

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, September 16, 2019

Stella Library Media Center

**CALL TO ORDER:** Dr. Fleischman, Chair called the meeting to order (6:45 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Steven Fleischman, Chair; Mr. Dan Cowan, Ms. Maegan Genovese, Secretary; Mr. Jeff Hughes, Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Vice Chair; Dr. David Ross, Ms. Joyce Shavers, Dr. Michael Strambler and Dr. Jeffrey Townsend.

**STAFF:** Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent.

The Board entered Executive Session to review and discuss the proposed 2019/20 contract for the Business Manager.

## **MOTION #1 – EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Move that we enter Executive Session (6:46 PM).

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Mr. Hughes

**UNANIMOUS**

## **MOTION #2 – PUBLIC SESSION**

Move that we return to Public Session (7:03 PM).

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Genovese

**UNANIMOUS**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Dr. Fleischman, Vice Chair called the meeting to order (7:06 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Steven Fleischman, Chair; Mr. Dan Cowan, Ms. Maeghan Genovese, Secretary; Mr. Jeff Hughes, Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Vice Chair; Dr. David Ross, Ms. Joyce Shavers, Dr. Michael Strambler and Dr. Jeffrey Townsend.

**STAFF:** Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Cheryl Mammen, Special Services Director; Al Pullo, Director of Business Operations/Services; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Doreen Merrill, Assistant Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Kim Franklin, Nancy Smerekanicz, Cathy Zdrowski, WEA; Mary Broderick, CABA; Pua Ford and Gina Prisco, community.

**CORRESPONDENCE** ó None

**PUBLIC COMMENT** ó None

Superintendent Gilbert noted that Ms. Stein would not be present due to a death in her immediate family.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #3 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Dr. Fleischman

**UNANIMOUS**

## **REPORTS**

**Board Goals** ó Dr. Fleischman presented the Board Goals developed at the August 19 Board Retreat. .

#### **MOTION #4 – BOARD GOALS 2019/20**

Move that we approve the 2019/20 Board Goals as stated.

Mr. Cowan

Second by Ms. Piascyk

**UNANIMOUS**

Meeting Topics ó Dr. Fleischman presented the Meeting Topics schedule for the year. This document may be adjusted throughout the year depending upon Board input.

PTO Update ó It was noted that the report from the PTO will now be a written report. The report submitted to the Board Clerk by Ms. Prudhomme indicated that due to the success of last May's Fun Run the PTO was able to host the first free Ice Cream Social and is able to also provide funding for Teacher Grants this year. The Halloween Hoot will occur on October 19<sup>th</sup> with Carrie Aronson leading the effort. Picture Days will be held on September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

Superintendent's Report ó Superintendent Gilbert highlighted the upcoming FOI workshop on September 25 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, STAR Screening, the magnet school tuition fee proposed by the New Haven School district, release of the SBAC scores, the web site refresh and the BOWA regionalization meeting on September 26 at Amity with CSDE Attorney Matthew Venhorst in attendance.

BRS Update ó Ms. Sherman apprised the Board of the staff training incurred during the three professional days inclusive of Dibbles, a new assessment for Grades K-2, the motivational keynote speaker Dr. Steve Sobal, the successful ice cream social, the positive start to the new school year and open houses.

Recognition of Gina Prisco ó Administration and the Board extended their gratitude to Ms. Prisco for her seven years of service at BRS. Ms. Prisco extended a heartfelt thank you to the Board, fellow colleagues and the Beecher community for her successful legacy and experiences at Beecher.

Parent Survey ó Superintendent Gilbert presented revised figures from the spring survey results with neutral responses included. It was noted that the targeted questions selected for following year-to-year do not necessarily reflect the trends depicted within the data. Also, with less than a quarter of the overall population responding, assumptions should not be drawn based on interpretation of data nor is it possible to know if it is the same cohort responding. It was noted that based on the results it is clear that leadership is a challenge along with differentiation of learning and the interpretation of differentiation. What are the structural factors, resources, assessments, where should the attention be focused and should a 360 exit interview process be implemented and/or negotiated. Perhaps we should switch to a normed survey instead of district developed questions.

Open Choice ó Superintendent Gilbert noted we are currently slightly over the 2% threshold with 17 students participating. Students enter in kindergarten to provide for optimum success for the child. In the coming year, there will be three vacancies and as approximately 29% of our student population is non-white and our diversity levels are comparable to surrounding districts, what level of diversity are we trying to achieve. Discussion ensued regarding our growing enrollment, the potential for increased class sizes, the financial per pupil expenditure of \$17,000 - \$18,000 to educate a student at Beecher, and the lack of available options for additional classroom spaces. It was agreed the Board would continue this discussion at a future meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Topics ó While the results for SBAC testing were recently released by the CSDE, a preliminary review indicates a positive increase in student achievement for Beecher students when compared to last year. The presentation should be structured similar to past presentations ó performance quartile rankings, student cohort growth and categories, movement in and out of ranges, identification of expected outcome comparisons.

