

**SHELTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
SHELTON HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
120 MEADOW STREET
FEBRUARY 24, 2010**

Chairman Timothy Walsh called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:22 p.m.

Roll Call: (alpha order)

Paula Ellis

John Francino-Quinn

Kate Kutash

Arlene Liscinsky, Vice Chairman

Thomas Minotti, Secretary

Win Oppel

Mike Pacowta

Timothy Walsh, Chairman

Kathleen Yolish

Full quorum of 9 present.

Board of Education Administration present:

Superintendent of Schools, Freeman Burr

Assistant Superintendent, Lorraine Rossner

Director of Finance, Allan Cameron

Director of Instruction, Patricia Curran

Director of Human Resources, Rita McDougald-Campbell

Operations Manager, William Banfe

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

The Board led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing

Eugene Kierce, 120 Thoreau Drive, addressed the Board concerning the redistricting plan, offering an alternative plan of creating two grade 5-8 middle schools.

Chris Panek, 19 Meghan Lane, discussed the revisions to the redistricting plan and possible negative impact on Elizabeth Shelton. Mr. Panek noted the new development in White Hills and potential for additional student population. He suggested not moving Mohegan students. He asked the Board to review the plan carefully and delay a vote until parents have had sufficient time to review the changes.

Public Hearing (continued)

Tammy Crews, 315 Meadowridge Road, questioned the capacity of Elizabeth Shelton and possible large class sizes. She asked the Board to review the plan to consider the impact on Elizabeth Shelton School.

Patricia Sekelsky, 66 Fort Hill Avenue, questioned class size at Elizabeth Shelton if there are teacher layoffs and noted the comparison to Long Hill class size.

Sara Burgers, 12 Laurelwood Drive, addressed keeping students at Long Hill and Mohegan rather than redistricting to Elizabeth Shelton.

Barbara Lang, 152 Village Drive questioned a rumor of closing Sunnyside School and requested the Board to be forthright and honest with the public.

No one else from the public spoke and the Public Portion was closed.

Approval of Agenda

Win Oppel moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Thomas Minotti; vote 9-0; motion passed. Paula Ellis moved to add an appointment to the agenda; seconded by Win Oppel; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Paula Ellis moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 27, 2010 and the Special Meeting of February 2, 2010. (Thomas Minotti abstained from February 2, 2010; Win Oppel abstained from both.) Motion passed.

Presentations

Freeman Burr noted the new Board requested this year's meetings be held at school sites on a rotating basis and that building principals were asked to make presentations relative to vision and mission of their schools; student achievement results; and school improvement plan progress. Shelton High School Headmaster Dr. Beth Smith with assistance from Housemasters Steven Swensen, David Presutto and John Skerritt, presented an overview of SHS Mission Statement and expectations for student learning; CAPT data and CAPT three-year trend analysis; SHS School Improvement Plan and progress on plan. A brief question and answer period was held. Dr. Smith and her leadership team were commended on their presentation.

(Note: Tape 1, Side B – 8:26 p.m.)

Presentations (continued)

Operations Manager Bill Banfe reviewed the timeline for preparation and moving associated with the opening of Perry Hill School, as outlined on a handout. He presented two plans with estimated costs for the move and recommended Plan B, using in-house movers. Discussion was held regarding funding the move and dumpsters.

Communications to the Board

A letter was received from Elizabeth Shelton PTO confirming their 501(c)3 status.

Appointments

Paula Ellis moved to reappoint the stipend position holder, Scott Smith, as head boys' varsity lacrosse coach at Shelton High School, as listed on the attachment; seconded by Kate Kutash; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Retirements

Freeman Burr recognized Janet Baldwin's professional development leadership and her contributions to Shelton Public Schools. Darlene Tickey commented on Mrs. Baldwin's attributes.

Paula Ellis moved to accept with regret the retirement of Janet Baldwin, reading consultant at Lafayette School, after 27 years of service, effective June 30, 2010, and to ask the Board Secretary to send a letter on behalf of the Board; seconded by Jay Francino-Quinn; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Instructional Update

Freeman Burr commented on the interview process for Perry Hill School, noting that 44 teachers were interviewed for 36-38 classroom positions, dependent upon the final budget. He said the plan is to finalize those positions within the next week or so and then to meet with Shelton Education Association to make decisions on remaining staff. In response to a question from Paula Ellis regarding the school structure and curriculum, he noted the middle school model will not be replicated and explained there will be dyad teams (pairs of teachers working in subject areas) versus clusters. A comprehensive presentation will be given to Board Members, possibly in April. Thomas Minotti mentioned that Pattie Curran was asked to make a future presentation to the public regarding curriculum and textbooks to be used. Freeman Burr continued that meetings will be held with Lorraine Williams and Karen Crosby to discuss support service positions, particularly Special Education teachers, school social workers, guidance, psychologists, etc. Next to be addressed will be unified arts positions of art, music and physical education, and likely clerical and support staff in April/May, once the budget is established. Further information regarding curriculum and the dyad structure was reviewed.

Instructional Update (continued)

Freeman Burr commented that training and development is ongoing under the leadership of Annine Crystal (readers/writers workshop model). Annine is working with a team of fifth and sixth grade teachers to develop a language arts curriculum, which will be aligned with state standards. The PD tracks will focus on the necessary training for teachers in the subject areas. In science, we will continue with the FOSS kit based curriculum and use support print materials. Mr. Burr continued with the goals of the Enrichment Specialist, who will be placed at Perry Hill, providing services to students identified as gifted and talented and developing enrichment units for all 5/6 students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. In addition to weekly meetings with Pattie Curran, Lorraine Williams and Karen Crosby, site visits are planned to Farmington, Ridgefield and Newtown.

