

**STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 14, 2010**

Gail MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the auditorium of Stonington High School. Members present were Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, Doug Rea, Secretary, Rob Cary, Faith Leitner, and Kevin Bornstein.

Member late: Sam Agnello

Member absent: Alisa Morrison

Also present were Leanne Masterjoseph, 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:

- Parent input on budget issues
- Strategic Planning invitation
- Race to the Top details
- Connecticut Economy magazine article
- Feedback from meeting with Stonington High School journalism students
- CABA's Board Chair Roundtable information
- Legislative Breakfast summary
- Draft letter to the Town concerning snow removal

**Recognitions**

Leanne Masterjoseph recognized the following:

- Deidre Toole's class for their help at Central Office
- Stonington High School Students recognized at E Commerce Conference
- Chris Stanley, and the 19 students who auditioned and were accepted at the All State Music Festival

Gail MacDonald mentioned a short note she received from the director of the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, Nicky Anderson, which recognized the Stonington High School Varsity Club. Club members volunteered their time and raised \$1000.00 for the Center.

Comments from Citizens

Gail MacDonald invited the citizens in attendance to comment, and also reminded them that there would be a time at the end of the meeting during which they would be offered time to speak.

Rachel ODell thanked the Board and said how she appreciated the information that has been sent home.

Student Government

Amanda Coffey reported on the following:

- The success of the Reindeer Games and the \$320.00 profit that benefited the Global Playground Foundation
- 2010 Connecticut Mock Trial Competition
- Unified Sports Basketball
- Thames Valley Music Festival and Stonington High School Band participation
- The All State Music Festival and the Stonington High School students who auditioned
- Stonington High School's Coffee House, and the evening of February 6, 2010 that will feature bands, guitarists, pianists and singers
- Stonington High School Art students gallery display that will take place on February 3, 2010
- National Honor Society Blood Drive and the students, teachers and community members that donated blood

It was at this time that Gail MacDonald recognized the new Assistant Superintendent, Nikki Gullickson, as this was her first official Board meeting.

SBIT

There were no questions or comments at this time.

Board Action on Pending Contracts

A. Custodian

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

**Motion 1: To approve the Custodian Supervisor contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

B. Facilities Manager

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

**Motion 2: To approve the Facilities Manager contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

C. Central Office

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Doug Rea:

**Motion 3: To approve the Central Office Classified Staff contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

D. Technology Director

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

**Motion 4: To approve the Technology Director's contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

E. Bus Driver

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

**Motion 5: To approve the Bus Driver's contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

F. Finance Manager

The following motion was made by Kevin Bornstein and seconded by Faith Leitner:

**Motion 6: To approve the Finance Manager's contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

G. Operations Manager

The following motion was made by Kevin Bornstein and seconded by Faith Leitner:

**Motion 7: To approve the Operation Manager's contract as presented.**

**Aye: All**

H. Computer Technicians

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

**Motion 8: To approve the Computer Technician's contract as presented for the years 2010 – 2013 as presented.**

**Aye: All**

Gail MacDonald explained to the audience that many of the employees were working without a contract and Dr. Paul Smotas helped in putting this language together.

Approval of Minutes

- A. Minutes – December 10, 2009 (Regular)
- B. Minutes – December 11, 2009 (Special)

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

**Motion 9: To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 10, 2009 and the Special Meeting of December 11, 2009 as presented**

**Aye: All**

**Abstained: Kevin Bornstein**

Consent Agenda

- A. Checks and Bills
- B. Intra-Account Transfers

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

**Motion 10: To approve the Consent Agenda items A and B as presented.**

**Aye: All**

**Abstained: Kevin Bornstien**

Presentation of Superintendent's Budget 2010 – 1011

Leanne Masterjoseph began her presentation by thanking the Board. Ms. Masterjoseph presented the following:

- Budget Goal
- Budget Preparation Climate Fall 2009
- Superintendent's Budget Preparation Philosophy
- Proposal
- Foundation Budget
- Primary increases in Foundation
- Primary savings in the Foundation
- The proposed Foundation reflecting a 1.54 increase for 2010 – 2011
- Advocacy Budget .69
- Cost Summary and the 2010 – 2011 bottom line 2.23% increase

Leann Masterjoseph concluded by stating she looks forward to the opportunity to answer the Boards and the community's questions.

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## Financial

### A. Monthly Financial Report

Judy Samokar presented the monthly financial report and reported that the Special Education line items are over budget because the cost reimbursements have not yet been received from the State. She provided the Board with the amounts and what should be received from the State at the end of February. She further explained how the expenditures will line up and be within the budget at that time.

Gail MacDonald recognized and thanked Leanne Masterjoseph for her help in putting the Community Members' guide to the Budget Process together that went home with students.

She also thanked the administrators, teachers and everyone else that agreed to a 0% salary increase during 2010 - 2011.

