

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2017
Stella Library Media Center

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the meeting to order (6:32 PM).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Ms. Claire Coleman, Dr. Steve Fleischman, Ms. Maegan Genovese, Secretary; Mr. Garrett Luciani (6:46 PM), Nancy Maasbach, Vice Chair; Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Mr. Paul Testa and Mr. John Vultee.

STAFF: Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Al Pullo, Director of Business Services/Operations.

The Board entered Executive Session to review a certified staff early retirement option as well as a transportation contract proposal.

MOTION #1 – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Move that we enter Executive Session (6:32 PM).

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Mr. Testa

UNANIMOUS

MOTION #2 – PUBLIC SESSION

Move that we return to Public Session (6:47 PM).

Ms. Hamilton

Second by Ms. Piascyk

UNANIMOUS

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the Public Session back to order (7:00 PM).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Ms. Claire Coleman, Dr. Steve Fleischman, Ms. Maegan Genovese, Secretary; Mr. Garrett Luciani, Nancy Maasbach, Vice Chair; Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Mr. Paul Testa and Mr. John Vultee.

STAFF: Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Al Pullo, Director of Business Services/Operations; Gina Prisco, Principal; Analisa Sherman, Assistant Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Larissa Crocco, James Crawford, Andrew Lavaway, Teresa Nakouzi, Tim Rourke, Sandy Simowitz, Teachers; Dan Esposito, Joan and Mark Grogan, Maria Madonick, Joi Prud'homme and Pua Ford, community.

CORRESPONDENCE – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #3 – CONSENT AGENDA

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Mr. Luciani

Ms. Piascyk requested extraction of the September 7 meeting minutes. Ms. Hamilton requested extraction of the 2018/19 regular meeting dates.

UNANIMOUS

Ms. Piascyk noted that Ms. Melnick was present at the September 7 special meeting.

MOTION #4 – AMEND MINUTES

Move that we approve the September 7, 2017 meeting minutes as amended.

Ms. Piascyk
Second by Ms. Maasbach
UNANIMOUS

2018/19 Regular Meeting Dates – Date changes included moving the April regular meeting to Tuesday, April 24, 2018 to accommodate the Town Budget Hearing on the 23rd, November 19, 2018 to Tuesday, November 20 due the scheduling of the Interfaith Services and changing April 22 to April 23, 2019 to accommodate the Town Budget Hearing.

MOTION #5 – AMENDED 2018/19 REGULAR MEETING DATES

Move that we approve the 2018/19 regular meeting dates as amended.

Mr. Testa
Second by Ms. Piascyk
UNANIMOUS

REPORTS

Ad Hoc SRO Committee – Ms. Hamilton presented the recommendation from the Committee noting low parent and staff participation in the public forums and the total survey responses received were 279. The committee recommendation is as follows:

1. Continue the current SRO position with an active duty Woodbridge police officer.
2. Continue SRO coverage as currently structured - during school year and summer programs – with summer programs covering summer cost (approximately \$28,000 of the total cost).
3. Discuss with the town any “shared” funding under the category of “community policing” given that if Beecher did NOT employ the SRO, coverage for the school would be provided by the Police Department at a very different level, but still would apply.

This committee will meet for a final time on October 23 to develop the survey results and recommendation presentation for the final staff / parent forum on November 2.

PTO Update – Ms. Prud’homme noted the upcoming Hoot, the well-attended Harvest Hike and the interactive black bean and corn salad taste testing where students were able to place smiley stickers on the wall indicating whether they liked it or not. As part of a math project, Grade 6 students will compile results of the four scheduled tastings. The Grade 2 Social will be held on November 3. In collaboration with RJ Julia’s Bookstore, two visiting guest authors, Soman Chainani and Ryan T. Higgins, signed books for students in Grades 1 and 5.

Superintendent’s Report – Superintendent Gilbert welcomed Claire Coleman, who was appointed to fill the vacancy of Emily Melnick, and acknowledged the non-certified staff retirements of Otis Burnett and OnaMay Slauson. Also noted were the World Language presentation at the Curriculum Committee, the inclusion of “BRS News” in the town/ community newsletter, two new superintendent committees *Diversification* and *Beautification* and preparation of the 2018/19 budget as well as the many fiscal challenges facing both the district and the state.

Calendar 2018/19 – Superintendent Gilbert reviewed the proposed calendar which complies with ACES regional requirements and developed in collaboration with the BOWA districts. Differences among the BOWA districts include the August start date, professional development days and ending days in June. Recognition of Lunar New Year in February was proposed. As the only holidays recognized are negotiated with various unions, it was suggested that February 19th could serve as the recognized observance as it was already designated as a day off for the winter break.

MOTION #6 – LUNAR NEW YEAR OBSERVANCE

Move that we identify February 19, 2019 as the observance for the Lunar New Year.

Ms. Maasbach
Second by Dr. Fleischman
UNANIMOUS

MOTION #7 – CALENDAR 2018/19

Move that we approve the 2018/19 calendar as amended.

