

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SHELTON, CONNECTICUT
Regular Meeting - January 27, 2010
BOE Administrative Offices
382 LONG HILL AVENUE

Chairman Timothy Walsh called the regular meeting of the Shelton Board of Education to order at 7:15 PM.

Roll Call:

Present: Paula Ellis, John-Jay Francino-Quinn, Kate Kutash, Arlene Liscinsky, Thomas Minotti, Michael Pacowta, Timothy Walsh, Kathy Yolish. Absent: Win Oppel. Quorum 8 present - 1 absent.

Also present: Superintendent Burr, Assistant Superintendent Rossner, Finance Director Cameron, Special Education Director Dr. Parchin, and Operations Manager William Banfe

Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman offered an opportunity for the public to speak.

Eugene Kierce of 120 Thoreau Drive addressed the Board with his concerns regarding the cost and effectiveness of school maintenance. He addressed the lack of maintenance repairs to outer doors at Shelton Intermediate School and Shelton High School, his request for copies of maintenance open work orders, use of the School Dude work order system, and the Ripton School renovations, now the home of the Board of Education.

James Oraziotti of 81 William Street and Francis MacIlvain of 22 Sharon Court addressed the Board citing their statement was also endorsed by other former Board members Bernie Simons and Eugene Kierce. They expressed concern with the anticipated budget cuts and know that the disbanding of athletic program(s) is always a possibility. They wished to bring forward other recommendations previously discussed by the athletic committees to cut costs which included student activity fees, joining a new league to reduce transportation costs, sponsorship, and ticket pricing.

No other members of the audience wished to address the Board this evening.

John-Jay Francino-Quinn made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Michael Pacowta, (Board member Arlene Liscinsky wished to add new business to the agenda), **Michael Pacowta made a motion to amend the motion approve the**

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agenda and to include new business of possible CIAC Action/Informal Report, potential vacancies, potential early retirement program, seconded by Arlene Liscinsky, vote 8-0, motion carried.

Arlene Liscinsky made a motion to go into executive session to discuss possible CIAC Action/Informal Report, potential vacancies, and potential early retirement program, seconded by Tom Minotti, vote 8-0, motion carried.

The Board entered into executive session at 7:25 PM.

Michael Pacowta made a motion to come out of executive session and resume the regular meeting, seconded by Paula Ellis, vote 8-0, motion carried.

The regular meeting resumed at 7:58 PM. The Chairman stated no decisions were made during executive session.

Paula Ellis made a motion to approve the minutes of the following meetings:

Special Meeting of December 8, 2009

Regular Meeting of December 16, 2009

Special Meeting of December 21, 2009

seconded by Tom Minotti, vote 8-0, motion carried.

Communications to the Board:

Superintendent Freeman Burr said he had one communication regarding a Safe Route to School infrastructure program regarding a grant application filed by the city and the DOT regarding Sunnyside School. He asked Assistant Superintendent Lorraine Rossner to update the Board. Ms. Rossner said the Board of Education had been contacted during the summer of 2009 by the Department of Transportation and asked if there were any shovel ready projects with respect to stimulus money used to create safer pathways to school. She continued that Sunnyside School has an unusual position on RT 110 with respect to the exit and egress of buses and walkers. The Board felt this would be an opportunity to apply for such funds. If this project were to be completed, it would create a truly neighborhood school where students could walk to school. The Board should hear within the next three months if the project has been approved.

The Superintendent continued with informational items as follows:

Retirements:

Patricia Mather, Special Education teacher at Shelton High school effective January 22, 2010, after more than 16 years of service

Carol Ford, Technology Center secretary, effective June 30, 2010, after 15 years of service.

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Resignations:

Patricia Grace-Farfaglia, first year Family and Consumer Science teacher at Shelton High School, effective February 12, 2010.

Superintendents Reports & Action Items

Superintendent Freeman Burr gave the Board members an instructional update on the Perry Hill School. A curriculum development for Perry Hill 5-6 is being done under the director of Language Arts Supervisor Annine Crystal. She has selected five teachers to be involved in the curriculum project. Their focus is language arts curriculum, developing a standards base language arts curriculum to be implemented in Perry Hill next year. There will be ongoing training in curriculum development with respect to Perry Hill in language arts, focusing on development in the 5-6 and then articulate the language arts standards in 7-8 and on to 9-12. Applications have been submitted for teaching positions at Perry Hill. The interviews for staffing have been set by Lorraine Rossner and Rita McDougald-Campbell. Interviews will begin on Monday, February 1 at Elizabeth Shelton School, Wednesday, February 3 will be at Long Hill School, the following Monday at Mohegan, Tuesday at Booth Hill School, Thursday at Sunnyside, and Friday at Lafayette. These interviews are for the 5-6 classroom teacher positions. Special Ed Support Services, Unified Arts, and ancillary positions will be considered at a later date. Communication has taken place with the schools, schedules distributed, and candidates notified. Teachers should be notified by the end of the week following the February recess if they have been selected.

