

Board of Education Minutes
June 10, 2020

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting platform meeting ID 817 2929 5540. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mr. McCord, Mrs. Mastroianni, Dr. Potemri, and Mr. Mendolia (6:39 p.m.). Also present were Mr. Nero, Mrs. Martin, Mr. Pont, Mr. Boucher, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. St. Germain, and Mrs. Reyes. Chairperson Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Presentations – None.
5. Administrators’ Reports – Mrs. St. Germain said they are getting ready for the “Graduates on Parade.” She said instructions were sent out today. Parents seem pretty pleased with what they are doing. The grade 8 Promotion Parade is on Monday. Mrs. Wagner thanked her and Mrs. Reyes.
6. Administrative – a. Minutes – Mr. Karpinski made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Welborn to accept the minutes of the meeting of May 14, 2020-Special Meeting, May 18, 2020-Special Meeting, May 27, 2020, and June 4, 2020-Special Meeting. Ms. Welborn commented on the June 4, 2020, minutes. The motion was amended to accept the minutes with the June 4, 2020, amendment. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Correspondence – None.
 - c. Personnel – Mr. Nero said he had two wonderful letters from Kerrilynn Tashea and Maureen Adams on their retirements that he will read at the next meeting. There was discussion of the number of years these teachers have been here. Mr. Nero had comment. Mrs. Wagner asked about doing something for the retirees.
7. Reports – a. Superintendent – Mr. Nero said we are working towards the end-of-the year. There are odds and ends with the building project. Moving has begun but we are keeping the desks in the current grades 5 and 6 classroom and he explained. We have an additional 101 desks that can be used if needed. He said they will be beginning negotiations with the paras/custodians on June 18th at 11:30 a.m. Mr. Karpinski asked about getting the Superintendent’s report in writing again and Mr. Nero said he would do that.
 - b. BOE Chairperson – Mrs. Wagner said we are getting the sub-committees on the school reopening task force ready to meet. She is going to present at the Board of Selectmen meeting next Tuesday as well as the repurposing committee to tell them of our needs and the possibility of using space for classrooms. Mrs. Mastroianni got information from the playground committee. Mrs. Wagner said the non-lapsing account is a big

thing for us. She said what this does for us is that it is not a savings account but it gives us more time to purchase beyond June and not having to do it more quickly. She had further comment. Questions were asked and answered.

c. Committee Chairperson – The Policy Committee will schedule a meeting in July on a regular Board of Education meeting night.

d. LEARN Board of Directors' Liaison – Mr. Mendolia thought there was a meeting tomorrow but he has not gotten information on the meeting.

e. School Modernization Building Committee – Dr. Potemri said they are wrapping up and they have the TCO (temporary certificate of occupancy). Moving has begun. She asked Mr. Berardinelli to get the quote on the fence and the paint. Where the PCB's were they had to remove the paint. She said in her opinion they have done everything they were supposed to do but she thought it requires another coat. She asked them what paint they needed to use. She asked for that information so they could order it and get it painted. The Town is going to do the labor to paint. She is going to bring that information to the next meeting; she should have had it today. Dr. Potemri is going to arrange a walk-through. She said it is done-complete-with some last minute things to do. The tour will be before the next Board meeting. Mrs. Wilkison said she had begged Mr. Nero and Dr. Potemri for her staff to get in to see the school. Mrs. Wilkison said she gave them tours yesterday and they loved the building. They all enjoyed it. Everyone wore masks and they were all safely distanced. Dr. Potemri said she wanted to personally donate the furniture for the entryway. It has been ordered. She said she appreciated everyone's flexibility during this process.

f. School Re-Opening Task Force – Mrs. Wagner said touched on that a little in her report. Mrs. Mastroianni will have more after the sub committees meet. Mr. Karpinski would like a report on what worked and what didn't and where we will need to be to catch up. He wants to see the report on their assessment. Mrs. Wagner said they will get the report after the survey. Mr. Nero said Rhode Island is opening on August 31st. He said they are calling for the 31st to be professional development and the first day be on September 1st. He said the governor said there would be no snow days because of distance learning. Mrs. Wagner had comment on professional development and one day is not going to cut it to put together the cohesive learning. Mr. Nero had comment. There was further comment.

8. Finance - a. Year-end Purchasing – Mrs. Wagner said the Facilities and Finance Committee met on Monday and came up with three different scenarios. She asked Mrs. Martin about closeout, outstanding invoices, and if that is set up with the town. Mrs. Martin said generally you ask the town to setup a reserve account. She questioned the process. Mrs. Wagner read the memorandum of understanding regarding the account. She said we do not need to go to them for approval. Mrs. Martin said June 30th is the closing date but we don't actually close the books until August. She explained the end-of-year process with purchase orders and invoices. Mrs. Martin said the non-lapsing account should be a separate account and not part of the general fund. A meeting will be setup to