Capital Budget Request ó It was suggested that the Boards of Selectmen and Finance be invited to tour the grounds and building prior to submission of this request.

Facilities Committee ó Mr. Hughes reviewed the September 11 meeting which discussed tree removal / drainage issues, waste sorting in the Cafeteria, roof replacement and installation of an outdoor water bottle filling station. This Committee will now meet on the second Friday of the month at 7:30 AM.

Finance Committee ó Ms. Shavers reviewed the September 16 meeting held just prior to the Board meeting. The committee reviewed the monthly financials and discussed the formation of a short-term committee comprised of various stakeholders to identify budget reductions given the fiscal constraints and expectations outlined by the Town of a zero percent or less increase.

Ad Hoc Task Force Committee ó It was suggested the Business Manager be added as a member of this committee. Board members who wish to participate should contact the Board Chair.

**MOTION #5 – AD HOC BUDGET TASK FORCE COMMITTEE**

Move that we establish an Ad Hoc Budget Task Force Committee as presented with the addition of the Business Manager.

Ms. Shavers

Second by Ms. Piascyk

**UNANIMOUS**

Natural Gas Contract ó Superintendent Gilbert recommended ratification of a multi-year contract for procurement of natural gas in collaboration with the Town, who engages a formal bid process for competitive pricing.

**MOTION #6 – NATURAL GAS CONTRACT**

Move that we authorize the Superintendent and/or designee to enter into a multi-year contract for procurement of natural gas in conjunction with the BOWA Consortium.

Ms. Shavers

Second by Ms. Piascyk

Mr. Cowan suggested modifying the motion to indicate the öTown of Woodbridgeö and not the BOWA Consortium.

**MOTION #6A – NATURAL GAS CONTRACT**

*Move that we authorize the Superintendent and/or designee to enter into a multi-year contract for procurement of natural gas in conjunction with the Town of Woodbridge.*

Mr. Cowan

Second by Ms. Piascyk

**UNANIMOUS**

Curriculum Committee ó Ms. Piascyk reviewed the September 12 meeting which focused on the phonics program. This committee will meet on the third Thursday of the month at 4:30 PM.

Policy Committee ó Ms. Genovese apprised the Board on the September 5 meeting which reviewed five policies, four of which were accepted for 30-day review under the Consent Agenda. This committee will meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 8:00 AM.

CABE Liaison ó Ms. Genovese noted that Dr. Derrick Gay will be the keynote speaker at the CABE / CAPSS Convention and will speak on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Webinars available include Brain Science and Early Childhood on September 26 and a hot topic ó The Future of Education on September 18. It was questioned whether it was known if there will be offerings around cybersecurity.

**NEW BUSINESS**

2019/20 Primary Mental Health Grant ó Ms. Mammen presented the 2019/20 Primary Mental Health Grant. This grant supports students with special needs through the use of child led play, family yoga, family teams and screening for students at risk in Grades K-3.

**MOTION #7 – PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH GRANT**

Move that we approve the 2019/20 Primary Mental Health Grant for submission to the Connecticut State Department of Education as presented by administration.

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Ms. Genovese

**UNANIMOUS**

WBOE Search Committee ó Superintendent Gilbert explained that this is a procedural process and by establishing itself as the Personnel Search Committee for the new principal the Board will be allowed to meet in non-meetings.

**MOTION #8 – PERSONNEL SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Move that we establish a Personnel Search Committee, chaired by Dr. Steven Fleischman, and move further that all members of the Woodbridge Board of Education be appointed to that Committee to conduct the search for a new Building Principal.

Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Mr. Cowan  
**UNANIMOUS**

Security Update ó Superintendent Gilbert noted that in light of the budget constraints we are facing, this is one of the many areas that will be explored as there are a variety of ways to fill the security need and districts across the state have adopted numerous alternatives. It was also noted that this discussion should not occur in a vacuum as the potential exists for budget implications to occur in other areas.

The Board presented the 2019/20 contract for the Business Manager.

**MOTION #9 – BUSINESS MANAGER CONTRACT EXTENSION AND SALARY (2019/20)**

Move that we extend the contract of the Business Manager through June 30, 2022, including a salary of \$123,352 for the 2019/20 school year and with an additional annuity equal to 1.5% of the 2019/20 salary.

Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Mr. Hughes  
**UNANIMOUS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** ó Cathy Zdrowski, WEA President, expressed the frustration of the WEA and their disappointment in not attaining a contract agreement with the Board. The WEA is being forced to carry the burden of the Town's poor planning with minimal increases that do not keep pace with the cost of living and incur additional insurance premium increases.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** (8:50 PM)  
Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Ms. Genovese  
**UNANIMOUS**

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board