Race to the Top: Superintendent Burr reported that they have joined with several districts in the state, and that he is please to have a Memorandum of Understanding with the SEA. Areas addressed will be standards and assessment, data systems to support curriculum, focusing on development of effective teachers and leaders. There is also a turnaround component that will not be entered into due to the closing of Lafayette, redistricting, and redistribution; we will not have a school as a school in need of improvement. SIS met all the AYP benchmarks. It is also possible to change the commitment and not participate or change areas of participation. It should bring approximately \$122,000 to the district. No staff positions will be funded with this money. Oversight of this funding will be handled through the reorganization of Central Office and will be part of the responsibility of a member of the leadership team. The funds will be distributed over Grades 6-10, focusing on professional development, curriculum development and equitably distributed among Perry Hill, SIS, and SHS.

CMT Update: Materials expected in the next two weeks. Testing will begin March 2nd and testing will be completed in Grades 3 – 8 on March 16th. Make up testing will be done on March 17th through 19th at each school. Tests must be shipped by March 25th.

Redistricting Reminder: Tomorrow evening, January 28th at Shelton Intermediate School will be the first presentation to the Board with no public portion.

Approved Field Trips:

SHS Wrestling Tournament, Vermont: The Shelton High School Wrestling Team placed 3rd in the tournament, and they continue to rank in the top 10 in the state.

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SHS students will attend a Congress simulation, in Washington, DC on February 5-7.

School Facilities Report: Bill Banfe

Elementary boilers have still not been accepted due to one problem with one boiler.

The Public Improvement Building committee has been charged with interviewing and selecting an audit firm to do an energy audit on all city buildings. Interviews have been conducted, and perhaps selection will take place this Monday.

It will be necessary to develop a Mercury Spill Response Plan system wide. They are in the process of doing so.

Elizabeth Shelton School currently has a temporary above ground oil tank because the in-ground tank took on a significant amount of water. It seems that he intends to recommend to the Superintendent that a permanent above ground tank be installed. The old tank and contaminated soil around it will need to be removed. Bill Banfe said that they will need to investigate the reason for this situation.

Mr. Banfe reported that all of the schools are using "green" supplies except for Shelton High School which is finishing up old stock. However, by May or June all schools will be all green. By 2011, all schools must be compliant with green and clean initiative.

Bill Banfe reported that the stairs for Shelton High rooftop access have gone out to bid. He added that the boiler room upgrade is also ready to go out to bid, and that the exterior doors are almost completed. Chairman Walsh wanted to confirm that the doors were locking and the building was secure. Mr. Banfe confirmed that is correct.

Perry Hill School moving plan will begin with the Building and Grounds meeting on February 8th. The move will be complex in that not only must the 5-6 grades be moved to Perry Hill location but also the K – 4 must be moved out of Lafayette. During the months of March and April a detailed plan will be provided. Mr. Banfe also reported that the building itself is probably 80% complete.

Board member Tom Minotti asked if Bill Banfe could provide his reports to the Board in written communication. He finds his reporting valuable and feels a written report would be helpful to Board members for follow up and support.

Paula Ellis made a motion to approve the request of Shelton High School Girls' Basketball team to conduct fundraising activities through the end of this school year, seconded by Kate Kutash, vote 8-0, motion carried.

Board member Tom Minotti noted that the document sent to the Board for approval stated the banquet will be held in March 2009. He wanted to make the public and the Board aware that the banquet will be held in March 2010.

