

Board of Education Minutes
February 24, 2016

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Band Room. Present were Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Mathwich, Mr. Karpinski, Dr. Robert, Mr. McCord, Mrs. Buzzee, and Mr. Mendolia (7:16 p.m.). Also present were Mr. Nero, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. St. Germain, and Mr. Chaney. Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Evan Burns.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Community Relations – Mr. Nero said the NSEF Trivia Night has been moved to Saturday, March 5th. In terms of community relations, he and Mr. Shawn Murphy spoke at the “State of the Stoningtons.” He had comment.
5. Presentations – a. History Club Proposed Trip – Mr. Marc Tardif, teacher, and Evan Burns and Sully Mrowka, students, presented a proposed trip to Philadelphia in 2017. Mr. Tardiff explained they have taken a number of small trips and the students highlighted previous trips. Mr. Tardiff reviewed a tentative itinerary. He reviewed the dates and explained the students would only miss one day of school due to a professional development day. Mr. Nero asked the students questions about their past trips. On a motion by Dr. Robert, seconded by MRs. Wagner, the Board voted unanimously to approve the trip and allow them to continue planning.
6. Administrators’ Reports – None.
7. Administrative – a. Minutes – January 21, 2016 Tri-Board – On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the January 21, 2016, Tri-Board meeting.
January 27, 2016 – On a motion by Mrs. Wagner, seconded Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016, meeting as amended.
February 10, 2016 Budget Workshop – On a motion by Mrs. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the February 10, 2016, budget workshop.
February 10, 2016 – On a motion by Dr. Robert, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2106, meeting.
February 17, 2016 Joint Budget Meeting – On a motion by Mrs. Wagner, seconded by Mrs. Buzzee, the Board voted unanimously to accept the mintues of the February 17, 2016, Joint Budget Meeting.

- b. Correspondence – None.
- c. Personnel – None.
- 8. Reports – a. Superintendent – Mr. Nero reported that they have been working on the budget.
- b. BOE Chairperson – Mr. Carlson will speak under section 10a later in the agenda.
- c. Committee Chairperson – Mr. Mathwich said the Facilities and Finance Committee met and action will be taken later in the agenda.
- d. LEARN Board of Directors’ Liaison – Nothing to report.
- e. PSPBC Liaison – Mr. Nero saw Mr. Jim Lord of the PSPBC said they have nixed a generator but are looking at a second soccer field. Mr. Nero had comment on two classrooms with lead paint that will be remediated. He told Mr. Lord they may have other items for the committee.
- f. Ad Hoc Committee – Mr. Mathwich said a public hearing was held and there was a lot of good discussion. The largest concern was the cost and the funding availability from the State. He said the big thing will be informing the people on how it works. Mr. Mike Urgo, chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee said the communications committee. Mrs. Wagner asked if the public understood the reimbursement process. Mr. Mathwich said we are probably going to have to keep reviewing it. Mr. Carlson said the project would not go on without state reimbursement. There was discussion. Mr. Karpinski mentioned the letters to the editors lately and there is nobody responding to them. Mr. Urgo said they have people lined up to write letters. He had further comment. There was discussion and comment. Mr. Urgo said they may not need to have another hearing. He said one thing that comes up is that people need to understand the cost associated with not doing anything. He said the Ad Hoc Committee is not saying anything because it is beyond their purview. He thought they needed a better answer. Mr. Nero said somewhere along the line, the Board is going to have to draw the line. He elaborated. There was discussion. Board members had further comment. Mrs. Wagner had comment and said the school system is the heart of this town and without the school, the town will crumble. There was further comment. There was discussion. Dr. Robert commented that we need to answer the questions that come up. Mr. Carlson said any questions that come up have been answered by the Ad Hoc Committee and they have addressed all them. Mr. Urgo said he was bringing this up because they cannot answer some of them. There was further comment.
- 9. Finance - a. January 2016 Financial Statements – A question was answered regarding textbooks. Mrs. St. Germain explained. Mr. Mathwich made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Buzzee to approve the January 31, 2016, Financial Statements. Dr. Robert commented that these have already been paid. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Transfer Request – Mr. Mathwich made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Buzzee to approve the transfer memo dated February 10, 2016, to transfer \$549.40 from high school other supplies (0250) to district-wide officials/resident troopers (1000) to cover the costs for the resident trooper attending a high school dance. Mr. Mathwich said the understanding is that these expenses are due to the trooper reduction and they have to be picked up by the Board of Education. The motion did not pass with four voting in favor, three against, and one abstention. Those voting against the motion were Mrs. Wagner, Dr. Robert and Mr. McCord. Mr. Karpinski abstained. Mr. Nero had questions for the Board. There was discussion. Mr. Nero said the Board of Selectmen is going back to the Board of Finance for some items including DARE. Dr. Robert explained how an additional appropriation with the Board of Finance works. He said we were not counting on this. It impacts student life and elaborated. Mrs. St. Germain explained why they asked for the transfer. Mr. Nero said we'll put the account in the hole. He had further comment. There was comment on the DARE program. Mr. Nero had further comment.

