

Board of Education Minutes
June 24, 2020

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting platform meeting ID 82248963027. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mr. McCord, Mrs. Mastroianni, Dr. Potemri, and Mr. Mendolia. 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 6:33 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Correspondence – Mr. Nero said we received a letter from the Workers’ Compensation Commission and he explained the committee and what they do to ensure the safety of the staff. He spoke of items the committee looks for and he elaborated. We are incompliant with the state regulations. Mr. Nero read a letter from Kerrilynn Tashea resigning from her position as a special education teacher after 35 years in North Stonington. Mr. Nero read a letter from Maureen Adams resigning from her teaching position after 25 years in North Stonington. Ms. Adams is also an alumna of Wheeler High School. Mr. Nero had comment. Mrs. Wagner said they will be missed.
5. Old Business – a. Year-end Purchases – Mrs. Martin emailed a report to the Board of all the purchase orders done since the last meeting. They totaled \$174,053.75. Postage and PPE, 8,000. Vacuum, floor scrubber, gym floor repair, mats and playground inspection, rugs, computer tables, see deb’s list. 98,044.10 prepared already. Mr. Wagner asked questions. 3543 for Sue’s computer-801.90. Mrs. Martin said there is \$174,300 as of today but we are in the middle of an AP run and that number could change a bit. Mrs. Wagner spoke of the non-lapsing account which is for educational purposes. She said the floor machine has continued to be cut. She feels we should purchase that now rather than wait. She asked the Board’s opinion. She said maintenance of the buildings is important. Mr. McCord and Mr. Mendolia felt we should purchase it. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Boucher had comment about salvaging parts from the old machine to repair the other machines. Mr. Boucher was given the okay to order the Zamboni machine. Mrs. Wagner said it looks like we won’t get the Chromebooks from the state and she asked if we should continue with the plan to purchase the Chromebooks for classrooms and carts. Mr. Pont commented on the location of where they would be placed. 69,300. Ms. Welborn asked if we could get them in time for the fall. Mr. Pont said there is a backorder on these of about 8-12 weeks. Mr. Pont said the total number is 240 for an approximate cost of \$8,450. Mr. McCord made a motion to purchase 240 Chromebooks for a cost of \$8,450. Ms. Welborn asked if these would be ready for the fall and Mr. Pont said it is not an easy task and he explained. Mr. Mendolia seconded the motion. Mr. Karpinski asked questions about what would go in the RISA account. Mrs. Martin said it would be about \$68,000 for the account but again reiterated that we are in the middle of an AP run and that number could change a bit. Ms. Welborn asked how we are referring to the account and Mrs. Wagner said it is referred as the non-lapsing account in the MOA. Mrs. Wagner asked about the

functionality of the equipment we are getting back. Mr. Pont said there will be down about 10%-15% She asked about the feasibility of getting these things out. She asked about ordering them a little later and asked his opinion. Ms. Welborn asked about students using their own technology and maybe not purchasing all of these. Mr. McCord said we should be handing out these like textbooks and elaborated. Mr. Pont explained about what other districts do in an opt-out situation; he said usually parents opt-out because there is a cost associated. Mr. Mendolia asked about the administration's feelings. Mrs. Wagner said they have always been in favor. She said we are trying to build up our technology. Mrs. Wilkison explained why it would be a good thing to have new computers in the classroom. What they are planning to purchase is huge for them. Mr. Nero had comment about the parents he and Mrs. Wilkison had spoken to about families needing multiple devices because they have more than one child. Mrs. St. Germain said to Ms. Welborn's point there will be some students using their own device at home but they will be using ours in school. They are going to be setting up a Google classroom situation in their school and she elaborated. She said ordering for each child is imperative. Mrs. Wagner put forth a scenario that the equipment could maybe be reassigned if a student doesn't need it if we go out again. There was further discussion on that. Mr. Pont had comment on the deployment process. He said part of the cost was included a deployment company and he explained. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Mendolia to approve \$17,000 to purchase the Zamboni. Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Boucher answered questions. He said it is technically a floor machine and explained. He said he gets vendors from the state bid list. Mrs. Mastroianni asked if that is best pricing or just because they are vetted. Mr. Nero had comment on the bid list. Mr. McCord said occasionally you will find something cheaper and he explained the process the bidders go through. Mr. Boucher had further comment. There was discussion. Mr. McCord asked questions about using other purchasing groups. Mr. Boucher had comment. Questions were asked and answered. Mrs. Wagner had further comment. Mr. McCord amended his motion to authorize up to \$17,000 and if the cost is over the purchase would be at the discretion of the Chairperson and Superintendent. The motion passed with six voting in favor and one against. Mrs. Mastroianni voted against the motion. Mrs. Wagner had comment on the purchases and some of the unknown costs for the fall. Mrs. Mastroianni wants to put \$10,000 towards the playground and she elaborated. Mrs. Wagner said we need to know the exact amount and the exact piece of equipment we will be purchasing. She said we can't just give them \$10,000 to put in their account. Mr. McCord suggested making a commitment to purchasing a piece of playground equipment from the non-lapsing account. There was discussion on this. Dr. Potemri had comment and spoke in agreement with Mrs. Mastroianni. Mr. Nero talked about the playground inspection that was done on Friday. He said part of it is in deplorable condition but parts can be retrofitted and he explained. He would like to see the report first and meet with a rep from CIRMA, our insurance carrier before we purchase any playground equipment. He explained further. He said we have a system in place and had further comment. He said we are taping everything off to make sure nobody uses the equipment and he elaborated. He had further comment. Mrs. Wagner had comment. Questions were asked on the fencing bid and Dr. Potemri said it was bid under the project.

