

**SHELTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
Board of Education Administrative Offices
382 Long Hill Avenue
Board Room, 2nd Floor
May 23, 2018**

Chairman Mark Holden called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:02 p.m.

Roll Call:

Mark Holden, Chairman

Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman

Kate Kutash, Secretary

Anne Gaydos

David Gioiello

Jose Goncalves

Amanda Kilmartin (via Skype)

Darlisa Ritter

Kathleen Yolish

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present: Dr. Christopher Clouet, Superintendent of Schools; Lorraine Rossner, Assistant Superintendent; Carole Pannozzo, Human Resources Director; Ed Drapp, Finance Director

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Thomas Minotti moved to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Kate Kutash. Discussion. Motion to amend agenda to table voting on bus contract introduced by Darlisa Ritter failed with vote of 2-6-1 (Yea – Ritter, Yolish; Abstention – Gioiello.) Motion to approve agenda passed with vote of 8-1 (Nay – Ritter).

Presentations/Recognitions

Innovative Educator Award – Superintendent Clouet introduced Long Hill School Teacher Jennifer Keene as recipient of this month's Innovative Educator Award. Ms. Keene gave a brief presentation highlighting the innovative activities conducted at Long Hill School, including projects on the Olympics and Genius Hour. Principal Andrea D'Aiuto said Jen Keene, as a Math Specialist, goes above and beyond helping intervention students (and staff) to overcome their math anxiety. Mrs. D'Aiuto shared student quotes describing Ms. Keene's super powers. Ms. Keene received congratulations.

CABE Student Leadership Awards – Superintendent Clouet stated four students were recognized with Student Leadership Awards by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE). SIS students John Esteves and Brooke Berry were presented with letters and awards. Unable to attend were SHS Students Alexis Klimazewski and Jafar Vohra, who were attending the SHS Book and Achievement Awards Ceremony. The students were chosen for their exemplary leadership skills.

CASL (Connecticut Association of School Librarians) Administrator Award – Sunnyside School Library Media Specialist Kari Yacawych had nominated Amy Yost and Joan Tichy for awards as building level administrator and district level administrator, respectively, and announced they received awards at the CASL dinner held in April. The award honors an administrator who provides necessary support for improving media services through encouragement and adequate funding for program maintenance and improvement. Congratulations were extended to Amy and Joan.

Connecticut Art Education Association's 2018 Outstanding Special Education Art Educator Award – LeAnn Hinkle, President Elect of The Connecticut Art Education Association, presented Long Hill School art teacher Theresa Manus with the 2018 Outstanding Special Education Art Professional Award. Ms. Manus discussed her research analysis of art being a vehicle for kids in life skills classes K-12 to be able to express themselves and help them to find their place in society. Principal Andrea D'Aiuto stated Theresa is an absolute asset to Long Hill School where she devotes a lot of time to life skills students, and the school is beyond lucky to have her as a staff member.

Chinese Student Exchange Program – Michael Jiang, Shelton parent, discussed the opportunity for a Chinese Student Exchange Program and associated benefits to the district. Mr. Jiang answered questions from board members regarding number of students, screening process and reimbursement to host families. Consensus was it is a worthwhile idea to be considered.

Redrawing of Attendance Areas Proposal – Milone & MacBroom – Superintendent Clouet stated there is strong consideration to redistrict due to inequities in how students are assigned, resulting in crowded conditions in some of our schools while others have room. He said in response to our RFP, we received a bid from Milone & MacBroom, a very well-known and experienced company in Connecticut that helps communities understand their options. Rebecca Augur, Principal Planner and Associate with Milone & MacBroom, presented information including a company profile and experience; project understanding; project approach and schedule. She explained that they will be joined by Transportation Advisory Services (TAS), a firm that specializes in student transportation consulting to assist with analyzing options for redistricting. Ms. Augur addressed several questions from board members.

Public Hearing

Mary McMahan, Bus Aide, wanted to know what the district would do if more than 60 buses were required.

Ron Pavlucik, 287 Eagles Landing, expressed concerns about recent BB gun incident at SHS and recommended a single point of entry and a metal detector. His opinion is that our security system, as described at the recent security forum at SHS, was a failure in this instance. Dr. Clouet responded that he is in regular contact with the Chief of Police and plans are in place to answer some of the security issues mentioned. His recommendation to the Board would be that we rely on the expertise of law enforcement. He stated what happened at the high school was an example of a system working in that without any injury or disruption to the school, a weapon was confiscated and a student was removed. Superintendent Clouet said having people wanded or use of a metal detector are ways to look at confiscation of weapons; so it is security, but it is also a mindset. Many times people also talk about the need for increased counseling, of which he is very supportive.

