Chairman Mark Holden called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:
Mark Holden, Chairman                                      Kate Kutash 
Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman                                Win Oppel 
Arlene Liscinsky, Secretary                                  Darlisa Ritter 
David Gioiello                                                Kathleen Yolish 
Faith Hack

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present:
Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Christopher Clouet
Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Lorraine Rossner
Finance Director, Dominic Barone (via Skype)
Human Resources Director, Carole Pannozzo

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Win Oppel moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Arlene Liscinsky. David Gioiello called for a Point of Order and deferred to Kathy Yolish to present an amendment. Kathy Yolish made a motion to add the following item to the agenda under New Business. Move to award honorary diplomas to Edmund Conklin, Kristjan Ndoj and Amber Kingersky at the Senior Awards Night at Shelton High School on June 2, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. and also give name recognition of these students at the Shelton High School Commencement Ceremony to be held on June 10, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. (or designated rain date if rescheduled); motion seconded by Darlisa Ritter. Discussion. Mrs. Yolish was asked for clarification and stated she wanted their names called in the proper place in the Graduation Ceremony and possibly place a rose on seat. Mr. Oppel noted the latter was not part of the motion presented. She also clarified that this would be in addition to doing a moment of silence for the SHS students that is already part of the plan. No further discussion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Gioiello – yea; Mrs. Hack – nay; Mr. Holden – nay; Mrs. Kutash – nay; Mrs. Liscinsky – nay; Mr. Minotti – nay; Mr. Oppel – nay; Dr. Ritter – yea; Mrs. Yolish – yea. Motion failed with 3-6 vote.
Thomas Minotti moved to approve the agenda with addendum items VIII. A 5 (Accept SCG-049F and Ineligible Cost Worksheets for the PHS Closeout) & 6 (Target Grant for PHS Gardening Project) and X. B 1 (Approve Transfer of Funds). Motion passed unanimously.

Presentations/Recognitions
Five students were recognized for their inventions presented at the Invention Convention and those present discussed their award winning inventions:

Luca Minopoli, Perry Hill School - The Back Buddy
Kyle Young, Shelton Intermediate School - Thermo-Electric Charger
Ian Pleasant, Shelton Intermediate School – Device to Redirect Cold Water
Jenna Melanson, Shelton Intermediate School – Seat Buckle Light Feature
Caitlyn McNeil, Shelton Intermediate School – The Friendly Feeder

Luca, Caitlyn and Jenna were Recognized Inventors at the Connecticut Invention Convention. Ian and Kyle received the CT Academy of Science and Engineering Award and were selected to attend the National Invention Convention in Washington, DC. Brian Young, father of Kyle, thanked the board and SIS for helping kids expand their minds and think outside the box through this program. He thanked Ken Saranich and Rob Swercewski and suggested future expansion of the program to high school.

John Niski talked about the success of the SHS Robotics Team this year, summarized the 2015-16 season and shared a video. In its 18th year, the purpose of the Robotics program is to create excitement about science and technology and give students the opportunity to work side by side with engineers from companies such as Sikorsky and OEM Controls. The team competed in five competitions in New England, qualified for the New England District Championship in Hartford, and qualified to compete in the World Championship in St. Louis with over 600 teams from 23 countries. The team held the record for highest score in the world up until the finals of the World competition. The team received the Chairman’s Award at both the District and Regional levels, which were given to the team that best exemplifies what the Robotics Program is about, and this distinction drew much attention. Appreciation was expressed for the board’s support, and the team members, mentors and volunteers were recognized.

(Chairman Holden called for a two-minute recess at approximately 7:30 p.m.)

Public Hearing
There were numerous speakers regarding the issue of awarding a posthumous honorary diploma to the parents of deceased student Edmund Conklin at the Shelton High School Graduation Ceremony. Many of the speakers were emotional, angry and rude with their comments, acting in a disruptive manner, shouting out while others spoke and screaming at the board.

Barbara and Ed Conklin, 60 Gray Street, Shelton, each spoke about their son’s life and criticized the board’s handling of their request to receive his honorary diploma during the graduation ceremony.
Bethany Stockmal, 2 Snowberry Lane, Shelton, asked the board to reconsider decision and announce his name and present parents with his honorary diploma at graduation.

