

Board of Education Minutes
February 26, 2022

DRAFT

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Saturday, February 26, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. using the hybrid format with those attending virtually via Zoom meeting ID 864 1458 3153. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mrs. Mazzella (via Zoom), Dr. Towle-Weicksel, Mrs. Mastroianni, Mr. Stefanowicz, and Mr. Mendolia. Also present was Mr. Nero and Mrs. Martin. Chairperson Wagner called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Old Business – Final Site Web Platform – Mrs. Wagner explained we have talked about this before and she elaborated. Mr. Nero had comment. He said we do have someone that is willing to do the web site. Board members had comment and thought we could still do cloud-based but with something different. There was discussion regarding the web site. Questions were asked about the integrity of the equipment and whether it could fail. There was comment and further discussion. There was discussion of raising the stipend to see if the interested person would be willing to do the website with Word Press. The Board is not going to purchase Final Site this year. There was further discussion. The stipend will be increased to \$5,000 for next year. It will be increased for the remainder of this year as well.
 - b. 2022-2023 Proposed Education Budget – Mrs. Martin reviewed the changes made since the Board last received the budget. There was a reduction due to cost-sharing with the town for the software program and she explained. Final Site will be taken out of the budget. AppliTrack is still in the budget. Mrs. Martin explained how that program works. There was discussion. Mrs. Martin will try to get accurate figures for the March 9th meeting so the Board can take action on that to purchase the program from the non-lapsing account. Board members had questions that were answered. There was discussion. Questions were asked about payout figures for those retiring. Mrs. Martin explained. Questions were asked about the program supervisors under the grant. Mrs. Martin had explanation. Further questions were asked and answered. Questions were asked on technology costs which Mr. Nero answered; the amount in question is for monitors, not computers. Questions were asked about advertising costs. Mrs. Martin explained that there are still some positions that would need to be in print. She had further comment. There was discussion on advertising. \$3,500 will be taken from advertising and put into professional development. Questions were asked about Title money and the reduction. Mrs. Martin explained there is a criterion that is used and we don't meet two of the three criteria. Mr. Nero had explanation as well. There was further explanation on grant funding. Further questions were asked and answered. Questions were asked about why certain positions are broken out. It is for reporting purposes. There was comment on the fields (athletic) and if we could keep the public apprised of the status. Mr. Nero had comment and said we are at a stand-still right now, referring to the irrigation. There was further discussion. Mr. Nero spoke of the need to have the parking lots resurfaced because it has been a couple of years since it has been done. He explained the rotation that had been

done in the past. Further questions were asked and answered. There was further talk of resurfacing and putting it off for another year. Mr. Nero said the lots would still need to be lined even if it is put off for another year. There was discussion of re-mulching the playground and the need to put the top-coat on every year. Questions were asked about the fields being done in phases. Mr. Nero had comment. There was discussion of non-lapsing funds and that the fund is not used for recurring items. Questions were asked about solar. There are still no savings; it is actually costing us money. There was discussion on the mulch and it being an annual expense. There was discussion on the grounds and whether to go out for an RFP for those services. It was decided to have that ready with a potential start date of July 1st. Mr. Nero said he and the groundskeeper have already had a discussion on this. There were further questions asked and answered. There was discussion of the salary for the incoming administrative assistant. There was discussion of a possible technology audit. Mr. Nero had comment. The Board supported a salary increase for the IT Director and Technician. Questions were asked on utilities that Mrs. Martin answered. The Board agreed on a budget with a 2.38% increase. Questions were asked and answered regarding a budget increase if special education services were removed. 1.21% of the budget is special education costs. We would be at 1.07% if we take out special education expenses. There was discussion of special education funding. The budget would be at .0027 by taking out special education and allowing for the tuition from Voluntown and Preston. There was discussion of a meeting date for next week. Further questions were asked and answered.

4. Public Comment – Brett Mastroianni, citizen, mentioned talking with the town’s IT director about the web site. This was brought up during the shared services conversation with the town.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Dr. Towle-Weicksel, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education
and
Peter L. Nero, Secretary Pro-Tem