Freeman Burr reported on the CAFE training recently provided to board members. In addition, he discussed the Lighthouse Project, an innovative training for board members, initiated jointly by CSDE and CAFE. It is a research-based, two-year project, provided free of charge for two years, with modules for training board members to monitor the work and initiatives focused on student achievement.

School Facilities Report

Bill Banfe directed attention to the written report provided in board packets. In response to a question from Win Oppel concerning a city-wide energy audit and its effect on Shelton Public Schools, Mr. Banfe said the Public Improvement Building Committee was charged with handling the elementary boilers and projects at Long Hill and Elizabeth Shelton. City officials asked the committee to participate in the selection of an energy audit firm. Interviews were conducted with three firms resulting in the selection of Johnson Controls for a city-wide energy audit. The company has been invited back for a detailed explanation of their proposal; the superintendent, chairman of the BOE and city officials have been invited to the meeting, as this will be a city expenditure. More than likely, the PIBC will oversee the process.

Items Voted On

Win Oppel moved to approve Plan B, as outlined and recommended by Mr. Banfe, to move the furniture, fixtures and equipment from each elementary school to Perry Hill School and from Lafayette School to the other elementary school locations in the district, subject to any necessary adjustments in funding; seconded by Kate Kutash; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Arlene Liscinsky moved to approve the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education Members' participation in the Lighthouse Research Project sponsored by the CT State Department of Education and the CT Association of Boards of Education at no cost to the Board for two years; seconded by Thomas Minotti; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Comments by the Board Chair

Timothy Walsh commended Dr. Smith and her leadership team for the tour of the high school prior to the meeting, as well as for the tremendous presentation about a very progressive Shelton High School of which all board members are proud. Mr. Walsh extended appreciation to all parents who attended the public hearings on redistricting and said the Board listened and some modifications have been made. In addition, the comments made tonight will be weighed prior to a vote being taken. Chairman Walsh addressed information presented by a former board member at a previous meeting relative to the inflated cost of renovations to Central Office.

Reports by Standing Committees

Athletics – John Niski reported on the progress of Wrestling and Girls Indoor Track. Paula Ellis noted a meeting about pay to play will be scheduled following redistricting.

Building and Grounds – Win Oppel stated the committee met and reviewed School Dude items and heard Bill Banfe's presentation on the move to Perry Hill.

Cafeteria/Transportation – Kate Kutash said a meeting was not held due to the redistricting hearings. She clarified that the redistricting motion is not coming from the Cafeteria/Transportation Committee but from the full Board. The committee will meet on March 3 at 5:15 p.m.

Curriculum/Policies/Technology – Thomas Minotti stated the committee met on February 22 and covered much of what was heard in Superintendent's report concerning the Perry Hill instructional plan. He continued that Freeman Burr shared information on Race to the Top. The committee also discussed departmentalization - Platooning Instruction. Materials are being reviewed and information will be shared with the community. Pattie Curran presented information to the committee detailing the curriculum for 5/6 and in general. The committee discussed textbook adoption and the process. Mr. Minotti said Mrs. Curran has been asked to make a presentation to the Board and the public.

Personnel Committee – Mike Pacowta said the committee did not meet; however, the Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee met in executive session earlier this week to discuss the mid-year evaluation of the superintendent. Mr. Pacowta reported there was open discussion with the superintendent following discussion by committee members only. The discussion focused on evaluations submitted by 8 of the 9 board members regarding the superintendent's performance. The Personnel Committee will meet shortly to hear the committee's findings prior to reporting to the Board.

Finance – Arlene Liscinsky stated the committee met earlier this evening. She said the next step in the budget process will be to go before the Board of Apportionment and Taxation at City Hall on March 8 at 7 p.m., at which time there will be no public portion but is normally a joint meeting with the Board of Aldermen. Board members were asked to submit comments and suggestions concerning the presentation, and the public was challenged to attend the presentation and the April meeting with the Board of Aldermen and to bring others with them in support of the budget. Further comments were made concerning the ramifications of an underfunded budget.

Reports of Special Committees

CES – Arlene Liscinsky reported the committee will meet next Thursday for a board retreat for board training.

CABE – Kathleen Yolish noted that the training provided by CABE on two Saturday mornings was worthwhile for the six attending board members. She said five board members will attend A Day On The Hill next week to meet with the General Assembly and our legislators and hopefully will be able to express views on unfunded mandates and other topics. On a separate subject, Mrs. Yolish said she initiated action toward joining a group closer to Shelton and will report on that shortly.

Redistricting Discussion

Chairman Walsh asked the Board's favor in not committing to a vote this evening, as additional information received must be reviewed. Freeman Burr made some general comments relative to the redistricting process. Kate Kutash clarified that contrary to what some may believe, the board members did not make the recent changes to the plan behind closed doors; ideas from parents were shared with the consultant, who modified the plan. Mrs. Kutash reiterated that the open space in White Hills must be considered when projecting enrollment at Elizabeth Shelton.

Adjournment

Paula Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m.; seconded by Jay Francino-Quinn; vote 9-0; motion passed.

Diane Luther

Diane Luther

Recording Secretary – Board of Education

March 3, 2010