10. Old Business – a. Mashantucket Pequot Classroom Space – Mr. Carlson had comment. Mrs. Wagner made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Buzzee to not use the museum classroom space as a viable option for our students moving forward. Mr. Mathwich had comment. He said it was designed to be an adult or post-grad environment. He said he would expect to see this type of building at UCONN. He elaborated. Looking at it from a middle/high/elementary perspective, the logistics won't work. He had further comment. Bussing would be an issue; the athletic facilities are a half-mile away and there would be a loss of instructional time. It is a huge facility that would need a lot of reconfiguring. He elaborated. The lease would be fair market value. Mr. Mathwich said it was an impressive facility but not set up to be what we want. Mrs. Wagner agreed. One of her concerns was the public being very accessible to our students. There was discussion. She said you are paying the cost for someone else's facility. Mrs. Buzzee commented on the lack of windows. Mrs. Wagner brought up the air quality. There was further comment. Mr. Nero said it was a lease deal. He had comment about a lease situation in Rhode Island. He said it is sovereign land. He spoke of the lack of an elevator inspection sticker. Dr. Robert moved the question. Mrs. Wagner asked that Mr. Nero be allowed to finish his comments. He said it was not designed to be a public school. There are no windows or lack of windows, a co-mingling of the public and the students, air quality, and anything you invest in this school you don't get back from the state are just a few of the issues. New London schools was looking at the facility but only wanted it for two-three years until their magnet school was built. He had further comment. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Carlson will send a letter to Dr. Mancini thanking them for the tour of their facilities.

b. 2016-2017 Proposed Education Budget – Mr. Nero handed out a sheet delineating the last nine budget increases that averaged a 1.06 % increase. Mr. Nero said he would never recommend cutting teachers. There was discussion. There was comment on various aspects of the budget. Mr. Mathwich said we can't keep deferring items. Dr. Robert had comment on the budget and a building project. Mr. Nero had comment. He said we have done things here and have had a lot of success. Mr. Nero had a comment on the staff added in the past few years. There was comment. Mr. Carlson commented on the positions that were added have resulted in successes. There

was further comment. There were questions asked and answered regarding non-bargaining unit salaries. Mr. Carlson said he wanted to make it known this was the number that had been published in the paper. There was further comment. Mr. Carlson had comments on a comment made at the Joint meeting. Mr. Nero spoke of his first budget and having to cut \$387,000 from a budget that he did not put together. He had comment. There was comment on previous referenda. Mr. Nero said he had told everyone that there was no way to give them another zero budget. There was further comment and discussion. Dr. Robert made a motion to cut the curriculum coordinator out of the budget. There was discussion. The motion did not pass with three voting in favor and five voting against the motion. Mr. Mathwich, Mr. Mendolia, Mr. Karpinski, Mr. Carlson, and Mrs. Wagner voted against the motion. A job description will be given to the Board. There was further comment and discussion.

On a motion by Dr. Robert, seconded by Mrs. Wagner, the Board voted unanimously to add Executive Session to the agenda for the Purpose of Contract Negotiations.

11. New Business – None.
12. Calendar – a. Future Meeting Dates
b. Committee Action List
13. Public Comment – Mr. Urgo commented.
14. Proposed for Executive Session – On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mrs. Buzzee, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. for the Purpose of Contract Negotiations.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:04 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mrs. Buzzee, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education