work out the process. Questions were asked and answered. There was discussion. There was discussion on the Chromebooks purchase. There was discussion on the possible grant from the state. Mr. Pont reviewed the numbers. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Pont had comment. Mrs. Wagner had comment. She didn't want to move 2% in to the account because we have needs. She wants to get what we need and perhaps use that for the needs we may have in the fall. She wants us to stick with the plan we know we need. There was discussion of the dollar amount in that account. Mr. Karpinski said we may have a large capital expense that may come up. Mrs. Wagner said the whole goal this year for that account was to see what we needed for the fall. She didn't want to sit on that account and spend it by the next budget. There was discussion. Mr. McCord talked about the fencing and the padding. Dr. Potemri said she would coordinate with the installation. Mrs. Wagner asked about the cubbies for kindergarten and Mrs. Wilkison explained and said they needed them. Central office postage as well as PPE was discussed. The floor machine was pulled off Mr. Boucher's list for this round. Mr. Boucher had comment. Mrs. Wagner said we are not totally taking it off permanently. Mrs. Wagner asked about the special education laptop and Mrs. Costa explained the need. Mr. Pont commented on the laptop model. He said the administration laptops are more high-end and explained. He can look at mid-range models. Mrs. Wagner had further questions on the special education list. Mrs. Costa said we do need to replenish our resource room technology. She is trying to rebuild. She said her students use the iPads as well. Mrs. Wagner had further comment. There was discussion on the damaged furniture during the move last March. Mr. Nero said all the damage was reported to the movers. There was further comment. Mr. Nero said the movers didn't take responsibility for any damage. Mr. Karpinski asked about professionals to move the elementary school. Mr. Nero said we are moving it ourselves. Mr. Boucher had comment on the moving last year. He said we settled and had comment. There was further discussion on purchases and questions on the list. Mr. Pont had commented. The list was reviewed. Mrs. Wagner asked about the playground inspection. Mr. Nero said it is needed if we are going to help with the playground. Mr. Boucher explained. Mrs. Wagner looked at the high school list and had comment. She asked about professional development and Mrs. St. Germain explained. She said there is merit to bringing in someone to do professional development and elaborated. Mrs. Wagner asked her to put together information on it. Mrs. Wilkison had comment and said they have spoken about having a coordinated plan in case we do this again and she elaborated. Mrs. Wagner asked her to put together the same as well and elaborated. Mrs. Mastroianni asked about comments made by Mr. Boucher regarding the issues. Mr. Boucher said he wasn't responsible for anything with the project—he is responsible for the buildings. There was comment on the damaged Gymnasium floor. There was discussion on why the movers didn't take responsibility for the damage. Dr. Potemri said the gym was part of existing conditions and wasn't part of the scope of work that was bid. She said they covered it with ram board and used it for moving staging among other things. She elaborated. Mr. Nero said there wasn't any damage per say from equipment but with the high water table, the moisture build-up caused the finish to peel because it was covered. Mr. Nero had further comment. Dr. Potemri had comment on the moving issues and said it was a he-said, she-said scenario. Mrs. Wagner asked for the total. Mrs. Martin said it was approximately \$158,634.16 with the 200 Chromebooks. Mr. Pont will check with his rep. That number was for an approximation of \$65,000 for the

Chromebooks. Mrs. Wagner asked about the procedure and if a motion was needed. Mr. Nero explained that the Board would just authorize him to execute the purchases. Ms. Welborn asked about why we were not carrying over 2%. Mrs. Wagner spoke of the discussion last night regarding the non-lapsing account. Mrs. Wagner will get the numbers from Mr. Pont and email out the list to the members and if anyone didn't have any other questions she would authorize Mr. Nero to move forward.

9. Policy First Reads – a. Hiring Policy – Mrs. Wagner spoke of the policy received. Mr. Nero said he and Dr. Potemri met and came up with a policy. Mrs. Wagner said she would also like to talk about posting of positions. She had comment on the proposed policy. Board members had comment. Mrs. Wagner had comment about the process. Mr. Nero had comment on staffing. There was comment. Mrs. Costa clarified hiring of her positions. Mrs. Wilkison was going to schedule her interview as well. Board members had comment. Mrs. Wagner wants to have a future discussion on that. Mrs. Mastroianni clarified her comments at the last meeting about hiring. She said she had no problem for Mrs. Wilkison to hire. She said this is a larger discussion. Mr. Karpinski agreed as well to hire. Mrs. St. Germain said it is important for them to post it right away to get the best candidates. She explained the process and thinks they vet the candidates thoroughly. She talked about posting shortage areas. There was further comment by Board members.

10. Calendar – June 24th is next regular meeting. June 16th is the 8th grade promotion parade and June 18th is the graduation parade. June 16th is grade 6 promotion with a parade as well. Dr. Potemri said at the next meeting the Board needs to close out the project. It will go on the next agenda.

11. Public Comment - Mike Noonan, citizen and teacher, thanked the Board for their hard work to get the buildings ready. As a taxpayer he is all about getting the buildings into the 21st century. As a teacher he is thrilled with the building. Mr. Noonan commented on the plaque inside the door with the wrong school name on it. Dr. Potemri said it will be corrected. She told him to check out the sound system on the stage because he will love it.

12. Proposed for Executive Session – On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:12 p.m. for the Purpose of Contract Negotiations.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:32 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Ms. Welborn, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education