Comments by the Board Chair: Timothy Walsh

Mr. Walsh commended Superintendent Burr for his efforts of late with a variety of activities including meeting with Valley Foundation representatives. Superintendent Burr added that they are trying to develop seed money in a Shelton Education Fund with a target of \$10,000 (August 2010) to fund a variety of projects including research

and development projects and recognition activities. The Board would need to approve the fund administered under the Valley Foundation. The Board of Education would put forth initiatives we would like to fund and the advisory committee would review proposals and determine which initiatives to fund. Carla Sullivan spoke about the foundation role in the fund which would be to house the money (\$10,000) in perpetuity which would be the base of fund, the fund would grow, and interest earned would be dispersed on an annual basis. This would be a donor advised fund foundation comprised of different facets of the community and those people would drive the fund. Having money in a community foundation is advantageous since there is no worry for separate tax filings because all is done by foundation. Chairman Walsh agreed it is a good idea – outside of budget and not subject to any manipulation, earns greater interest (spending formula is 5.7% and investment of funds is 23%).

Mr. Walsh encouraged everyone to attend the redistricting meetings that will be taking place. Superintendent Burr added that there will be an email access for the public to express their comments, concerns, and to ask questions. The Board of Education is expected to formulate a “most frequently asked questions” page for the public to access based on the questions received through the email link.

Reports by Standing Committees:

Athletics: Paula Ellis reported that the wrestling team is in the top 10 in the state. She also added that student Jen Spicer has been selected to the All New England Team and John Niski added that she has also signed a national letter of intent to play Division I soccer. Ms. Ellis added that she realizes there is concern about the budget and that the mitigation for this year has been completed and no programs will be cut for the spring. They will meet soon to look at the athletic budget to determine cost saving measures. Nothing is set, and she added that all information must be gathered and reviewed. She is hopeful to have a special meeting or workshop for Board members, Dr. Smith, Mr. Niski and coaches to review research on pay for play.

Building and Grounds: Kate Kutash reported that she attended this meeting and a review of School Dude reports took place. John Jay Francino-Quinn added that the old Long Hill School playground is gone. The removal of the current Ripton playground from its present location to Long Hill School playground area is on hold because of the winter. However, he is expecting a group to get together to make the move. He also stated that the Mayor has offered “in kind” services that the city can provide to make this happen. Tim Walsh added that the playground is not being used to capacity. There will be more excavation at Long Hill School play area and the PTA/PTO at Long Hill School will help reinstall.

Cafeteria/Transportation: Kate Kutash reported that they met January 6th and that the first Wednesday of each month will be the meeting night except for February when they will wait until after February 11th. Mrs. Dempsey reported to the committee that the bus lot on Riverdale Avenue is complete and the road is repaved. Mrs. Stanisci reported on the successful breakfast program at SIS and that a breakfast program will be started at the high school on Monday at 7:15. It was stated that some parents of children owe large amounts of money through the POS system. Research is continuing to find a “safe and secure” method to alleviate this problem.

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Curriculum/Policies/Technology: Tom Minotti said he and Kate Kutash have decided to maintain the meetings as is. Policies recommended last meeting have been approved. He mentioned the high school grouping policy presented by Dr. Smith at last meeting is being reviewed. There will be a reduction of one grouping strata at the beginning of the next academic school year which will result in the reduction of one tracking group at Shelton High School. Minutes are posted on the website. Also, they were approached regarding the positive energy fundraising, and this will not be supported by the BOE. Mr. Minotti discussed the spreadsheet Dr. Smith brought forward outlining area high school credits needed for graduation – also presented was a SHS current credits needed for graduation spreadsheet and outlines a proposal for credit increases for some departments. Grade to grade promotion requirements from Freshman to Senior years. Dr. Smith added that she feels they are aligning themselves to schools in our DRG and league, as well as state mandated high school graduation requirements, however, without adequate funding some of the requirements may not be met. Next meeting will be February 22, 2010 at 4 PM.

Personnel: Michael Pacowta reported that the personnel committee met to discuss Perry Hill School staffing and the substitute teacher program (daily, long term, pay scales) to be reviewed by the leadership team. There was also discussion of the budget mitigation process and the impact on personnel and potential impact on personnel. Chairman Walsh said he was appointing an Ad Hoc committee for the Superintendent's evaluation – Mr. Pacowta will be the Chairman.

Finance: Arlene Liscinsky reported that the committee met and Mr. Cameron gave a report on the L2. Tim Walsh congratulated Arlene Liscinsky on her election to President of CES which represents the lower Fairfield county region, and he feels this is quite outstanding.

Mr. Walsh has recently asked Kathy Yolish to take over the CABE report.

March 3, 2010 – Program for Board Members at the Hill in Hartford to meet with legislators.

Paula Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by John Jay Francino-Quinn, vote 8-0, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Lilling – Substitute Recording Secretary (for Diane Luther)

January 28, 2010