

Board of Education Minutes  
October 10, 2012

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Band Room. Present were Mr. Testa, Mr. Mendolia, Mr. Hundt, Dr. Robert, Mr. Mathwich, and Mrs. Dame. Mr. McCord was absent. Also present were Mr. Nero, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mr. Sandford, and Mr. Apicelli. Chairman Testa called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Hundt led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items – None.
4. Community Relations – Colleen Smith and Amy Kennedy of the Wheeler Library spoke of some of the library's upcoming events. Mrs. Kennedy explained the reason for the fundraising.
5. Presentations - New Teacher Introductions – Mrs. Wilkison introduced Courtney Caswell and gave background information on Miss Caswell. She is the grade 4 social studies teacher. Mrs. Costa introduced Jenna Moore and gave background information on Miss Moore. She is an elementary special education teacher. Mr. Sandford introduced Will Johnson and gave background information on Mr. Johnson. He is the grade 7 social studies teacher. Mr. Nero explained that Ivelisse Hernandez could not be here this evening and elaborated. She is the high school Spanish teacher. He had further comment.
6. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Wilkison spoke of the CAS Elementary School of Excellence Award and explained that they did not get the award. She elaborated and told the Board she was told that there was very little they could do to improve but to focus on diversity. They will be presented with the CAS School Climate Award. Mrs. Wilkison said she is very proud of the faculty and staff. She reviewed other happenings at the elementary school including Open House with 86% of the families attending, the North Stonington Volunteer Fire Department visited the school for Fire Prevention Week, and October 15<sup>th</sup> is Connecticut Loves to Read Day. She talked about the school's safe climate plan and that a first draft was developed. She elaborated. Mr. Sandford went over happenings at the middle/high school, including the community bonfire, Homecoming Dance, the athletic games on Saturday, the new school profile, and the Distinguished Alumni Awards. Mr. Logan Tashea, student, spoke of advertising in the schools. He elaborated. Mr. Nero spoke on this item and elaborated. He said one of the problems with this is that revenue has to go to the Town. He had further comment. Board members had comments, questions, and suggestions.
7. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes - June 6 2012 – Mr. Testa explained the question that was posed about the minutes. On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mr. Hundt, the Board voted five in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the June 6, 2012 emergency meeting. Mrs. Dame abstained.

September 12, 2012 – On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted five in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the September 12, 2012 meeting. Mr. Hundt abstained.

b. Correspondence – Nothing other than what was in the packet.

c. Personnel – None.

8. Reports - a. Superintendent – Mr. Nero suggested amending the policy about public speaking on the agenda and he explained. Mr. Nero said he will be taking part in the library’s fundraiser and he elaborated. He told the Board members that suggested policy revisions were handed out to them. He explained the memo regarding conferences that he will be attending. He elaborated. He told the Board we are in the process of writing the grants and he elaborated. He will be attending the NSEF meeting tomorrow. Mr. Nero told the Board that a presentation will be done on the insurance consortium on October 24<sup>th</sup>. He suggested having a business meeting as well on the same evening. He will be making suggestions on other items as they come up in the agenda.

b. BOE Chairperson – Mr. Testa said the Town has declined the offer to use our facilities for the referendum. He said he has not heard anything back from the Board of Finance on the RISSA account information and he elaborated. Mr. Testa said there are four candidates for the Board vacancy. There was discussion. There was a question on the grant that was applied for.

c. Committee Chairs – Facilities and Finance met earlier. Mr. Mathwich said they covered two financial statements that will be covered later in the agenda.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Mr. Testa explained he had a meeting with Mr. Nero on a new list. Mr. Nero said he met with Mr. Mullane and Mr. McCarthy on this and elaborated. He commented on having to pick a plan and going forward on the buildings. Mr. Nero said the roofs of the Gymnasium and the elementary school were added to the list and elaborated. There was discussion.

