

February 4, 2009
Special Meeting

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in the North Stonington Elementary School Library. Present were Dr. Robert, Mr. McCord, Mr. Testa, Mr. Briscoe, Mrs. Ricker, Mrs. Banker, and Mr. Keane. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. Costa, Mr. Susi, and Mr. Sandford. Chairman Robert called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

2. Public Comment/Request to Comment on Agenda Item – Mrs. Colleen Sebastian explained her daughter's Senior Project and elaborated. She spoke of the workshop at Foxwoods and asked if there was any way the students could go with an excused absence. Dr. Robert quoted Board policy and asked questions of Mrs. Sebastian. Mr. Susi complemented Shianne Sebastian on her project. He explained he didn't sanction the trip due to early dismissal yesterday, a late opening today and the loss of class time. He elaborated. He said it wasn't linked to anything. He had further comment. Mr. Susi said if the students asked for permission, it would be unexcused. Mrs. Sebastian had comment. Mr. Briscoe spoke of procedure. There was comment from Board members. Dr. Robert thought the next step in the process would be the Superintendent. There was further comment.

3. Community Relations – The Board moved to Presentations.

4. Presentations – a. Energy Package Grant – Mr. Mullane explained the stimulus package request. He felt the most valuable item put in by North Stonington would be the boiler project. He introduced Scott Learned and Peter Springsteel. Mr. Mullane spoke of the package to update the heating system. He said the stimulus project was designed to provide jobs and he explained. He gave an approximate cost of \$12,000 plus or minus to update the plans. There were questions asked and answered about a timeline. Mr. Learned gave background on the project. He said they need to go back through the drawings and through the schools to update them. He reviewed other items that have to be revisited. Mr. Mullane clarified items. He had further comment. There was comment from other members. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Briscoe had concerns about doing this project and having it impede a new building project with the State. Mr. Mullane didn't feel it would and elaborated. Mr. Learned commented on the boilers. There were further questions asked and answered. There was further comment. Mr. Mullane talked about putting in a certain dollar amount in the capital non-recurring line and replacing the windows some at a time. He had further comment. There was further comment. Mr. Mullane said they didn't want to go forward without having this type of discussion with the Board of Education. There was further comment. Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Keane to accept the energy project update. There was discussion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Mullane said he would keep the Board informed on the stimulus package.

The Board revisited Community Relations – Dr. Pukas said there has been very good publicity as of late and gave some highlights.

5. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Wilkison told of happenings at the elementary school including the Author in Residence program, the art exhibit opening, the 100th day of School Celebration, Read Across America Celebration, professional development day, and Technology Day. Mr. Sandford told of things happening at the middle/high school including getting a grant from the PTO, Glenn Sidle’s play that was written for the Drama Club and the Westerly Sun doing an expose on the play, the middle school cheering squad’s competition, the Winter Ball on Saturday, 7th grade student, Max Stewart, winning the radon poster contest, the girls’ basketball team being close to being in the State competition, getting ready for the CMT’s and the CAPT, re-looking at the Student Handbook, the Program of Studies review, the late arrival schedule review, and the Chikumbuso widows coming to the schools in April. There was comment. Mr. Susi complemented Mr. Sandford on the grant he had written and they received. Mr. Sandford explained what the grant was being used for. Mr. Briscoe checked on the status of the senior project and elaborated. Mr. Susi responded. There was further comment.

6. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes - January 14, 2009 - Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Keane to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2009, meeting. Mrs. Banker had comment on the motions made for the US History waivers. The Board had questions and comments. Action on the minutes was tabled to allow Mrs. McCarthy to review the audio of the meeting.

b. Correspondence – Dr. Pukas received a letter from CIRMA informing her that the district had received a Risk Manager Achievement Award for the RFP for transportation and thanked Mr. McCarthy for his work on the RFP.

c. Personnel – None.

7. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas spoke of the College Board conference she attended and told the Board she was a panel member.

b. BOE Chairperson – There was discussion of concessions and decided things were on hold.

c. Committee Chairs – The Committee meetings will be rescheduled. Mr. Keane said he had spoken to Mr. Secchiaroli about having a joint meeting with Policy and Finance. Mr. Keane reviewed the Policy Committee minutes from their recent meeting.

On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to move agenda items 10a, New Business, Policy 1230(a), Community Relations, Other School-Connected Organizations, Booster Clubs - Revision and 10b, Policy 5131.9, Students, Gang Activity or Association – Revision, to item 7c. Mr. Keane continued with the Policy Committee recommendations.

On a motion by Mr. Keane, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to accept item 10a, Policy 1230(a), Community Relations, Other School-Connected Organizations, Booster Clubs – Revision.

Mr. Keane reviewed Policy 5131.9. On a motion by Mr. Keane, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to approve Policy 5131.9 Regulations, Students, Gang Activity or Association.

On a motion by Mr. Keane, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to approve Policy 5131.9, Students, Gang Activity or Association as revised.

Mr. Keane reviewed the items that have yet to be revised. He had comments on the Board's Comment/Complaint/Suggestion form.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Nothing to report.

e. Committee Action List – Mr. Briscoe said the Ad Hoc Committee asked the Board of Education to come up with a cost as to what it would be for them to do nothing. He elaborated. Mr. Briscoe said he would start a chart and pass it around for input. He elaborated. There was comment by Board members. Mr. Briscoe said in the future there will need to be a Sub-Committee of the Committee to handle all the requests. He had further comment.

8. Financial – a. Transfer Request – Mr. McCarthy explained the transfer. On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Keane, the Board voted unanimously to approve the transfers requested by the Business Manager in a memo dated January 22, 2009.

9. Old Business – a. Rescheduling of FOI Workshop – Dr. Robert said the workshop was rescheduled to Tuesday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the high school media center. There was discussion.

b. Athletic Committee Report of Tennis and Golf – Mr. Susi said he had spoken to Mrs. Turner. The coaching stipend reduction was not approved by the NSEA. He said to date golf can be funded and tennis could not be funded as of yet. He elaborated. There was discussion. Mr. McCord said he was disappointed in the teachers' union. He said we wouldn't have either of these next year. Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Banker to approve the formation of the Wheeler Golf Team. There was comment. The motion passed with six voting in favor and one opposed. Mr. Keane opposed the motion.

10. New Business – a. Policy 1230(a), Community Relations, Other School-Connected Organizations, Booster Clubs – Revision – Covered above.

b. Policy 5131.9, Students, Gang Activity or Association – Revision – Covered above.

c. Dates for Budget Meetings – Dr. Pukas suggested a Board meeting from 7-7:30 and then at 7:30 have a budget workshop. Dr. Robert suggested dedicating every Wednesday night to the budget. The Special Meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. on the 11th.

11. Calendar – A Policy Committee, a Policy/Finance Committee, and a Policy/Curriculum meeting will be set up.
12. Public Comment – None.
13. Proposed for Executive Session – None.

On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education