



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 21, 2017
Chatfield-LoPresti School
7:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield (arrived 7:44 pm)
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski (arrived 7:41 pm)
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Peter Kubik

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Joseph Falzone, Director of Operations
Cindy Brooks, Director of Nutrition
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Tara Yusko, Assistant Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Kathleen Freimuth, Assistant Principal, CLS
Reporter

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 p.m.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. None

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – July 10, 2017
2. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – August 8, 2017

B. **2016-17 Year End Report** – Ending June 30, 2017

C. **2016-17 Year End Account Transfers**

D. Acknowledge the receipt of homeschooling notification and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program

1. Marya Kostick, John Kostick

Ms. Cynthia Kostick has informed the Board of Education of their intent to home school her children, Marya Kostick and John Kostick, for the 2017-2018 school year

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. INFORMATION

A. Staff Resignations–Non Certified

1. Bercier, Deana

- Nutrition Services
- Bungay Elementary School
- Effective: August 14, 2017

2. Brower, Linda

- Monitor Paraprofessional
- Bungay Elementary School
- Effective: August 10, 2017

3. Kempf, Stacey

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Bungay Elementary School
- Effective: August 2, 2017

4. Molyneux, Alison

- Secretary
- Bungay Elementary School
- Effective: July 19, 2017

5. Orosz, Melissa

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Seymour High School
- Effective: July 31, 2017

6. Sparwell, Marie

- Clerical Paraprofessional, P/T
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Effective: July 12, 2017

VII. REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – 07/10/17

2. Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes – 08/16/17

B. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments

Mr. Putorti reported that he has been working with Mr. Wilson to establish goals and this will be discussed at the September 5, 2017 Board of Education meeting. He asked Board members to send him ideas for goals and they will see if they fit. Board members will receive a copy of the goals before the September 5, 2017 meeting and the goals will be discussed as they have been in the past. Mr. Putorti said the convocation will be on Thursday, August 24, 2017 and it is sure to be entertaining. He does not think he can attend due to a commitment at work. He said everyone knows the latest news from the State includes an \$8,000,000 cut. This will be added to the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

2. Board Member Comments

Mr. Stanek thanked Mr. Putorti for adding the budget situation to the agenda. He also talked about a conversation he had with a Seymour resident who was a voter who consistently voted against the education budget. Recently his grandson moved to North Carolina and they have found that he is very advanced as compared to the children in his new school. His grandfather is now a supporter of the Seymour Public Schools. Mr. Strumello talked a little bit about the Athletic Committee meeting that was held on August 16. He said he was very pleased with the plan to replace the banners with vinyl ones. He said he also thought the process that is being developed to certify volunteer assistants was a positive thing for the district because assistant volunteers will be getting in-depth training to deal with student athletes. He indicated that this will start with the winter and spring volunteers as it is too late to do this for our fall sports. Mr. Garofolo reported that he was working with his grandson and was very impressed with all the knowledge of tools and safety procedures in a wood shop. He credited this to the classes he took at Seymour High School saying the staff there instilled skills, safety protocols, and knowledge that his grandson has carried with him. He congratulated the staff at Seymour High School on the good job they have done.

Superintendent Report

1. Mr. Wilson reported that Mr. Putorti has earned CABE's Certificated Board of Education Member designation and read the letter that was received from CABE on August 17, 2017. He welcomed our new Assistant Principal at Chatfield-LoPresti School; Kathleen Freimuth. He reported that Mrs. Tencza will begin the first day of new teacher orientation on August 22. Mr. Wilson reminded everyone of the convocation on August 24. He reported on the Administrative Retreat that was held on August 14. Administrators participated in some team building exercises and started working on a draft of their school improvement plans. He reported that he had lunch with First Selectman Kurt Miller and they talked about open communication. With this in mind, they will have a monthly meeting to keep each other informed. Mr. Wilson attended a workshop in Ansonia for all valley superintendents on Restorative Justice Practices. Ms. Harmeling asked if there was any handout information on this as she would be interested in seeing it. Mr. Wilson reminded the Board that the Connecticut Hurricanes will be using the Seymour High School field for a competition on August 26, 2017 in the evening. They will also be using the showers in the high school. Mr. Wilson also talked to the Board about the need for someone to volunteer as the ACES Representative and if anyone is interested to email him.

