

Board of Education Minutes
February 8, 2012

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Band Room. Present were Dr. Robert, Mr. McCord, Mr. Testa, Mr. Scarchilli, Mr. Hundt, Mr. Mathwich, Mrs. Dame, and Mr. Mendolia. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mr. Sandford, and Mr. Apicelli. Dr. Robert called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

2. Community Relations – Two articles were at the Board’s places regarding the Governor’s proposed budget. Dr. Pukas elaborated. There was discussion of items relayed at the Tripartite meeting this evening. Questions were asked and answered.

3. Presentations – None.

4. Administrators Reports – Mr. Sandford spoke about some proposed changes to the athletic program and he elaborated. Questions were asked and answered. There was discussion. Dr. Robert asked that a presentation be made with the dollar amounts associated with the proposed changes at a later date. There was discussion between Mr. Sandford and Dr. Robert. A committee meeting will be held so Mr. Sandford can make the official presentation. There was discussion. Mr. Apicelli introduced students Zoe Robert and Samantha Muller who gave the report on what was happening at the middle school. They spoke of the middle school dance, the middle school boys’ and girls’ basketball team, The Chili Bowl was held, the Renaissance event was held with 137 students attending, X-block clubs and activities started and they gave examples, the advisory groups continue every Wednesday, and the middle school Penny Wars will be starting. Mr. Tardiff explained what the dance admission price goes toward. A dodge ball event will also be held for the middle school sponsored by SADD, Students Against Destructive Decisions. Ashley Storey and Gabby DeJesus told of happenings at the high school including the Winter Ball, the carnation sale, the singing telegrams, Rachel’s Challenge raised funds for a local soup kitchen, there is a Black History Month PowerPoint presentation each day, a spaghetti dinner is being held, the basketball teams have done well, and the Advisory Groups are continuing. Also mentioned was the Empty Bowls Project, Soles 4 Souls, Jeans for Teens, and the field trip to Long Wharf Theatre. Questions were asked about the Advisory Groups and the students answered. Mr. Apicelli had comment about the students’ presentations. Mrs. Wilkison told the Board the winner of the spelling bee, Macie Mancini, will take part in the Connecticut State Spelling Bee, Family Science Night will be held on February 16th at 7:30 p.m., and she also spoke of the Student Council food pantry.

5. Approval of Minutes – January 18, 2012 – Mr. Hundt made a motion that was seconded by Mr. McCord, to accept the minutes of the January 18, 2012, meeting. A correction was pointed out in Item 2. The motion passed unanimously as amended. Mr. Testa was absent for the vote.

- b. Correspondence – Dr. Pukas said the District had received another CIRMA Achievement Award and gave kudos to Mr. McCarthy, Business Manager. Drs. Pukas and Robert had further comment.
- c. Personnel – None.
- 6. Reports – a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas said work would begin on the newsletter and she elaborated.
- b. BOE Chairperson – Dr. Robert asked those present to check out Governor Malloy’s proposal.
- c. Committee Chairs – The Facilities and Finance Committee did not meet this week due to the Tripartite Meeting. The Committee will meet at 6:15 p.m. before the next meeting on the 15th.
- d. PSPBC Liaison – None.
- 7. Finance – None.
- 8. Old Business – a. PSPBC List – Dr. Robert discussed the list presented. Questions were asked and answered about items on the list. It was suggested to put the list in a priority order. There were further questions asked and answered. It was decided the administrators will meet to put the list in order. Mr. Testa had comment. There was discussion of the response to the PSPBC about the roofs.
- b. LEARN Board of Directors – Mr. Testa will not be able to take part due to their meeting schedule. Mr. Mendolia will inquire about the Board.
- c. Superintendent Search Report – Mr. Mathwich gave an update on the process. He spoke of the focus groups and explained. There was further discussion.
- 9. New Business – a. Educational Specs – Mr. Mathwich said the draft specs have been sent to Rusty Malik. There was further explanation. It was decided the whole Board would be involved in approving these. There was further comment.
- b. Check List for Board Packets – Dr. Pukas explained why this was on the agenda. It was decided to check off on the agenda any enclosures.
- c. Dates for Budget Meetings – Dr. Pukas explained they were waiting for direction from the Board of Finance. There was discussion. Dr. Robert wants to see the budget as is and suggested the new programs and requests be listed separately and in a prioritized list if possible. Dr. Pukas clarified that the initial presentation be done by each person that put their portion together. Mr. Testa commented on three zero increase budgets in a row and wondered how we can operate like that. He had further comment. He spoke of restructuring of the district, not

knowing how to do it but needing to do something. There was discussion. There was discussion of tuition students we send to other districts. There was discussion of the Vo-Ag program. Mr. Sandford had comment. There was further discussion. The Community Involvement Committee will meet on Tuesday, the 21st at 6:30 p.m. to hear the presentation on the athletic proposal. Budget meetings will be as follows: February 28th and 29th at 7:00 p.m. and March 6th, March 7th, and March 13th at 7:00 p.m. The regular meeting will be March 14th at 7:00 p.m. with the budget as the agenda item.

d. Discussion of Letter to Town – Mr. Mathwich sent out a draft letter to the Board and he said he hasn't heard anything yet. Suggestions were made. This will be put on the next regular March meeting agenda.

e. Discussion of Science Labs at MS/HS – Mr. Scarchilli said Mr. McCarthy would look into estimates on this. Mr. Sandford had comment. He told the Board that he and Mr. McCarthy are researching a company. Questions were asked and answered.

f. Discussion on Becoming a “Specialized” School – Mr. Testa commented if we utilized our strengths to try to develop something to be recognized for that may draw students from other districts. There was discussion on trying to stop the trend of kids wanting to go to other towns. Questions were asked and answered. The question was asked about Green Technology and if there were grants for that type of thing. Dr. Pukas had comment. Further questions were asked and answered.

g. Discussion of Creating a Better Perception – Mrs. Dame had comment about past meetings and the need to show the Town we are a cohesive group. She had further comment.

h. Discussion of End-of-Year Purchases – There was discussion of items to earmark with any monies at the end of the year. There was discussion of timelines. This tied in to the science lab discussion. There was discussion on the money being set aside for maintenance items with any funds that go back to the Town. A prioritized list will be developed.

i. Board Structure – Mr. Scarchili asked to table this to the next meeting.

10. Calendar –a. – Future meeting dates – February 21st with Mrs. Turner, Mr. Sandford, and the Community Involvement Committee at 6:30 p.m., February 28th and 29th, March 6th, March 7th, and March 13th all at 7:00 p.m. for budget presentations and the regular meeting on March 14th. The Facilities and Finance Committee will meet at 6:15 p.m. on February 15th with a special meeting at 6:30 p.m. for non-bargaining unit employees.

11. Public Comment – Mrs. Veit had questions on the letter to the Town.

12. Proposed for Executive Session – a. Student Discipline Matter – On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:49 p.m. for the Purpose of Student Discipline Matter and to invite Mrs. Costa and Mr. Sandford into such session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:36 p.m. On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education