

REGIONAL DISTRICT ELEVEN
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Chaplin, Connecticut
Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2007

Interim Superintendent Dr. Colette Traylor called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Present were Board members Leslie Wertam, John Insalaco, Jennifer Nelson, Marion Taylor, Christina Moore, Eugene Winchester, Jennifer Jones and George Askew. Principal Kathryn Walsh was also present. Unable to attend was Charles Bruckerhoff.

2. BOARD REORGANIZATION

A. Election of Officers

- a. Chair: John Insalaco moved to nominate Leslie Wertam; Christina Moore seconded the motion. Jennifer Jones moved to nominate Charles Bruckerhoff. Leslie Wertam was elected with the following vote (4.7): John Insalaco(.8), Jennifer Nelson(.8), Marion Taylor(.9), Christina Moore(1.3), George Askew(.9); Charles Bruckerhoff received the following vote (2.1): Jennifer Jones(1.3), Eugene Winchester(.8).
- b. Vice-Chair: Christina Moore moved to nominate John Insalaco; Marion Taylor seconded the motion; John Insalaco was elected with the vote of all the members, with his abstention.
- c. Treasurer: Marion Taylor moved to nominate Jennifer Nelson; Christina Moore seconded the motion. Jennifer Nelson was elected with the vote of all the members, with her abstention.
- d. Secretary: Jennifer Nelson moved to nominate Marion Taylor; Christina Moore seconded the motion. Marion Taylor was elected with the vote of all the members, with her abstention.

B. Establishment of Regular Meeting Date/Time/Place

- a. Jennifer Nelson moved to establish the meeting time and place of the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at Parish Hill; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. There was discussion of the feasibility of moving the meeting to each of the towns through the course of the year; the idea will be considered again. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Committee Appointments

- a. CABE: Charles Bruckerhoff
- b. EASTCONN: John Insalaco
- c. Personnel and Supervision: John Insalaco, Charles Bruckerhoff, George Askew
- d. Central Office: No change
- e. Board Newsletter: Jennifer Nelson, Jennifer Jones
- f. Education and Board Policies: Marion Taylor, Christina Moore, Jennifer Nelson, Eugene Winchester
- g. Fiscal and Plant: Jennifer Nelson, Leslie Wertam
- h. Technology: Marion Taylor
- i. Cooperative School
 - i. Communications: Charles Bruckerhoff, Leslie Wertam
 - ii. Curriculum: Leslie Wertam, Charles Bruckerhoff
 - iii. Costs Analysis: Jennifer Nelson, Eugene Winchester

3. COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUDIENCE

K.Newcombe suggested the referenda on the budget need more advertising and longer hours; she reports that the town clerks in each of the town is willing to accept absentee ballots from 6 am to noon if the referendum hours are scheduled for noon to 8pm.

B. Blair discusses the disappointment at the failure of the previous referenda and pointed out that holding a referendum is costly to each town; she proposed a number of cuts to the

budget for the Board to consider; she asked for an executive session to be scheduled to again discuss secretarial positions. Leslie Wertam responded that the position has already been discussed and the position is now posted.

G. Wagner asked if the February 13, 2007 minutes of the Board meeting have been amended yet. Leslie Wertam responded that they are not yet amended. She asked if there is a response to the letter to the Board addressing the terms of office. Leslie Wertam responded that this is in the hands of the Board attorney. She opined that the failure of the budget referenda registers the sentiment toward the Board or the school, student/teacher ratio and the organization of the school.

W. Smallwood asked about cost per pupil and February minutes. Jennifer Nelson responded explaining the costs by assessment, gross costs and costs after education grants.

D. Weingart encouraged people who voted against the budget to make suggestions to the Board; he asked for clarification of the fund balances in writing, shared services agreement and that remedies for the cost per pupil be discussed. He described the perception that the Board has been unresponsive to suggestion people have raised; he proposed the Board work to resolve the Board-community relations.