## Operations

### A. Project Updates

Bill King provided project updates on the following:

- West Broad Street School ceiling abatement
- Stonington High School Clean Energy Task Force
- Sustainable energy use
- Fuel Bids
- New copiers throughout Stonington Public Schools and the training of staff

### B. Completion of Stonington High School

Bill King explained the Stonington High School's intercom is being completed and asked the Board to take no action on the closing of this tonight because the electrical modification is scheduled to be complete by January 28, 2010. He informed the Board that this would be put on the January 28, 2010 Special meeting agenda in order for them to take action at that time.

C. 2010 Junior Class 5K Road Race Fundraiser on May 31, 2010

Bill King summarized the “Bearathon” and the success of this fundraiser to include:

- Its Organization
- The course/route
- Profits and plans to donate 20% to the Mystic VFW
- Insurance
- Police Approval

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

**Motion 11: To approve allowing the Junior Class to hold a 5K fundraiser and to obtain appropriate sponsors for the event contingent upon obtaining proper insurance and police approval.**

**Aye: All**

EDO99 – Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs

Bill King explained to the Board about this agreement and the need to add Leanne Masterjoseph as an authorized signer for the food service program.

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

**Motion 12: To recommend the change of authorized signers for the School Nutrition Program and add Leanne Masterjoseph as Superintendent to the ED099 filed with the State Department of Education.**

**Aye: All**

Leanne Masterjoseph explained the deadline that is in place for the legal firms to submit their proposals. She further explained that these would be brought forth to the Board next month.

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### Board Members Goals

Board members discussed ways that they could increase their ability to effectively communicate.

Paul Picard, Technology Director, answered and addressed the Boards ideas concerning the web-site design and implementation.

Leanne Masterjoseph expressed the utmost importance of the web-site.

Gail MacDonald encouraged Board members to consider getting out to the schools more and she asked for more feedback from the Board and Superintendent for a more formalized recognition forum during Board meetings. She asked the principals to become involved with this. Ms. MacDonald also stated she would like to bring citizens forward to the Board meeting for recognition.

### Committee Reports

#### A. Finance

Rob Cary provided updates on the collaboration seminar and the two conversations he has had with the Board of Finance Chairman.

#### B. Retirement Board

No report at this time

#### C. Stonington Education Fund

Faith Leitner provided updates on the Stonington Education Fund proceeds and how they will benefit the distance learning proposal as brought forward by Steve Murphy and Paul Picard.

Dr. Paul Picard provided the Board with a handout which explained the following components of the Distance Learning Proposal:

- Service
- School Web Site
- Upgrades

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- Assisting Teachers
- The Costs Involved

#### D. Cable TV Advisory

Kevin Bornstein updated the Board about the contact he made with Cable Advisory and when the meetings will be held.

#### E. Athletic

Sam Agnello reported that he missed tonight's meeting and asked Leanne Masterjoseph to provide updates.

Leanne Masterjoseph reported on the following:

- Coaches Handbook
- Friends of Stonington Crew's proposal for collaboration with the Board of Education concerning ownership and insurance of boats
- Revisit Drug and Alcohol Policy with Board of Education subcommittee

Doug Rea reported that the meeting was informative and questions were answered on how a policy could be written for events that happen outside of school.

#### Superintendent's Report

Leanne Masterjoseph provided updates on the following:

- Personnel
- Added Teaching
- Enrollment Report and the additional information that the Board had requested at last week's meeting
- Strategic Planning and the 35 participants

- Mystic Seaport Connection, the working relationship that has developed and what it means for Stonington Public Schools

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- Race to the Top and the meeting she attended with Gail MacDonald. At this time Gail and Leanne are not inclined to recommend the Board enter into the Memorandum of understanding with the State.

Gail MacDonald also attended the meeting and explained to the Board that the money that would be received would be spread out over four years and the administrative work that would be created by this. She explained that there are a lot of stipulations and strings attached and doesn't think it is worth it to sign on.

#### Comments from Citizens

Susan Jones commented on the following:

- Co-Teaching - Parents should have the information before school starts so that it will be less confusing
- The web-site and how many parents and community members may not have access to it
- Utilizing free newspapers by sending letters to the editor to get information out to the community

Rachel ODell commented on the following:

- Access to the Board packet
- Access to the line by line budget
- Strategic Planning
- Asked if the Board could put items on their website so the public can see all of the information

Cindy Nadeau commented on the use of health care paraprofessionals and cautions the Board on the importance of privacy.

Liss Sabbadini commented and questioned the Board on the following:

- Class size and how the information is obtained
- How resource and decreased enrollment numbers are obtained
- Reductions being proposed at the elementary level and how this will affect the schools

- How she can obtain information on how actual money is being spent versus what has been budgeted

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Boards comments/Concerns

Sam Agnello apologized for being late.

Doug Rea stated that he appreciates the Stonington Education Fund and the work they do for distance learning and asked if they could look at terms of communication with the community and ways that could be used to communicate with those that do not have computers.

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

**Motion 13: To adjourn at 9:35 p.m.**

**Aye: ALL**

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Doug Rea, Board Secretary