9. Financial - a. June 2012 Financial Statements – Mr. Mathwich made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hundt to approve the revised June 2012 Financial Statement. It was explained that these figures revise the figure that was in the September 12, 2012 meeting minutes.

b. September 2012 Financial Statements – On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mr. Hundt, the Board voted unanimously to accept accounts payable of \$571,093.90, payroll of \$556,313.53, subtotal general fund of \$1,127,407.43, grant expenditures of \$14,956.20 for a total of \$1,142,363.63 for the month of September 2012.

10. Old Business – a. 2012-2013 Proposed Education Budget – Mr. Nero said he has had discussions with Mr. Spring and Mr. Mullane. The Board of Finance is recommending no further cuts to our budget. Mr. Nero said he

would like to bring back lacrosse. Board members had comment. The Town Meeting is on Monday at 7:00 p.m. There was comment.

b. Status of Board of Education Member Vacancy – Covered in the Board Chair’s update.

c. Health Insurance Consortium Update – Mr. Nero said representatives will be coming in to give an explanation of how this works. He said it is a win-win situation and elaborated. He had further explanation and comment. Questions were asked and answered. There was further comment.

11. New Business – a. Board of Education Policy Manual – Mr. Nero said he was recommending to the Board that one set of hard copy manuals is kept and that when changes are made, everything is done online. There was further comment. Dr. Robert made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hundt to switch to the online policy manual. There was comment and questions. The motion passed unanimously.

b. 2013 Schedule of Meetings – Mr. Nero explained the different versions of the meeting schedules. He had further explanation. There were questions asked and answered. Board members had comment. On a motion by Mr. Mathwich, seconded by Mr. Hundt, the Board voted unanimously to approve version 2 for 2013.

c. Community Social in November – Mr. Nero suggested waiting until December so the new member can take part.

d. Transcript Request Procedure Change – Mr. Nero had explanation about the recommendation from Mr. Sandford. On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to charge \$5.00 for those requesting a transcript.

e. Attendance Policy 5113.2 Revision – Mr. Nero said the policy has changed. He and the administrators met and discussed this. He told the Board we are following the new law and he elaborated. Mr. Mathwich made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia to delete current policy 5113.2. Questions were asked that Mr. Sandford answered. Mr. Sandford said this is significantly different and had further explanation. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Mathwich made a motion that was seconded by Dr. Robert to accept the new policy as written with the suggested amendments on the second page. Questions were asked and answered. There was comment. The motion passed unanimously.

f. Early Dismissal Day Request – Mr. Nero explained the high school is preparing for their NEASC visit and also that both schools will be going into a new teacher evaluation method. He elaborated. Dr. Robert had comment and wondered if there was any other way to do this. Dr. Robert made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mathwich to deny the request. There was comment about accomplishing what we need to do without having the half days. Dr. Robert and Mr. Mathwich withdrew the motion and the second. On a motion by Dr. Robert, seconded by Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to table this item to gather more information. Mr. Nero explained he had

a conversation with the superintendents at LEARN and elaborated. He said they will come back with new information on this item at a future meeting.

On a motion by Dr. Robert, seconded by Mr. Mathwich, the Board voted unanimously to add Superintendent's Conference Request to the agenda.

g. On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Dr. Robert, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's conference requests.

12. Calendar – a. Future Meeting Dates – Dr. Robert made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mathwich to add November 28 and December 19 to the meeting schedule. There was discussion. The meeting schedule will be re-posted to make these regular meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Committee Action List – None.

Mr. Nero said he forgot to mention the SAT scores during his report. He said we did outstanding on the scores and elaborated. He noted the important part was that we were second out of nine districts and he had further comment. He told the Board he was very proud of the scores.

13. Public Comment – Mr. Joe Gross felt the education budget will be supported and he elaborated. He said that the superintendent will be supported in his endeavors. He had further comment and said the Board will get the support because of Mr. Nero's efforts. He had further comment on the budget. Mrs. Colleen Smith commented on the early dismissal days and supported them. A citizen pointed out that we are not meeting again before the budget and urged people to vote. He said the finance board is working hard. He spoke of the voting. He had further comment and spoke of the new group that was formed to keep people informed. Mr. Damien Robert had a question that was answered.

14. Executive Session – None.

On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Dr. Robert, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to  
The Board of Education