about a program he would like to start a wrestling program .

Kathy MacKinley stated that she wants the Board to keep on working with the Board of Finance and to look for other ways that the Board of Education could communicate with the public.

Bruce Yarnell, a teacher with Stonington Public Schools and the parent of a third and fourth grader at West Vine Street School, wants the Library Media Specialist position reinstated.

John Denard addressed the Board on class sizes in the high school, talked about programs that were lost and the students that were impacted by those losses. He wanted the Board to think about providing more choices that keep children in school because not all students will go to college.

Todd Yarell a parent and educator expressed his thoughts to the Board about the impact that a Library Media Specialist has on the entire student body and is more important than world language. He mentioned the 90-90-90 study and encouraged the Board to read it

Ed Habreck, Stonington First Selectman addressed the Board on the following:

- Congratulated the new Board members
- The collaboration between the Boards of Education and Finance and the Selectmans office
- He thanked Leanne Masterjoseph for their first meeting

As a parent of students at West Vine Street School, Mr. Habreck requested that anything impacting the classroom by way of special needs or dynamics needs to be attended to because one child can impact the entire atmosphere of a classroom.

Susan Jones addressed the Board concerning pay to park. She thought that these monies going to the Town is unfair and wanted money being generated by the school to be used by the school for supplies or other items they might need.

The following motion was made by Doug Read and seconded by Faith Leitner

Motion 2: To adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Aye: All

Doug Rea, Board Secretary