

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, December 19, 2016

Stella Library Media Center

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the Public Session to order at 7:05 PM.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Dr. Steve Fleischman, Vice Chair (7:30 PM); Ms. Lisa Connor, Secretary; Ms. Karen Kravetz; Mr. Garrett Luciani, Ms. Nancy Maasbach, Ms. Keri Matthews, Ms. Emily Melnick and Ms. Lynn Piascyk.

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

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Aimee Meacham, PTO; Teresa Nakouzi, WEA; Maria Kayne, BOS Liaison; Pua Ford, Joseph Holowienko, Monika Kaczmarczyk, Rebecca Merkle, Joyce Shavers, Yonatan Zamir, community; BRS Owls and Hawks Robotics Team /Parents.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Zamir expressed his desire for participating in the discussions to explore and expand project based learning into Grade 5.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Ms. Connor

Second by Ms. Matthews

**UNANIMOUS**

## **REPORTS**

**PTO Update** – Ms. Meacham apprised the Board on the Thanksgiving Food Drive, the Book Fair, completion of the grade level socials, with the exception of Bingo Night in February, and the PTO Info Night on January 11 in the Stella Library Media Center followed by the Open Parent Forum with Superintendent Gilbert. The PTO is looking to generate more interest and solicit additional parent volunteers.

**Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Gilbert highlighted his ongoing discussions with various stakeholders as part of his Entry Plan as well as the development of a new Strategic Plan that will be shared in January and his attendance at the November CABE/CAPSS Convention with Ms. Hamilton and Ms. Connor.

**Robotics Team** – Mr. Holowienko, Ms. Shavers and the BRS Owls and Hawks Robotics Teams gave demonstrations of their winning projects – *Tick Door* and *Bird/Squirrel Feeder*. The Lego/Robotics events inspire students to incorporate critical thinking skills, cooperation, team work, and research in developing competition projects. Based on a common theme, students apply science, technology, math and engineering concepts to identify a problem, develop a design and create an innovative solution that explains why and how the solution solves the problem. Students then work collaboratively with parents, community and staff to research, design and build the robot as well as share their findings.

**BRS Update** – Ms. Prisco acknowledged the efforts of Mr. Letsch and Ms. Marroquin in conducting the holiday student choir and music performances at BRS, the Senior Center and the Yale shops. Parents were reminded to sign-up for Instant Alert. The Extended Day Drama Club will commence tryouts for the *Jungle Book* in January. Parents were urged to visit the lost and found tables.

2017/18 Budget Presentation – Superintendent Gilbert outlined the 2017/18 budget proposal reflecting an overall increase of 4.72%. This budget maintains current staffing levels for both certified and non-certified staff, addresses increasing costs associated with out-of-district placements and transportation costs, includes technology equipment replacement, maintains class size guidelines and supports the educational mission, vision and goals of the district. Discussion ensued over class sizes and open choice options. There are benefits for smaller class sizes and several grade levels are very close to being over the guidelines. With the current per pupil expenditure in the range of \$17,000, the impact could be significant--if class sizes increase so will staffing. It was noted that, as has been the past practice, open choice options will be discussed at the January Board meeting.

**MOTION #2 – 2017/18 BUDGET**

Move that we approve the 2017/18 budget as presented by administration for submission to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance.

Dr. Fleischman  
Second by Ms. Matthews  
**UNANIMOUS**

Facilities Committee – No Report

Finance Committee – No further report. The Committee met on December 12 to review the monthly financials and the 2017/18 budget proposal.

CABE Liaison – Ms. Connor noted the keynote speaker and the compelling message for student success in the new innovation era - what does it demand from education; what needs to be done differently to prepare students to become problem solvers; the differences in traditional education versus team learning; classroom culture / organized learning that eliminates failure and creating an effective road map for students to become innovators.

Upcoming Meeting Presentation – Ms. Hamilton indicated that Superintendent Gilbert will present an update on his Entry Plan based on Board recommendations and feedback received from various stakeholders over the last several months.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Superintendent Gilbert presented the 2017/18 calendar. As mandated by the CSDE, the calendar complies with the regional requirements and was developed in collaboration with the BOWA districts. It was suggested that the Lunar New Year holiday be included in future calendars.

**MOTION #3 – 2017/18 CALENDAR**

Move that we approve the 2017/18 calendar as presented by administration.

Ms. Kravetz  
Second by Ms. Hamilton  
IN FAVOR: Ms. Connor, Ms. Hamilton, Ms. Kravetz, Mr. Luciani, Ms. Maasbach, Ms. Melnick  
and Ms. Piascyk  
AGAINST: Dr. Fleischman  
ABSTAIN: Ms. Matthews

***MOTION PASSES 7-1-1***

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

The Board entered Executive Session to receive a safety and security update. Mr. Pullo was invited to participate in the discussion.

**MOTION #5 – EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Move that we enter Executive Session (8:53 PM).

Dr. Fleischman  
Second by Ms. Matthews  
**UNANIMOUS**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the Executive Session to order (8:58 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Dr. Steve Fleischman, Vice Chair; Ms. Lisa Connor, Secretary; Ms. Karen Kravetz; Mr. Garrett Luciani, Ms. Nancy Maasbach, Ms. Keri Matthews, Ms. Emily Melnick and Ms. Lynn Piascyk.

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

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** (9:09 PM)  
Dr. Fleischman  
Second by Ms. Kavetz  
**UNANIMOUS**

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board