Justine Giglio, 230 Lenore Street, Shelton, stated parents should have a say in what is best for their children. Said Dr. Smith and the BOE have put more of a spin over the last several years of social drama. She encouraged the board to allow the family’s request to hear name announced and receive honorary diploma at graduation and not at awards ceremony.

Sharyn Sully, 15 Wilson Lane, Shelton, spoke about loss, grief, healing and the need for closure.

Jennifer Carey, 11 Woonsocket Ave, Shelton, asked the board to announce his name and allow the parents to receive honorary diploma at graduation ceremony. Blamed board chair for turning their request into a three-ring circus with social media posts.

Pat Conklin-Santone, 17 High Acre, asked the board to allow graduating students to vote as a means of influencing the board’s decision.

Linda Sicinski, 47 Pawtucket Ave, Shelton, appealed to the board to reconsider and honor a student who made a mistake, noting a lot of kids in his class made mistakes and are still walking. She suggested more education and programs for students. Board needs to be more empathetic and do the right thing.

Joseph Tallo, 31 Timberland Drive, Shelton, discussed the board’s handling of an incident involving his son, stated the board is not helping the Conklin family and encouraged audience to vote board members out.

Ashley Conklin, 60 Gray Street, Shelton, talked about her brother and her parents’ request. She stated an honorary diploma is not the same as a diploma and asked that his name be called at graduation to give closure to the family.

Pat Carey, 6 Blueberry Lane, Shelton accused board chairman for posting misleading statements on Facebook creating an enraged community. He asked the board to reconsider its decision.

John (last name illegible), 463 Ironwood Trail, Shelton, said there is no reason why parents cannot receive diploma. Said board should do the right thing. It’s the best thing the board could do to make the community whole.

Neil Hesling, 90 Poplar Drive, Shelton, lost his son at Sandy Hook Elementary School and understands the family’s need for closure. He asked the board to remember and honor Ed by doing what the family, classmates and community want.

Stephanie Thompson, (no address given), state it’s not hard to do right thing; make the right decision and recognize both Kristjan and Ed.
John Anglace, 676 Long Hill Avenue, stated this is a solemn moment because members of our school community were lost prematurely. It is a time for families and institutions of which they were part to come together to lessen the grief for family and collectively assist in their needs. Mr. Anglace relayed the words of Mayor Lauretti that this is not the first time we have lost classmates, and over the past 24 years we have many times recognized their loss in a dignified manner by presenting the family an honorary diploma at the end of graduation process. He asked the administration and Board of Education to grant the common sense request of family members and classmates by giving the parents their son’s diploma at graduation.

Karen Palange, 1153 Monroe Turnpike, Monroe, as an outside observer asked the board to reconsider, look into their hearts; read name at graduation.

Kyra Palange, Monroe, asked why this is an issue and mentioned Milford’s handling of diploma for Mara Sanchez. She questioned the character of people in Shelton who are running this town.

Rachel Clancey, 70 Congress Ave, Shelton, whose mother was an educator and administrator, said she is no longer proud to be a part of this community. She was critical of comments on social media. She stated a vote should not be needed…it should be unanimous.

Connie Stockmal, 2 Snowberry Lane, Shelton, a student, does not understand why Shelton is setting a negative precedence while other high schools and colleges don’t have an issue. Said she has been stressed over this for the past month. She mentioned that most students support the idea of awarding the diploma, but there are a few who disagree because they don’t want the focus of graduation to be about this and said they are being selfish. She said the board is breeding this culture.

Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Ave, Shelton, stated the board has heard from students and parents, but the Shelton senior citizens are not here tonight and suggested board members should go to the Senior Center to hear what is being said. (Note: Tape Side B at 8:32 p.m.) He supports the idea of having the Officers of the Class of 2016 vote to resolve the issue.

Jose Goncalves, 556 Long Hill Avenue, Shelton, said Shelton is a beautiful community and the board has given it a bad name. He said that can be changed by honoring Eddie Conklin by giving the family an honorary degree.

Brian Belade (no address given), fourth generation Shelton resident, reflected on loss of students over the years and stated it’s going to happen again. How will it be handled in the future? He said the board needs to look at their requirements for graduation.

