

Board of Education Minutes  
November 18, 2009

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, November 18, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Music Room. Present were Mr. Hescocock, Mrs. Ricker, Mr. Testa, Mr. Hundt, Dr. Robert, Mrs. Banker, and Mrs. Dame. Mr. Secchiaroli was absent. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. Costa, Mr. Susi, and Mr. Sandford. Dr. Pukas called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. Dr. Pukas explained why she was calling the meeting to order.

2. Election of Officers – Dr. Pukas read an item from State Statute regarding the election of officers. She accepted nominations for Chairman. Mrs. Ricker nominated Dr. Robert and Mrs. Dame seconded the nomination. On a motion by Mr. Hescocock, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to close the nominations for Chairman. Paper ballots were handed out for the vote. Mrs. McCarthy counted the votes for Chairman. The tally of votes for Chairman were as follows: four (4) votes for Dr. Robert, one (1) vote for Mr. Testa, one (1) vote for Mrs. Dame and one (1) abstention. Dr. Robert was elected as Chairman. Dr. Robert presided over the meeting as Chairman. Mrs. Banker nominated Mrs. Ricker for Vice Chairman and Mr. Hescocock seconded the nomination. On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mrs. Banker, the Board voted unanimously to close the nominations for Vice Chairman. Mrs. McCarthy counted the votes for Vice Chairman. The tally of votes for Vice Chairman was as follows: five (5) votes for Mrs. Ricker, one (1) vote for Mr. Testa, and one (1) abstention. Mrs. Ricker was named Vice Chairman. Mrs. Ricker nominated Mrs. Banker for Secretary and Mr. Testa seconded the nomination. On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mr. Hescocock, the Board voted unanimously to close the nominations for Secretary. Mrs. McCarthy counted the votes for Secretary. The tally of votes for Secretary was as follows: five (5) votes for Mrs. Banker and two (2) abstentions. Mrs. Banker was named Secretary.

3. Public Comment – An audience member asked if the aptitude tests were taken this year. Dr. Robert mentioned that had already been reviewed at a previous meeting and information would be provided to her.

On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mrs. Dame, the Board voted unanimously to move Item 11a, New Business, Discussion Concerning Investigation of Retention of Private Firms to Provide Custodial Services, to Item 4a.

4. a. New Business – Discussion Concerning Investigation of Retention of Private Firms to Provide Custodial Services. Dr. Pukas explained that this had been on a previous agenda. Mr. McCarthy gave background of this item. He said representatives from SSC were here if the Board had any general questions. He said that SSC was awarded a contract through LEARN so he did not see this as a conflict of interest. He passed out information for the Board to look at to decide whether they wanted to pursue the concept. Board members had questions. It was explained this was not entertained previously because the Board was in the middle of contract negotiations. There

were further questions asked and answered. The background of sharing resources was explained. Dr. Pukas had comment. There were further questions asked and answered. Dr. Robert thanked them for coming.

b. Community Relations – Nothing other than what was in the packet.

5. Presentations – Strategic School Profiles – Dr. Pukas told the Board these were for the 2008-2009 school year. She explained DRG's. She explained what they were given in their packet and the timing of it. Dr. Pukas reviewed items of interest in the district profile including the number of students eligible for free and reduced hot lunches, students receiving special education services, kindergarteners attending preschool, the number of juniors and seniors working more than 16 hours a week, a correction to the number of non-English home languages, the CMT and CAPT percent meeting goal, the percentage of students meeting goal on the physical fitness test, the SAT's, the graduation and dropout rate, a correction to the number of graduates employed and pursuing education, elementary class size, hours of instruction, district expenditures, special education, and the typical peer numbers. Board members asked questions. Mr. Susi had comment and gave some information in response to questions. Mrs. Wilkison had comment and gave some information in response to questions. The administrators had further comment. Board members and Dr. Pukas had further comment.

6. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Wilkison told of happenings at the elementary school including election and voting activities, sending letters to the troops for Veterans' Day, the children receiving some letters from the troops, the Ellis Island Simulation, drama club tryouts, the first marking period ending on the 17<sup>th</sup>, report cards going home on December 2<sup>nd</sup> with parent/teacher conferences on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. She also said the reading teachers have been evaluating the students, there was talk of going back to teaching grammar, the math teachers are using Every Day Math, and next Tuesday is "Math Day." Mr. Susi spoke of happenings at the middle/high school and asked some of the middle school teachers to speak. Pat Ostrout spoke of the food drive in the middle school and explained. Jill Skidgell spoke of the culinary classes and their activities. Marc Tardiff spoke of the Positive Behavior Support program and explained how it operates. He said the first year is about learning about the program and next year they will implement it. Mr. Susi spoke of the Renaissance Program, the reading program and the professional development at the middle school with the teachers helping other teachers. He spoke of the middle school dance, the Homecoming dance, the Drama Club's one-act plays, the Veteran's breakfast, the athletic banquet, the art trip, a meeting with the high school sub-committee of the Ad-hoc Building Committee, and that he was on a NEASC evaluation team. Board members had questions.

7. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes – October 14, 2009 – On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mrs Dame, the Board voted four in favor and three abstentions to accept the minutes of the October 14, 2009, meeting. Dr. Robert, Mr. Hescock, and Mr. Hundt abstained.

October 28, 2009 – On a motion by Mrs. Banker, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted four in favor and three abstentions to accept the minutes of the October 28, 2009, meeting. Mrs. Ricker, Mr. Hescock, and Mr. Hundt abstained.

b. Correspondence – Dr. Pukas explained the information at their places.

c. Personnel – None.

8. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas explained Mr. McCarthy had emailed Mr. Donahue regarding the costs of the asbestos abatement. She explained the H1N1 letter being mailed out to all families. She had been in touch with Robert Rader of CABE who encouraged everyone to go to the new Board Member Conference to be held in December. She said Mr. Rader was willing to come to North Stonington to talk to the Board.

b. BOE Chairperson – Dr. Robert welcomed Board members back and welcomed the new members.

c. Committee Chairs – None.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Mr. McCarthy said he understood the committee had not met yet but will be meeting next week.

e. Committee Action List – None.

9. Financial – Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Dame to accept expenditures of \$1,047,627.19, grant expenditures of \$34,238.24, for a total of \$1,081,865.43 for the month of October 2009. There were questions asked and answered. The motion passed with six voting in favor and one abstention. Mr. Hescock abstained.

b. Transfer Request – Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Banker to approve the budget transfers in the October 23 memo as written. Mr. McCarthy explained the transfer sheet and answered questions. Board members had further comment. There were questions asked and answered regarding Mr. McCarthy's memo concerning the budget outlook. The motion passed with five voting in favor, one opposed and one abstention. Mr. Testa opposed the motion and Mr. Hundt abstained.

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business – a. Discussion Concerning Investigation of Retention of Private Firms to Provide Custodial Services – Covered above.

b. Board of Education Committee Assignments – Committees were chosen as follows: Athletics Committee members are Mrs. Banker, Mrs. Dame, and Mr. Testa. Curriculum Committee members are Mrs. Banker, Mrs.

Dame, and Mrs. Ricker. Community Relations Committee members are Mrs. Banker, Mrs. Dame, and Mrs. Ricker. Facilities Committee members are Mrs. Banker, Mr. Hundt, Mrs. Ricker, and Mr. Testa. Finance Committee members are Mr. Hescocock, Mr. Hundt, Mr. Secchiaroli, and Mr. Testa. Policy Committee members are Mrs. Dame, Mr. Hundt, Mrs. Ricker, and Mr. Secchiaroli. Personnel Committee members are Mrs. Banker, Mr. Hundt, Mr. Secchiaroli, and Mr. Testa.

12. Calendar – The Facilities and Personnel Committees will meet December 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. The other Committees will meet briefly on December 9<sup>th</sup> to elect Committee Chairs.

13. Public Comment – An audience member asked about the dropout rate and asked about using some of these funds to keep the kids in school. Dr. Robert had comment. She asked further questions. Mike Noonan, parent, congratulated the Board for taking on tough educational issues and for all they do to support education. He also commented on his son and daughter's education and his son's college application process.

14. Proposed for Executive Session – a. Students' Disciplinary Matters – Dr. Robert asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for Students' Disciplinary Matters and to invite Mr. Susi, Mr. Sandford, and Dr. Pukas into the session. Mr. Hescocock made that motion which was seconded by Mr. Testa; the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 9:55 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:25 p.m. On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Mrs. Dame, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to  
The Board of Education