Lauren Moore, 5 White Birch Court, spoke about the BB gun incident and expressed her hope that it can be determined what worked, what did not, and what can be improved upon, especially in terms of communication to the students and how the incident was communicated to parents on the Shelton Public Schools website. She supports additional counseling in schools. She is in favor of redistricting, despite the possibility of her child being moved from Elizabeth Shelton, which is overcrowded.

Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Avenue, felt the most important items on the agenda are the updates on the Strategic Plan, budget and transportation. He asked for status of bus contract.

Lauren Osso, 89 Okenuck Way, expressed her disappointment that ESS will not be getting new windows this summer. She discussed her petition to get SROs in the schools and encouraged action to get more funding from the BOA. She stated security is a big issue and ESS is busting at the seams. Relative to the windows, Ed Drapp gave an overview of issues regarding timelines with the

State. He discussed an alternative plan to start the project late summer and work through the fall to get it completed.

Approval of Minutes

Kate Kutash moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 25, 2018; Special Meeting of April 30, 2018; Special Meeting of May 14, 2018; and Special Meeting of May 16, 2018; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti and passed unanimously.

Communications to the Board

Board Members received a letter of thanks from Lisa Huber, last month's Innovative Educator.

Superintendent's Commentary/Instructional Update

Strategic Plan Update – Dr. Clouet stated work is being done to present to the Board a significant update for the end of the year.

Budget Update – Superintendent Clouet said the Board of Aldermen will vote May 29 to set the mill rate and codify any allocation from the city to us and also determine how ECS funds will be expended, whether they come to us or remain on the city side. He said there are many unknowns, one of them being the transportation issue, and we are waiting to find out exactly how the Board of Aldermen decide to make an allocation to us.

Transportation Update – Dr. Clouet discussed a lengthy document he shared with the Board that included a timeline of the many meetings we've had working with the Mayor and his representatives, as well as a number of letters from our attorney and theirs. Our attorney says there has been absolutely no violation of the City Charter. Jack Bashar informed us that the buses purchased by Shelton taxpayers would not be available to transport students. We sought clarification from the bidder to make them aware to avoid any claims after the fact. Superintendent Clouet said, as far as he is concerned, we have gone out of our way. As someone who has been a teacher, high school principal, and superintendent of schools since 2001, I have never, ever seen anything like this. This is not good community service on the part of the political culture here. It is something that is broken and needs to be fixed. It does not serve the families or the children of Shelton. Dr. Clouet discussed being a presenter at a meeting today with other superintendents and said it is heartbreakingly embarrassing to have to try to explain to people when they ask what it is all about. He said he is hopeful the Board will vote tonight to move forward so we can have a reliable, credible bus service for our students starting July.

(Note: Tape 1, Side B at 8:29 p.m.)

Approved Field Trips

Board Members were apprised of approved field trip for SHS History students to travel to Austria, Germany, and Switzerland April 11-20, 2019.

Items Voted on

Kate Kutash moved to approve Bylaw #9327.1 BOE Social Media; motion seconded by Darlisa Ritter. Discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to approve continuing participation in Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification for the school year 2018-2019, subject to the exceptions and exclusions in the agreement; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Kate Kutash moved to approve the 5 year transportation contract with NELLC – Durham School Services; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti. Lengthy discussion. Darlisa Ritter was not in agreement to sign contract until BOA set the mill rate and expressed concerns about board member personal liability, as per City Charter. Mark Holden said as far as voting on a contract when next year's allocation has not been appropriated, if that were the case, we could never enter into a multi-year contract for anything because we always do multi-year contracts with unions, transportation, etc. and are always putting ourselves in that position. Dr. Clouet stated he certainly understands the apprehension about potentially being personally liable; however, once the allocation is made by the City, what he and the cabinet will bring to the board for a vote, they will reconcile whatever revenue coming in with a budget; so, they will not be expending more than is taken in. He said if it happens to include having to get buses from an outside source, the budget you will be voting for will include that. Motion passed with a roll call vote of 7-2 (Nay – Ritter, Yolish). Chairman Holden stated the Superintendent and Finance Director will be directed to prepare contract information.

Comments by the Board Chair

Chairman Holden commented about security and the use of metal detectors versus school counselors and SROs who can get to know the students, intervene and try to help them stay on the correct path. He noted tight budgets have always been a problem, at least with adding school counselors. Hopefully, something can be done on the city level to approve SROs as part of the Police Department's budget.

