

Board of Education Minutes
August 16, 2017
Special Meeting

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A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, August 16, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the North Stonington Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room. Present were Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Mathwich, Mr. Karpinski, and Mr. McCord. Also present for the Board of Education were Mr. Nero, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. St. Germain, and Mr. Chaney. Also in attendance was Mr. Murphy, First Selectman, and Mr. Duigou and Mr. Roychowdhury from Eagle Environmental. Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – Mr. Carlson had introductory remarks. He commented on the small amount of people in attendance and said he believed it was because the letter that went home to parents and the article in *The Day* may have helped to alleviate fears concerning this matter.

4. Environmental Concerns – Mr. Nero had comment and gave some background information. Mr. Jeff Duigou introduced himself and gave his background. Ashis Roychowdhury introduced himself and gave his background. Mr. Nero had further comment. He gave history of his first meeting with Eagle Environmental with the issue of the middle school windows. He was told at that point we were in total compliance. Mr. Nero spoke of PCB's and what they are. He spoke of the testing that was done and how low the levels were at the middle school. He gave statistics of the number of schools in the state that have PCB's present. Mr. Nero commented that he spoke of environmental issues frequently during the whole process leading up to the numerous referenda on the building project including the two negative votes. He elaborated. Mr. Nero said in 2014, the town decided to develop a Tri-Board consisting of the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education and he elaborated. He said in 2015, there was a meeting held that Mr. Roychowdhury attended at which he said that we were in complete compliance but that could change at any time with the regulations. Mr. Nero gave an analogy. Around the time of that meeting, the EPA called him and they questioned him about the middle school and the PCB's there. He had further comment. He had further comment on his discussions with the EPA. He continued with the history. He said today, the state approved both of the plans for the school projects. He had further comment. Mr. Nero said we are going to propose some things to the EPA in hopes they agree with it. One of the things discussed was what do we do in the interim. Mr. Nero explained they are concerned with four feet out from the building in certain areas and 16 inches down. He elaborated. Mr. Nero reviewed some of the fixes that could be done. We decided on the fencing option and he explained. He reiterated that we are no different than 66% of the other schools in Connecticut. He had further comment. He said we will continue to do testing and continue to keep people informed. He said the hope is that we get a state budget and can start on the project. Mr. Nero said as soon as the projects are completed, at the end of the day, when we get a certificate of occupancy, we will be free of

any environmental issues we have had. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Nero answered a question as to whether the fencing was a fire hazard. Mr. Nero said they have not heard from the fire marshal yet but if an egress is required, they will be put in. Mr. Nero spoke of the daily inspections of the fence. Mr. Urgo said he has heard concern from people about the school garden. Mr. Nero said it is safe and explained. Mrs. Wilkison had a question as to the PCB level at the middle school where the elementary students will be going. Mr. Nero said they are minimal and they are doing more testing. He had further comment. Further questions were asked and answered. A question was asked about the ongoing testing and Mr. Roychowdhury said it was completed. Recommendations will be made by this Friday to the EPA. He said EPA wants some type of plan and he explained. He said most of the results are in but they are just waiting for a few more results. There was further discussion. He reviewed the numbers that have been spent recently on testing. He elaborated. Mr. Nero said we want to keep our kids and our staff safe. He elaborated. He said Eagle Environmental has been our contractor on environmental issues and won the bid for the project. They were with them in Hartford at the meeting with DAS. The state and DEEP were fine with our plan. Mr. Nero said about a week later, Mr. Duigou contacted him and said he was contacted by the EPA in Boston. Mr. Murphy said if any further questions come up the best source of information is the Superintendent. He elaborated. He said people tend to not know the true story and had further comment on that. Mr. Roychowdhury said he has known these schools since the early 90's. He said he has found this school system to be very proactive and not trying to hide anything. He reiterated that we are trying to keep and students and staff safe. Mr. Nero had further comment.

5. Public Comment on Agenda Items – None.

On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education