Tom Meyer (last name illegible, no address given) talked about leadership noting that great leaders listen and rally people. Decisions can be changed. Said this is a leadership opportunity to get the town to rally. He suggested getting a vote from every high school student.
Approval of Minutes
Kate Kutash moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 27, 2016; Regular Meeting of April 27, 2016; Special Meeting of May 4, 2016; Special Meeting of May 10, 2016. Motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

(Chairman Holden called for a two-minute recess at 8:45 p.m.)

Communications to the Board
Chairman Holden said a letter was received from the Registrars of Voters thanking the Shelton Public Schools, Dr. Clouet, and Security Supervisor Ben Trabka for their cooperation and assisting with requirements for a very smooth Primary Day.

Superintendent’s Reports & Action Items
Superintendent Clouet stated we have taken very seriously the national concern of lead in water and asked Maintenance Supervisor John Calhoun to give an overview. Mr. Calhoun stated an initial meeting was held with representatives from Aquarian Water Company and Naugatuck Valley Health to discuss the process for evaluating the water quality in our schools. A plan was developed to test water coming from Aquarion Water and entering our buildings. Drinking fountains and water coolers throughout the district were checked against an EPA list of suspect units and none are on the list. Tests of kitchen and drinking fountain water quality conducted in all schools were submitted; a full report is expected no later than June 17.

Dr. Clouet reported the interview process of several internal candidates for Booth Hill School principal position began today, and he intends to make a recommendation to the board tomorrow for consideration of a principal for next year.

As a result of working with the mayor, the aldermen, our technology staff, principals and teachers, a plan has been developed to get interactive projectors (formerly known as Promethean boards) for all gr. 2 and 3 classrooms. Students will experience having smart boards or interactive boards from kindergarten through the end of elementary school.

Connecticut Next Generation of Accountability Standards - Superintendent Clouet said there will be a full and detailed presentation to the board at the end of June or over the summer of a new way of rating schools that moves beyond just assessments and, in addition to academic growth, looks at a total of 12 indicators. He stated it is an interesting and expanded way of measuring school quality.

Governor’s Summer Reading Awards – Dr. Clouet commended Vicky White, Supervisor of Literacy, for a fantastic job working with principals, teachers, students and their families. Shelton Intermediate School is one of seven middle schools in the state and Shelton High School is one of three high schools in the state to be recognized for excellent reading progress.

Superintendent Clouet said notification was received that two of our high school students will represent Connecticut in the prestigious Water Science Competition. Lauren Pawlowski and
Courtney Litts have been named State Winners of the 2016 Stockholm Junior Water Prize, which says a lot about the work of our students and teachers.

**Approved Field Trip**
There were none.

**Items Voted on**
Kate Kutash moved to approve the revisions to Policy Series 3000 that have sat for review; motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

Faith Hack moved to approve continuing participation in Connecticut’s Healthy Food Certification for the school year 2016-2017, subject to the exceptions and exclusions in the agreement; motion seconded by Kathy Yolish and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to approve the revisions to Policy Series 4000 to sit for review until the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Education; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

Win Oppel moved to approve the revisions to Bylaw #9110, Number of Members, Terms of Office, Oath of Office, to sit for review until the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Education; seconded by Thomas Minotti. Discussion. It was clarified that this motion is to allow review and topic can be brought up for future discussion. Arlene Liscinsky asked that any questions be emailed to her. Motion passed unanimously.

Win Oppel moved to accept the SCG-049F (formerly ED-049F) and Ineligible Cost Worksheets for the Perry Hill School Closeout for purpose of discussion; seconded by Kate Kutash. Discussion. Dr. Clouet said the board previously voted to accept the project and this is to file paperwork to the State, which will allow the City to recoup significant amounts of reimbursement. He clarified that ineligible costs will come out of the original project costs. Motion passed unanimously.

Faith Hack moved to accept on behalf of Perry Hill School a grant of $1,000 from Target to be used for the PHS gardening project; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti and passed unanimously.

**Comments by the Board Chair**
Chairman Holden stated the opioid seminar held last month was well attended and was a serious conversation about a real problem facing our residents and students, but more needs to be done. He discussed a number of recent accidents in Shelton that occurred since our last meeting that were fatal or resulted in life-threatening injuries. He said while we don’t think any of the drivers were our students, the way to solve long-term problems is to start by educating youth. We need parents’ help by setting good examples and holding their kids accountable for responsible behavior.