6. New Business – Elementary School Building Project Closeout – Dr. Potemri asked if we had gotten the forms from the State. Mrs. Martin said she sent them to Dr. Potemri, Mr. Malik, and Ms. Dias on June 17th. Dr. Potemri had further comment. This will be acted upon at the July meeting. Mrs. Wagner said now that everything is complete, who holds the warranties and the maintenance records and information. Dr. Potemri said all that information that is under warranty is all turned over. Mr. Nero's office and Mr. Boucher would do the follow-up once the building is turned over. Mr. Nero said all the warranty information was turned over. He said we have to have annual maintenance contracts like we did before and he explained. He explained some of the warranty time lines. Mr. Boucher said Mr. Berardinelli has turned over many things. They are going to be turning over many more items with the new buildings. He said they continue to do trainings on the new equipment. They will be fully trained and they are doing good. Mr. Karpinski asked about taking a tour. Mrs. Wagner was hoping our next meeting could be in-person with social distancing. Mr. Nero said she may want to have a conversation with Mr. Urgo about meeting in-person. He elaborated. Mr. Urgo may not have lifted the ban yet on meeting in public. Mrs. Wagner had comment. Mr. McCord suggested we could meet in the same area and we could still do Zoom for the public. Mrs. Wilkison said if someone is available during the day she would take them over for a tour. Mr. Nero offered the same. Mrs. Wagner said something would be put together before the next meeting.

7. Student Success – The Committee has not met. Mrs. Wagner spoke of the School Re-Opening Task Force and explained they broke into three sub-committees. We can't make a lot of decisions until we hear from the state and we are hearing from them tomorrow. Health and wellness met today. She commented. She said it is very important to get the right information out to the parents. She complemented our nurse, Astrid Williams, on her work in committee today. Mrs. Wager said we'll regroup again after we hear from the state. Mr. Karpinski wants to get information on lessons learned and he was told the administrators are working on that and will bring that forward in July.

8. Community Relations – Mr. Nero Said CIAC has given guidance on sports. Mrs. Reyes said starting July 6th, the teams are starting... She and Mrs. Turner met. She said there are screenings every session. They are asking certain questions of the athletes before practice. The entire ECC is using the same consent form. All schools are starting on July 6th. Mrs. Reyes said it's been communicated to the coaches and will be shared with the parents. The two soccer coaches will start on July 6th. The groups will be no larger than 10. Mrs. Reues explained the process of what they can and can't do. Mr. Karpinski had comment on captain's practices and there was discussion on that.

9. Finance and Facilities – a. May 2020 Financial Statements – Mr. McCord made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Karpinski to approve the financial statements for the period ending May 31, 2020. Mr. Karpinski commented on the Eversource bills. Mrs. Martin said they talked to them last week and again today and she explained the issue with them. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Policy – The July meeting may be policy-heavy. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 8th. There was discussion of moving the meeting to July 15th. July 22nd will be left on the calendar and canceled if needed. There was discussion.

11. Public Comment – None.

12. Proposed for Executive Session – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:44 p.m. for the Purpose of Salary/Benefits of Non-Bargaining Unit Staff, Preston and Voluntown Incoming Student Contracts, and Contract Negotiations.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:52 p.m.

13. Salary/Benefits of Non-Bargaining Unit Staff – On a motion by Dr. Potemri, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted four in favor and three opposed to granting a 2% salary increase to non-bargaining unit staff. Mr. Karpinski, Mrs. Mastroianni, and Mr. McCord voted against the motion and stated they felt contract negotiations should be finished first.

14. Approval of Preston and Voluntown Incoming Student Contracts – Mrs. Wagner had comment. Both districts approved. On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Ms. Welborn, the Board voted unanimously to approve the contracts with Preston and Voluntown. Mrs. Wagner said this is very exciting time.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education