Reports of Standing Committees

Teaching & Learning – Anne Gaydos reviewed the topics of the May 8 meeting including a report on Revisiting Next Generation Accountability Report; Math Model Classroom Update; ESS Departmentalization; and comments by Superintendent Clouet. Minutes are posted online. Next meeting is June 12 at 4:00 p.m. with tentative agenda items of School of Innovation Update and Curriculum Status Report (Summer Revision schedule).

Finance Committee – Thomas Minotti gave an overview of the meeting of May 16 which included a comprehensive financial report by Ed Drapp; Facilities projects report by John Calhoun; Transportation update by Superintendent Clouet; Food Service Management Contract discussion in executive session. Minutes are posted online. The next meeting is May 20 at 5:00 p.m. The following motions are brought forward for a vote:

Thomas Minotti moved to accept Long Hill School, State Project 126-0086, as complete; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to accept Elizabeth Shelton School, State Project 126-0087, as complete; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to accept Mohegan School, State Project 126-0088, as complete; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to accept Shelton High School, State Project 126-0089, as complete; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to accept Sunnyside School Roof, State Project 126-0085, as complete; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to renew the Food Service Management Contract for the 2018-2019 school year; motion seconded by Kate Kutash. Discussion. David Gioiello asked for status of union negotiations with Whitson's and Ed Drapp provided an update. Motion by David Gioiello to table failed with roll call vote of 4-4-1 (Yea – Yolish, Ritter, Goncalves, Gioiello. Nay – Kutash, Gaydos, Minotti, Holden. Abstention – Kilmartin). Motion to renew the Food Service Management Contract failed with roll call vote of 4-4-1 (Yea – Kutash, Gaydos, Minotti, Holden. Nay – Ritter, Yolish, Gioiello, Goncalves. Abstention – Kilmartin).

Policy Committee – Kate Kutash stated Policy met on May 8 and worked on the Social Media Bylaw Appendix. David Gioiello questioned content of the approved bylaw and decision was made to refer it to the committee for further review. Teachers who are sponsoring the Alaska fieldtrip were in attendance to respond to questions from committee members. Minutes are posted online. The next meeting is June 12 at 5:00 p.m. to address Attendance Policy Draft and open discussion on New BOE Member Orientation.

Kate Kutash moved to accept Social Media Policy Appendix to Bylaw #9327.1 to sit for review until the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Education; motion seconded by Darlisa Ritter and passed unanimously.

Public Relations & Outreach Committee – No meeting was held.

Reports of Special Committees

CES – Thomas Minotti reported on the CES Regular Meeting held on May 3. He said Dr. Michael Regan who had resigned in April has returned to CES and will continue as Director of Special Education.

Unfinished Business

There was nothing discussed.

New Business

David Gioiello moved to direct the Superintendent to conduct a fault analysis associated with bringing of a weapon into the school and determine what worked, what failed, and bring forth recommendations as to what we might change to improve the security at the school; motion seconded by Darlisa Ritter. Motion passed unanimously.

Amanda Kilmartin moved to hire Milone & MacBroom for the redistricting process study; motion seconded by Kate Kutash. Discussion. David Gioiello encouraged members to vote no and to wait until we know where we are financially. Motion passed with roll call vote of 6-3 (Nay – Yolish, Ritter, Gioiello).

For Your Information

Chairman Holden noted the attachments in the packet including Vacancy Report, Staff and Stipend Actions, and Enrollment Report. Darlisa Ritter asked if enrollment report could include the number of graduates.

Highlights

Kate Kutash gave kudos to Dr. Clouet for decision to cancel afterschool activities the day of last week's storm. Mrs. Kutash said the SIS Concert was great. Kathy Yolish commended Mark Bilotta and Carole Sylvester for the SIS Concert. She would like Mark Bilotta and students to perform at a future CABA Conference held in November. David Gioiello said our Board has been accused of being poor negotiators and not caring about what the final contracts are. He commented that people should

understand that the raises BOE employees get are consistent with what city employees get. The big difference is with our negotiations with our employees, they are paying for part of their medical insurance, where on the city side they are not. Amanda Kilmartin commented that Dr. Clouet deserves recognition for his handling the difficult budget process with tremendous professionalism. Mark Holden mentioned the SHS Concert tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. and agreed that the SIS Concert was a great performance. He said the Board will hold a Special Meeting on June 6 at 5:30 p.m. to rebalance the budget for 2018-2019.

Adjournment

Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 9:33 p.m.

Diane Luther

Secretary to Board of Education

May 31, 2018