

Board of Education Minutes
April 26, 2017

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Band Room. Present were Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Mr. McCord, and Mr. Mendolia. Also present were Mr. Nero, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. St. Germain, and Mr. Chaney. Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – Heidi Mehrnger-Macina, reading specialist at the elementary school and citizen, spoke and explained what a reading specialist does at the elementary school. She elaborated. Mr. Joe Gross, citizen, commended the entire education community, especially the teachers. He spoke of the budget presentation made to the Board of Finance. He commented on how helpful the Superintendent of Schools has been. He spoke of the presentation made at the selectmen’s meeting last evening. He spoke of the high caliber of the architect. He said he will speak again at the end of the meeting. He had further comment. Deanna Scanapieco, math specialist at the elementary school, spoke regarding the elimination of the reading specialist position, the math specialist position, and the other elementary positions. She explained what the math specialist does at the elementary school. She elaborated. Mr. Nero had comment. Mrs. Ostrout, middle school math teacher, spoke of the math specialist position at the middle/high school. She elaborated. Board members had comment. Mr. Nero had further comment. Mrs. Wilkison thanked Mrs. Mehringer-Macina and Mrs. Scanapieco for coming this evening. Mr. Gross had further comment. There was further comment from Mr. Nero and Board members. Chairman Carlson had comment.
4. Presentations – None.
5. Community Relations – Mr. Nero said he was not able to attend the last NSEF meeting.
6. Administrators’ Reports – Mrs. St. Germain thanked the Board for their comments on the staff. She spoke of Cameron Walley and Peter Kelmelis being recognized at the Connecticut Association of Schools High School Fine Arts Awards Banquet, May 15th will be the community forum at Wheeler and she explained what it is and the following day will be a student panel with the same topics; they are trying to garner sponsors. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Chaney had comment on the committee. He said they administered the yearly climate survey to parents, staff, and students. He explained. Mrs. St. Germain had comment. Mr. Chaney said they administered the SAT to juniors, as well as the CAPT and other testing since the last meeting. The 8th and 11th graders have been chosen to participate in a pilot of the new science tests and he elaborated. They are gearing up for SBAC. The PTO has organized breakfast for the students. Mr. Chaney said they will be meeting with the middle school students to go over how important it is for them to do their best on the tests and take them seriously.

Mrs. St. Germain thanked Mr. Pont for getting the curriculum on the web site. She elaborated. As each discipline finishes, they will be posted as well. They are celebrating the paraprofessionals and per diem substitutes on Friday. Next Tuesday is Teacher Appreciation Day. Mrs. Wilkison spoke of the Invention Convention and 7 students went to the State competition. Five students were chosen to go the State finals. Mrs. Wilkison said Jimmy Fallon's people contacted them about doing videos on the inventions. She elaborated. She said yesterday was the K-2 spring concert. She thanked Mr. Noonan and the teachers. SBAC testing started this week. She had further testing comments. The art show is May 11th from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. She thanked the Board for all their support.

On a motion by Mr. Mendolia, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to move item 14, Proposed for Executive Session to Item 7.

7. Proposed for Executive Session - a. Contract Negotiations – On a motion by Mr. Mendolia, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:43 p.m. for the Purpose of Contract Negotiations.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:07 p.m.

8. Administrative – a. Minutes – April 5, 2017 – On a motion by Mrs. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted four in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the April 5, 2017, meeting. Mr. Karpinski abstained.

b. Correspondence – None.

c. Personnel – Mr. Nero said Karen Gallo will be retiring after 38 years in the district. Mrs. Starr is retiring and Mrs. Lincoln-Fortier is moving over to the high school. Mrs. Wilkison is bringing forward a candidate on Friday. The speech-language candidate is coming tomorrow to meet with Mr. Nero. Board members had comment.

9. Reports – a. Superintendent – None.

b. BOE Chairperson – Mr. Carlson had comment. HE spoke of the Tri-Board meeting tomorrow. Mr. Nero thanked Mrs. Ostrout. He spoke of the CAFE policy audit. There was comment.

c. Committee Chairperson – Mrs. Wagner said they met on Saturday and reviewed policies. She gave a rundown of the policies reviewed and commented on changes that were made. There was comment. She said they were pretty much straight forward.

d. LEARN Board of Directors' Liaison – None.

e. PSPBC Liaison – None.

f. Building Committee – Mr. Carlson had comment on getting a construction manager that will take on the risk of the project and he elaborated. He had further comment.

10. Finance – a. March 2017 Financial Statements – Mrs. Wagner made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia to approve the financial statements for the period ending March 31, 2017. Questions were asked the Mrs. Allen answered. There were further questions and comments. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Transfer Requests - There were questions asked and answered. On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously to approve the transfers as requested in a memo dated February 8, 2017.

11. Old Business – a. 2017-2018 Proposed Education Budget – Mr. Nero said there was nothing new to report.

12. New Business – a. Elimination of Teaching Positions – Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia to eliminate one elementary school math support position, two elementary school reading specialist position, one high school/middle school math support position, and one high school/middle school reading support position at the end of the current school year. Mr. Nero had explanation. It was commented that the Board of Education is not happy to be doing this but it is necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers – Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia, that the contract of Claire Benedict, Brittney Hattoy, Kim McKay, Kellie Edwards, and Rebecca Stegeman not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action. Mr. Nero said if money is funded, everything goes back to what it was. He had further explanation. Mr. Karpinski had comment. There was comment by Board members stating they are unhappy about doing this. The motion passed with four voting in favor and one abstention. Mr. Karpinski abstained.

c. Non-Renewal of One-Year Teaching Position for a Staff Member on Leave – Mr. Nero explained this was a formality. Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia that the contract of Jessica Biekert not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person in writing of this action. Questions were asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Calendar – a. Future Meeting Dates – The Tri-Board meeting is tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. and the next Board of Education meeting is May 10th.

b. Committee Action List – None.

14. Public Comment – Pat Ostrout, middle school math teacher, spoke of a middle school dance they had that Mr. Mendolia’s son was involved in. The Class of 2018 volunteered their time and ran the dance and did everything involved. She said it was a nice evening and she wanted to give a shout-out to the class. She said grade seven went to Battleship Cove yesterday and talked about the field trip.

On a motion by Mrs. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education