

Board of Education Minutes
June 28, 2021

DRAFT

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Monday, June 28, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting platform meeting ID 862 2929 7270. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mrs. Mastroianni, Dr. Potemri, and Mr. Mendolia (6:45 p.m.). Also present were Mr. Nero and Mrs. Martin. Chairperson Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Reports – a. Superintendent – Mr. Nero spoke about the grade three position and told the Board that Courtney Lauer was appointed. The reading specialist at the high school resigned and we are still trying to fill a custodial position. Questions were asked and answered about the reading teacher resignation.

b. BOE Chairperson – Mrs. Wagner asked about having discussions regarding grant funding. Should we be setting up special meetings or make it part of our regular Board meetings? Mr. Nero said they have been talking with the administrators about what their needs will be and he had further comment. Mrs. Wagner had further comment. Questions were asked and answered about whether any funds have been designated. Mr. Nero will be talking with his staff about it. Grant funding will be put on July's agenda. Further questions were asked and answered about funding. Mrs. Martin commented on the estimated dollar amount. There was comment on what other items the grant funding may be used. Board members had further comment. There was discussion. Questions were asked and answered. Mrs. Martin will get the matrix to the Board on what areas the funding may be used. There was further comment. Mrs. Wagner will send further information to the Board. Mr. Nero had comment. There was discussion. Mrs. Wagner asked about the Chrome Books and Mr. Nero answered. She congratulated the class of 2021 and had further comment on graduation.
5. Old Business – a. Review of Strategic Plan – Mrs. Wagner asked the Board to review the plan again. She reviewed the makeup of the committee that worked on the plan. She reviewed the vision of the graduate and didn't think that had changed. She had further comment. Ms. Welborn had reviewed the plan and would like to know where we are now; we should look at these five areas over the next five meetings and would like an assessment as to where we are now. Mrs. Wagner thought should we prioritize or start from the beginning. Mr. Karpinski wants to assess where we are since last March; there has to be real-time feedback and he had further comment. Ms. Welborn read her notes that said this is a template for 3-5 years. There was discussion. They will get feedback from the administrators. Mr. Nero will have administrative input for the meeting on July 14th. Board members had further comment. The administrators will be asked for their report in writing as well. The Board wants to know where we are and how are we measuring this particular item. Dr. Potemri wanted to make sure it's documented.

She had further comment. Mrs. Wagner will send an email out of the expectations. She had further comment. Mr. Nero had further comment. There was clarification.

b. ARP-3 Funds – Covered above in the BOE Chairperson Report.

6. New Business – a. Potential Board of Education Vacancy – Mrs. Wagner read a letter dated June 21, 2021, from Dr. Darren Robert resigning his position from the Board of Education. She thanked Dr. Robert for his years of service. She had further comment on Dr. Robert's tenure. Mrs. Wagner had comment. The Democratic Party had two candidates and they are endorsing Jamie Towle-Weicksel. Questions were asked and answered. Board members had comment. A Board member commented about having to be interviewed by the Board before they were appointed to fill vacancies and thought the two candidates should at least have a meet-and-greet. Mrs. Wagner had comment and said typically you with the endorsed candidate. Another Board member said he was not interviewed. There was further discussion on the process. Ms. Welborn made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Mastroianni to accept the endorsement of the Democratic Town Committee of Jamie-Towle-Weicksel to fill the vacancy of Darren Robert who resigned his position with the Board of Education. There was discussion. Board members wanted to make sure this was the proper procedure. Questions were asked and answered. Mrs. Wagner explained she has checked with the town clerk on this and also spoke to Toulia Balesstracci (Democratic Town Committee) about the procedure. Mrs. Wagner said we can fill the seat with whomever we like but she would like to go with the endorsed candidate. There was discussion that the nominee of the party is usually the one to be appointed. There was discussion. Mrs. Mastroianni explained how the process was different for the Board of Finance vacancy. There was further discussion. There was comment about whether this was a minority seat or a Democrat seat. Mrs. Mastroianni clarified. The motion passed with five voting in favor and one abstention. Mr. Karpinski abstained. Jamie Towle-Weicksel thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with them.

7. Student Success – None.

8. Community Relations – There had been discussion on how to get the word out about the budget and that will have to be worked on for next year. Mrs. Mastroianni thought we should use our strategic plan and suggested scheduling a committee meeting. She had further comment. Mrs. Mastroianni said there are about 130 people following the Board of Education Face Book page.

9. Facilities and Finance – a. May 2021 Financial Statements – The committee did not meet this evening but Mrs. Martin answered questions that had been submitted to her. Mr. Nero answered some questions as well. Further questions were answered regarding May's financial statements. Questions were asked and answered on policy costs. Utilities' costs were discussed. The remaining questions submitted were answered. On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Dr. Potemri, the Board voted unanimously to accept the May 2021 Financial Statements.

b. Fiscal Year End – There was nothing to report yet. Mrs. Wagner had comment. There was further comment.

10. Policy Votes – a. Policy/Regulation 4111 – Mrs. Wagner had comment. Board members had comment. There was discussion regarding regulations. Mr. Nero had comment. There was discussion. Ms. Welborn asked to break out sections for different categories of staff for their hiring procedures. There was comment that our procedures should be consistent. There was further discussion. There was further discussion. Mr. Nero had further comment. Mrs. Wagner will let Mr. Nero know what changes they would like to make to the document.

b. Policy 5114 – Ms. Welborn made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Mastroianni to accept policy 5114 as revised by Anne Littlefield. There was discussion. The motion passed unanimously. Regulation 5114 will be acted upon at the next meeting as will 4111.

11. Public Comment – None.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Ms. Welborn, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education