G. Wagner proposed focus group in the communities, that people would accept compromises if they feel they are heard.

B. Kimmel asked if accepting Title 1 funding would help costs.

B. Blair suggested that passing the budget should be a priority over Brooklyn Co-Op.

C. Kimmel read a letter asking the Board for tuition for her to attend Griswold High School for the nursing program; she stated that her parents would provide transportation. Leslie Wertam moved to place the request on the agenda under Old Business/New Business; Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Weingart said the schedule of referenda on Tuesdays means the Chaplin Town Hall hours are disrupted.

W. Smallwood stated that people in the community thought the budget should not go up this year and asked why the budget never goes down. Leslie Wertam explained that many increased costs have been absorbed (e.g., contractual increases, insurance increases) to bring a budget increase of 0.4%; the assessment to Scotland is \$180,000 less than last year's figure; the average class size at PHHS is 16.3, the state average is 20.3. Christina Moore explained that Community Conversations were held to hear what members of the community wanted in the school and what the school should offer; in part the cooperative agreement is an effort to reduce cost per pupil.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

- a. Ann Williams wrote to thank the Board for honoring her with the EVA award.
- b. Dr. Traylor wrote to inform the Board of the end of her term, October 1, 2007. George Askew moved to accept the notice with regret; John Insalaco seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. NEASC

Dr. George Ladd has begun work with the teachers to respond to the NEASC review; updates are due in November, as part of the routine NEASC process of developing the school improvement plan.

6. REGION #11/BROOKLYN COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Board Chairs Leslie Wertam and Ken Swartz(Brooklyn) signed the cooperative agreement and it was sent to the State Department of Education. The Communications Committee has begun meetings. Work on a website is underway, with a domain name of cooperativeschool.org. Meetings are planned in the Fall in each of the 4 towns for discussion of development, costs. A positive vote is required in each of the 4 towns to proceed. The tentative schedule for the referenda is October.

- A. Middle School Configuration – Jennifer Nelson and Marion Taylor will represent the Board in this work.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

John Insalaco moved to accept the special meeting minutes of June 5, 2007. Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones abstaining.

John Insalaco moved to accept the annual meeting minutes of June 19, 2007. Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with John Insalaco, George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones abstaining.

John Insalaco moved to accept the regular meeting minutes of June 19, 2007. Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones abstaining.

John Insalaco moved to accept the special meeting minutes of June 26, 2007. Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with amendment to note that Sharon Wakely was absent, with John Insalaco, George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones abstaining.

John Insalaco moved to accept the special meeting minutes of June 28, 2007. Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with Marion Taylor, George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones abstaining.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS/ADMINISTRATIVE REQUESTS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Principal Dr. Walsh described the progress of the Curriculum Committee.

B. Superintendent

a. Personnel

i. Christina Moore moved to accept with regret the resignation of S. Targonski; Eugene Winchester seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ii. Jennifer Nelson moved to approve the appointment of J. Griffin, Math; John Insalaco seconded the motion. Eugene Winchester inquired about teaching experience and Dr. Walsh explained the BEST program for new teachers. The motion carried unanimously.

iii. Christina Moore moved to approve the appointment of A.Clark, Math; John Insalaco seconded the motion. Dr. Trailor explained the Connecticut certification process for teachers certified in other states. Mr. Clark will apply for CT certification and DSAP permit. The motion carried unanimously.

iv. John Insalaco moved to approve the appointment of M.Cannon, Vocal Music; George Askew seconded the motion. Dr. Walsh noted that the employment included a clear understanding that a musical production is included in responsibilities of the position. The motion carried unanimously.

v. George Askew moved to approve the appointment of J.Landon, Custodian; Eugene Winchester seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Acceptance of Contract Proposals for Repairs to School Building and Grounds

i. John Insalaco moved to accept the bid for the curtain drain work from J. Swan for \$6000; George Askew seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ii. John Insalaco moved to accept the bid for the ball field work from J. Swan for \$4600; George Askew seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The administration will seek a discount from Swan for doing the two jobs while their equipment is already in place for one.

iii. John Insalaco moved to accept the bid for replacement of the tech shop door from Overhead Door for \$1294.73; Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

iv. Christina Moore moved to approve expenditure of up to \$6750 for roof repairs by Barr Construction pending receipt of updated,

detailed proposal; Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- v. Jennifer Nelson moved to empower the Fiscal and Plant Committee to choose a contractor to paint the gym. Eugene Winchester seconded the motion. Because of time constraints and the desire to complete this work before the students return, the committee will meet to consider bids. The motion carried unanimously.

9. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Request for tuition to Griswold High School: Dr. Traylor reported that she has spoken with the Superintendent at Griswold; he explained that Griswold has contracts with Lisbon, Voluntown and Canterbury. Their nursing sub-program can result in EMT or CNA certification. The application process is to their Principal and then to the Superintendent; he reported that their process was not followed, and at this point a new student cannot apply. She also contacted Windham Tech: their program begins in the sophomore year, accepting 18 students a year; they cannot accommodate an additional student because their enrollment is complete.

Discussion followed on alternative ways to obtain EMT and CNA certification outside the public school system, fiscal responsibility and the cost per pupil figures, the desire of some members of the community to have more options funded by the Board, and obligations to provide transportation.

Jennifer Nelson moved to deny the request of this student for tuition to attend Griswold High School; George Askew seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: John Insalaco, Jennifer Nelson, Marion Taylor, Christina Moore, Leslie Wertam, Eugene Winchester, George Askew

No: Jennifer Jones.

A. Appointment of Auditor

Christina Moore moved to appoint Carlin, Charron & Rosen, LLP, as auditor for the 2006-2007 fiscal year; Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The board took a brief recess.

B. Final Approval of Policies

a. John Insalaco moved to give final approval to policy 3292; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried with abstentions from George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones.

b. Policy 3323 is referred to Fiscal And Plant for review.

c. Christina Moore moved to give final approval to policy 6172.61; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried with abstentions from George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones.

d. Christina Moore moved to give final approval to policy 6142.101; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried with abstentions from George Askew, Eugene Winchester and Jennifer Jones.

C. Shared Services Agreement

The agreement is under review by an additional attorney.

D. Approval of Financial Statement

Fiscal and Plant has not met; therefore, no financial statement is ready for presentation yet. With the reorganization of the Board, the new committee will meet and review the financial statement for presentation.

E. Budget Work session

There was extensive discussion of funds for capital non-recurring expenses, accrued liability and the percentage of reserve recommended by the auditors against anticipated and unanticipated expenses. Discussion of undesignated fund was based on unaudited figures. The cooperative agreement will require funds for legal and planning consultation. A pending lawsuit may create additional legal costs.

Decreasing assessments to the towns does not reduce the budget bottom line. New staff and reorganization of staff with differentiated instruction will decrease contractual expenses and increase student/teacher ratios. Anticipated needs for special education services and the attempt to avoid outplacement when possible were discussed.

- a. Approval of 2007-2008 Budget for Presentation at Tri-Town Meeting
 - i. John Insalaco moved to present a budget of \$6,127,810, which represents a 0% increase over last year's budget; George Askew seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
 - ii. John Insalaco moved to return a total of \$202,417 to the towns; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Tri-town Meeting Date/ Method of Voting
 - i. George Askew moved to present the budget in a tri-town meeting on August 6, 2007 with the vote to follow in the towns' respective voting places on August 7, 2007, from noon to 8pm, with absentee ballots available from 6 am to noon; Marion Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS/REQUESTS FOR BOARD ACTION

There were no committee reports/requests for board action.

11. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS

G. Wagner acknowledged board and administration effort to join classes and reduce staff.

D. Weingart commented that the board and administration have looked at options to bring this budget forward and encouraged the specifics be shared.

J. Savino spoke regarding middle school configuration, shared services agreement and the Blue Cross/Blue Shield demutualization.

G. Wagner spoke regarding the student request to attend Griswold High.

W. Smallwood spoke regarding the same request, consultant Dr. Ladd, and the process of receiving estimates for repairs.

Motion to adjourn (11:11 PM) made Christina Moore, seconded by Jennifer Nelson and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Marion Taylor, Secretary

12. ADJOURNMENT

Christina Moore moved to adjourn at 11:15 pm; Jennifer Nelson seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion Taylor, Secretary