Dr. Fleischman
Second by Ms. Maasbach
UNANIMOUS

Accountability Report – Ms. Prisco and Ms. Sherman provided an overview of the Accountability report. Testing is done completely on-line, students are allowed to select their apparatus of choice, i.e., laptop, iPad or desktop and there is no time limit for completion. Efforts have been focused on increasing the participation rate, which has direct correlation and impact on the CSDE ranking and has prevented us from achieving “school of distinction” status, and decreasing chronic absenteeism. It was noted that prior to implementation of SBAC, the participation rate for CMT’s was approximately 99%. Chronic absenteeism dropped significantly from prior years. While above the state average, Physical Fitness scores also decreased for Grades 4-6. Emphasis in the coming year will focus on increasing upper body muscle strength.

Summer Program Review – Extended Day averaged 160-170 students per day with concentration on interactive child-to-child activities. The Recreation Program experienced a slight decrease in enrollment from prior years and the summer academic program enrollment was similar to past years. Each program is self-sustaining with fees remaining unchanged over the last several years.

BRS Report – Ms. Prisco noted the outdoor read held recently to celebrate literacy, return of the after-school poetry group and math Olympiad, fire safety week, the annual coat drive sponsored by the rotary club, the building/bus evacuation drill and upcoming parent/teacher conferences.

Facilities Committee – Mr. Vultee reviewed the October 16 meeting held prior to the public session with a tour of the outside grounds. Given current budget constraints, areas of importance and associated with safety will be prioritized and addressed accordingly.

Finance Committee – Dr. Fleischman apprised the board of items discussed at the October 10 meeting and outlined the various capital projects under consideration related to technology infrastructure and wireless network expansion, paving and access for first responders, landscape grading/drainage as well as kitchen equipment replacements.

MOTION #8 –CAPITAL PROJECT 2018/19 SUBMISSION

Move that we approve the 2018/19 capital projects as presented for submission to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance.

Dr. Fleischman
Second by Ms. Maasbach
UNANIMOUS

Transportation Contract – Dr. Fleischman explained the timelines associated with the current owner/operators contract which expires June 2018. Since a two-year extension is available and Amity contracts expire in June 2020, extending the contract to June 2020 will allow all BOWA districts to bid the BOWA regional transportation requirements prior to the June 2020 expiration.

MOTION #9 – TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT EXTENSION TO 2020

Move that we authorize administration to discuss continuation of the current contract with Owner/Operators with the option of a two-year extension.

Dr. Fleischman
Second by Ms. Maasbach
UNANIMOUS

Policy Committee – Ms. Maasbach reviewed the October 17 Policy meeting noting that Policies 7551 Naming of Major Facilities and 3280 – Gifts, Grants, Bequest and Memorials were revised with minor language changes and accepted for 30-day review under the Consent Agenda. The November 21 meeting will continue discussion of the Attendance, Truancy and Homework policies. It was also the Committee’s recommendation that an Ad Hoc Class Size Committee be established to commence in January 2018 with a similar constituency composite as the current SRO Committee.

MOTION #10 – AD HOC CLASS SIZE COMMITTEE

Move that we establish an Ad Hoc Committee to review the Class Size Guidelines commencing in January 2018 with membership similar to the Ad Hoc SRO Committee.

Ms. Maasbach
Second by Dr. Fleischman
UNANIMOUS

Community Lecture Series – Ms. Maasbach outlined several topic possibilities for a community lectures series that could commence in January and would parallel the Town series.

Curriculum Committee – Ms. Piascyk reviewed the October 5 meeting inclusive of the World Language update and corresponding integration with the Middle School. The November 9 meeting will spotlight Writers Workshop.

CABE Liaison – Ms. Genovese reviewed the CABE/CAPSS Convention and Delegate Assembly in November, the Leadership/New Board Member Orientation Workshop on December 7 and a December 14 workshop on responding to hate incidents in schools and districts. Policy highlights include October as national bullying prevention month, positive school climate and kindness campaigns, various articles in the *CABE Journal* and the article on diversity written by Bob Rader the Executive Director of CABE.

ACES Liaison – Ms. Hamilton noted that at the October 12 meeting enrollment, fiscal and project updates were provided. Similar to other districts around the state, ACES is currently operating in the red.

Upcoming Meeting Presentations

Strategic Plan – the presentation should include updates for where are we, accomplishments since July, student enrichment clusters, curriculum compacting and development of a review cycle for curriculum updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Superintendent Gilbert presented the certified staff early retirement incentive proposal.

MOTION #11 –CERTIFIED STAFF EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE

Move that we authorize the Superintendent to offer the early retirement incentive to the membership of the WEA.

Dr. Fleischman
Second by Mr. Luciani
UNANIMOUS

Ms. Prisco noted the Student Council will be conducting bake sales on October 17 and 19 to benefit hurricane victims.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mr. Esposito spoke on the importance of maintaining an active duty police officer as an SRO at BRS given the threat of active shooters becoming a daily event.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: (8:43 PM)
Dr. Fleischman
Second by Ms. Hamilton
UNANIMOUS

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board