VIII. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Seymour High School Banners

Mr. Strumello asked Ms. Yusko to review what was discussed at the Athletic Committee meeting regarding the banners. Ms. Yusko explained that they are looking to better organize the banners in the gymnasium. She talked about the current process to update the cloth banners which includes getting the lift to take them off the wall, shipping them (at our expense) to be updated/cleaned, and then putting them back on the wall. The solution would be vinyl banners that are clean, don't roll, and don't fade. To update them, you simply order the update and it is a peel/stick for the banner. There are lines to make sure they are put on straight and when completed you cannot tell they are peel and stick. They want to move the banners to each end of the gymnasium so spectators can see them while sitting on the bleachers. Ms. Yusko feels this is an excellent way to display our pride. Mr. Strumello said it is great way to really see our championships and keep a good history, and present a clear view of how much we have won. It will be very professional and a nice addition to the gymnasium. Ms. Yusko said it will make everything very uniform. Mr. Hatfield asked how the coaches feel about this and Ms. Yusko said she met with them and all are excited and looking forward to the new vinyl banners. Mr. Stanek reminded everyone of two banners that hang in the gymnasium that are not sports related (Mock Trial Championship 1982-83). These banners were donated by a family and the Board voted to put them in the gym. Moving or changing them could cause a controversy. Mr. Putorti suggested the family be contacted and find out if they have an issue. Mr. Hatfield asked how the spending freeze would affect this and Mr. Putorti confirmed that a spending freeze has been in effect since July 1. Mr. Garofolo asked if this proposal was due to uniformity or ease of updating. Ms. Yusko said the current cloth banners have faded and look worn. Our past is as important as our future. Mr. Hatfield said the quote is from one company and wondered about the companies that are here in town. He asked to get two or three quotes from local businesses before a decision is made. He said he felt local companies should get the work if they can match the quote. Ms. Magri asked if we have a policy of what is considered "banner worthy" and if so this should be referred to the Policy Committee. Mr. Putorti asked for a motion and Ms. Harmeling said the Board was not yet ready.

IX. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. RFP #17-01 Propane Gas

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec. Mr. Garofolo) to award RFP#17-01 to East River Energy, Guilford, Ct. to provide 62,500 gallons of propane gas at the rate of \$.8923 per gallon for the period Sept. 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 and 62,500 gallons of propane gas at the rate of \$.8832 per gallon for the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

B. Nutrition Services 2017-18 Budget

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri) to approve the 2017-18 Nutrition Services Budget as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

C. Nutrition Services Salary Increases

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve a 2% increase in salary for all Nutrition Services staff
There was some discussion on the current budget situation and whether or not this should be considered at this time. Mr. Belden explained that Nutrition Services are self-sustainable and it will not affect our budget. The director is not part of this as she has a contract. Mr. Hatfield asked about the assistant director and Mr. Belden confirmed that we do not have an assistant director. Mrs. Brooks has a secretary. Mr. Strumello asked if the motion should be changed to indicate it does not affect our budget. Ms. Harmeling said the information would be in the minutes.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to amend the motion

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

AMENDED MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve a 2% increase for all Nutrition Services staff which does not include the director as included in the self-sustaining budget

Ms. Harmeling did not agree with this wording and rescinded her second of the motion.

