Chairman Mark Holden called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:09 p.m.

Roll Call:
Mark Holden, Chairman
Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman
Arlene Liscinsky, Secretary (via Skype)
David Gioiello
Faith Hack

Kate Kutash
Win Oppel (via Skype)
Darlisa Ritter
Kathleen Yolish

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present:
Superintendent of Schools, Freeman Burr
Assistant Superintendent, Lorraine Rossner
Human Resources Director, Carole Pannozzo
Finance Director, Dominic Barone

Also present: Incoming Superintendent, Dr. Christopher Clouet

(1 tape on file in City/Town Clerk's office)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda
Kate Kutash moved to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti and passed unanimously.

Public Hearing
Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Avenue, questioned the status of patching roof at Sunnyside School. Freeman Burr stated the patching has been completed and withstood the recent heavy rain. Dominic Barone said a temporary fix is being considered for the overhang at entryway. Mr. Crawford asked about the status of odor in library area. Superintendent Burr stated there are plans to start removing certain furniture, and specifications are being prepared to go to bid for replacement furniture, which will be handled by the city.

Approval of Minutes
Faith Hack moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of November 18, 2015 and Regular Meeting of November 18, 2015; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.
Presentations/Recognitions
There were no presentations/recognitions.

Communications to the Board
There were no communications this month.

Superintendent’s Commentary - Freeman Burr gave some closing remarks during his final Board of Education meeting. He said he enjoyed every minute of his time in Shelton and is grateful for the opportunity to work here. He expressed appreciation to many. Superintendent Burr announced several scholarship funds and awards he is personally establishing for students and received a standing ovation.

Approved Field Trips
There were no approved field trips to report.

Items Presented for a Vote
Win Oppel moved to accept on behalf of Shelton High School a $500 Science grant from the Weller Foundation to enhance the school’s science program; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to accept on behalf of Shelton High School a $750 Industrial Arts grant from the Weller Foundation to enhance the school’s manufacturing/technology departments; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Comments by the Board Chair
Chairman Holden discussed the second budget meeting held earlier tonight, which included a presentation of unfiltered requests from schools and departments, noting there will be lots more to come in the next 6-7 weeks. He stated while a lot of opportunities have been identified for improving our educational system, we also need to bear in mind the constraints of the budget. He said this year we need to do the best we can to cut our request down into something that hopefully will be more acceptable to the aldermen and the Mayor. Mr. Holden commented that Freeman and Chris are working exceptionally well together during the transition. He said it has been an absolute honor and privilege to work with Freeman and wished him well in his retirement.

Reports of Standing Committees
Teaching and Learning – Thomas Minotti reviewed the topics of the December 8 meeting including an outstanding presentation on Learning Commons by Joan Tichy; presentation by Tina Henckel on the national science standards recently adopted by Connecticut (a standardized adoption of an assessment that will better meet the needs of our students); presentation by Lorraine Rossner of Early Dismissal Professional Learning Calendars; Superintendent Burr presented the district ELL information. An update on DMC findings and next steps will be forthcoming. The next meeting will be January 12 at 4:00 p.m.
Policy – Kate Kutash reported on the December 8 meeting.
  • Policy Revision – CABE sent their recommendations; awaiting appointment of an ad hoc committee based on volunteers from the board
  • Discussion of expectations of ad hoc committee (set a timeline for revision with priorities of time-sensitive ones that are required by recent state mandates; study recommended revisions from CABE for other policies and report to the committee
The committee will meet next on January 12, tentatively at 5:00 p.m.

Finance – Win Oppel said the committee met earlier and reviewed the current budget and ongoing projects.

Win Oppel moved to approve a transfer of $150,000 to the Insurance Reserve account for budget year 2014-2015, and that this was already included in our end-of-year budget discussions; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Reports of Special Committees
CES – Arlene Liscinsky said CES will meet in January. She reported on the Legislative meeting held at CES noting the basic issues of lobbying state representatives; the state’s financial status; burden of proof; calendar; suggestion by state representatives for board members to reach out and contact them on pressing issues.

Committee Appointments – Chairman Holden announced the members of the Ad Hoc Policy Committee: Arlene Liscinsky, Chair; Win Oppel, Faith Hack and Thomas Minotti. Also, the liaison to CABE is Faith Hack.

CABE – Faith Hack discussed a board member orientation booklet on issues that are important for board members and a major STEM opportunity for students.

Unfinished Business
Kate Kutash moved to accept on behalf of Long Hill School a donation of $14,500 from Long Hill School PTO for playground and rock climbing wall expenses; motion seconded by Faith Hack. Discussion included concerns over rock climbing wall, which were allayed when picture of the apparatus was shared. Kate Kutash moved to amend the motion; motion to amend was seconded by Darlisa Ritter and passed unanimously. Kathy Yolish moved to approve the amended motion to accept on behalf of Long Hill School a donation of $14,500 from Long Hill School PTO for playground expenses; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Kate Kutash moved to approve an edit to Policy #1330, Use of School Facilities, which has sat for review; motion seconded by Kathy Yolish and passed unanimously.

Kate Kutash moved to approve revised Policy #5132, Student Dress, which has sat for review; motion seconded by Darlisa Ritter and passed unanimously.
Faith Hack moved to approve the 2016-2017 District Calendar; seconded by Kate Kutash. Discussion included the spring recess and consequences of not following regional calendar. Vote 8-1 (Win Oppel – nay). Motion passed.

For Your Information
Chairman Holden referenced the attachments in the packet including Vacancy Report, Staff and Stipend Actions, and Enrollment Report.

Highlights
Kathy Yolish commended John Scalice and staff for their Literacy Night, The Polar Express, which was well attended by about 400 people. She congratulated Ken Saranich and staff for their uplifting holiday video. She plans to attend chorus performances at Mohegan and Long Hill. Kate Kutash said she was very impressed with the SIS Robotics State Competition at SHS, where Shelton had two teams from PHS and two from SIS. Dr. Smith, staff and students were congratulated for 85 students who achieved National Honor Society. David Gioiello complimented the flute ensemble for their presentation at the Plumb Memorial Library rededication last Sunday. Faith Hack attended the robotics competition and enjoyed speaking with the students. Mark Holden stated at the robotics competition most of those staffing and running it were either mentors or students of the SHS robotics team He commented on the dedication and determination of the students in the program. Mr. Holden said the high school league startup will be soon, and the name reveal will be on January 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the SHS resource center. He discussed the final football game and said he was proud to be there on behalf of the team, who worked so hard throughout the season. Arlene Liscinsky thanked Freeman Burr for all he has done to move the district forward, including full day kindergarten. She said he has done a great job for district.

Adjournment
Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Diane Luther
Diane Luther
Secretary to Board of Education
December 21, 2015