Mr. Holden discussed the Robotics State Championship that conflicted with Shelton’s Prom, resulting in Robotics Team 230 rookies driving the robot with only a day or two to practice.
He said they made it all the way to the championship matches. He suggested students working with mentors might be applied to our music program as a way of promoting interest in music.

Chairman Holden discussed Tuesday’s CT Post article on high school graduation rates showing Shelton tied with Fairfield and a larger percentage of our students earned a high school diploma than Ansonia, Derby, Milford, Oxford, Seymour and Stratford.

He said the budget the Aldermen approved last week was less than we asked for; but, thanks to lower than expected medical claims this year, we’ll be able to pre-buy enough items for next year to accomplish the goals that we set in our budget process. He stated we will still be one of the lowest cost districts in the state but we’ll be able to improve our program and he expects our student achievement will reflect this. We do outperform most of the 94% of school districts in CT who spend more than we do on a per student basis.

Mr. Holden stated that posthumous honorary diplomas are new to us. We agreed putting them at the Senior Awards night is a dignified opportunity to honor fallen students. This will be our policy for the future. The Conklin family was notified of our proposal before they went to the media. He said the Conklin and Ndoj families have endured tragedies he cannot begin to imagine. He referred to the vitriol on social media and on the radio and said people have defamed the character of the board and made scurrilous attacks against him.

Those remaining in the room shouted him down and continued to yell at the board calling them disgraceful and shameful. Most of the public departed.

Reports of Standing Committees

Teaching & Learning – Thomas Minotti discussed the only agenda item of the meeting of May 10, which was a presentation by Kathy Riddle on course selection process and protocols at Shelton High School. Due to lack of time, the committee tabled Leadership Academy information until next meeting. A topic to be revisited in future meetings, which comes from the last NEASC report to enhance the offerings in the Arts, is the possibility for all students to take an instrumental course. Minutes are posted online.

Finance Committee – Win Oppel said the committee met on May 18. Caris Health presented information about a process of looking to reduce healthcare costs in our covered groups. There will be a separate meeting just for discussion, and Caris will be invited back for another presentation.

Win Oppel moved to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to transfer funds as follows:

- Increase account 5423 Service Contracts, by $200,000
- Increase account 5690 Replacement Equipment, by $4,126
- Increase account 5731 Equipment, by $240,000
- Decrease account 5210 Medical Insurance, by $444,126

Motion seconded by Faith Hack and passed unanimously.
Policy Committee - Kate Kutash reviewed the topics of the meeting of May 10 including Series 3000, 4000 and revisions to Bylaw 9110. Tabled for the June meeting is building use discussion and transportation of students to school sponsored events by parents. Next meeting is June 14.

Ad Hoc Policy Committee - Arlene Liscinsky had nothing further to report.

Reports of Special Committees
CES - Arlene Liscinsky said last month’s agenda included Evaluation of Executive Director and Approval of Budget $47,593,365 (2.02% decrease). Unless anything happens in the last legislative session, there will be no tuition increase to the district for the 7th year. Next week’s meeting will feature a lobbyist for our local RESC to give an update on laws that were past recently.

CABE – Faith Hack said upcoming events will be a Collective Bargaining Workshop on June 7 in Middletown and a Summer Leadership Conference on July in Old Saybrook.

Unfinished Business
A topic was brought up but was ruled out of order.

New Business
There was nothing to discuss.

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

Highlights
Kathy Yolish said there are great things happening in Shelton Public Schools and discussed The Little Mermaid performance; Work Experience Program Recognition Breakfast; PHS Cornerstone Projects. She gave kudos to Deb Keller for Concert Band, Chorus and Choir performances and mentioned LHS Red Nose Day is tomorrow. Faith Hack talked about the Book Awards Ceremony. Thomas Minotti also attended The Little Mermaid performance and said Katherine Arena of SHS was crowned Princess for the Barnum Festival. Mark Holden talked about setting up a telescope at LHS on May 9 where about 400 kids had a chance to observe the Mercury transit of the sun. He thanked the board for participating in the Lighthouse Workshop on May 17. He mentioned the Book Awards Ceremony, Mini-Grants Awards on May 19, and Research Symposium at SHS. A summer retreat for the board will be held to review SBAC test results from the State.

Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 9:31 p.m.

Diane Luther
Diane Luther
Secretary to Board of Education
June 8, 2016