AMENDED MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve a 2% increase for all Nutrition Services staff which does not include the director as included in the self-sustaining budget

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

D. Intra District Transfer Request

1. Vazquez, Mason and Lillian Knutson

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to accept the approval of the 2017-2018 intra district transfer request for student Mason Vazquez (grade 2) and Lillian Knutson (grade 3) who currently attend Chatfield-LoPresti School and therefore, have no impact to class size

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

E. Broadcast Seymour High School Football Games

Mr. Garofolo asked who Mr. Morse was and what his position is. Mr. Belden said he was approached by Mr. Morse to gain permission to film/photograph the Seymour High School football games, he is a volunteer and this is nonprofit. They film games for Derby and Ansonia and would like to expand to Seymour. Mr. Garofolo asked if there were any privacy issues and Mr. Belden confirmed there were not. Mr. Stanek wanted to know why the Board should approve this. Mr. Belden said they want to use our press box. He confirmed that they would provide additional insurance to do this.

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to accept the recommendation of the Athletic Committee to approve the request of Mr. Sean Morse to broadcast video and photography of Seymour High School's football games

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

ABSTAIN: Mr. Garofolo

F. Budget

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to add to the agenda a discussion on the budget

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Putorti stated that there is the potential for the loss of ECS money in the amount of \$8,000,000 as indicated by Governor Malloy. Mr. Putorti and Mr. Wilson had a phone conversation about this with First Selectman Miller and Mr. Belden said he had a conversation with Mr. Caserta. There will be a meeting on Wednesday, August 23 to meet with financial advisors to discuss how this major cut would be covered. The Board of Education would not have to cover the entire amount but would be responsible for a large portion of the amount. Mr. Garofolo asked if this included the proposal to pass a portion of the pension costs to town. Mr. Belden said it did not include pension. He said it affects ESC, Pequots, and car taxes. Mr. Garofolo said this is a result of not dealing with the problem at the State level and then passing the problem to the towns. We are being hammered and the students are the ones who really lose. Mr. Putorti said we will try to deal with this through creative means. Mr. Putorti confirmed there is a spending freeze and only contractual obligations will be met. Mr. Hatfield wondered if our services are being met and Mr. Belden confirmed they are. Mr. Belden said the spending freeze is for discretionary spending not contractual and we will do what we need to do to open the schools for the year. Mr. Falzone is doing bare bones work to get the schools open and we will not be initiating any new projects. Mr. Wilson confirmed that if more is needed, he will inform the Board. He said he is appreciative of the support. Ms. Harmeling said there is no impact at this time. Mr. Hatfield said some districts are delaying the start of school. Ms. Harmeling mentioned sports. She said we have to have a plan B and that she did not understand the rationale of districts delaying the start of school. Ms. Magri said this will create a cash flow problem with not ECS funds coming in. She said the State was supposed to vote on a budget on September 11 and if a budget did not pass, these cuts will come into play. We don't know the impact until the financial advisors and Mr. Miller come up with a plan. Mr. Putorti said it may be a situation where we have to borrow money. Ms. Magri asked if we would have information for the 9/5 meeting and Mr. Putorti said yes. He said we will not know until the State budget is set but felt there would be cuts. Ms. Harmeling said we have a lot to look at including legal options to figure out what to do. At this point it is hypothetical. Mr. Putorti said we may have a special meeting next week to discuss this further. Mr. Stanek asked if we would be hold off on filling vacant positions. Mr. Wilson confirmed that they have already been filled. It was agreed that more work would need to be done after the financial advisors make their recommendations.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Hatfield said that since he was late to this meeting and missed the Board Members Comment section of the agenda, he wanted to make a public comment. He asked to discuss AED Access at all sporting events to our next meeting agenda. He spoke about his disappointment that the minutes from the Athletic Committee included the phrase "better pricing and quality". He felt this should not have been part of the minutes since this vendor has been a long term supporter of Seymour. He said he was very disheartened. Ms. Harmeling reminded him that since was said in the meeting it should be part of the minutes. Ms. Harmeling questioned whether or not a Board member could make public comment. Mr. Hatfield said he was speaking as a private citizen who lives at 25 Patton Avenue and moved to the audience to finish his statement.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk