

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, February 4, 2013 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Superintendent Jody Ian Goeler; Board members Sophieazane Bartlett, George Bauer, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, John Swendsen, Maryanne Van Aken and Pamela Zmek; student representatives Jake Dominello and Vincent Pistrutto; and Board Clerk Debra Carlton

Absent: Board member Gary Suslavich

Audience members included: Region 14 faculty and staff members Katie Yocis, Alice Pistrutto and John Dominello; *Voices* reporter Mike Preato; and about 6 additional members of the community

I. Call to Order

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Region 14's Finest – Mitchell Elementary School

Mr. Goeler invited Region 14's "Absolute" Finest award recipients, the MES Bird Watchers Club, along with their faculty advisor, Kristyn Franz, and Principal MaryLou Torre to come to the podium. Ms. Torre described the passion and enthusiasm displayed by the club in the pursuit of bird watching, as well as educating their fellow students about birds of our area. She delights in her almost daily visit from the group, who each spoke in turn about club activities, and even gave an example of the types of morning announcements they provide when describing a new bird to their school. Awards were given by Ms. Zmek to: Alexa Burke, Brady Calo, Kate Greene, Madison Griffin, Mia Higgins, Ryan Tomkalski, Chris Velleca, and Ms. Frantz. The group received a rousing applause from the audience and standing ovation from the Board of Education.

III. Review of the Minutes

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 22, 2013.*

Entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 5-0-2**. Mr. Chapman and Mr. Swendsen abstained, not having been in attendance for that meeting.

IV. Correspondence

None.

V. Report from the Chairman

Mr. Bauer noted that much work has been done in committee, and details would be covered during committee reports. He called on student representatives, Jake Dominello and Vincent Pistrutto, to give a report. Jake spoke about All State music auditions, upcoming Mr. Nonnewaug competition and talent show, achievements in girls basketball and gymnastics, Team Beta's progress on building their robot, and he expressed student concern over the early closing of the school library, which is unavailable to students after 2:30 pm. He also reported on the middle school, including a new "cyber room," world language projects – adding his opinion that world language programs at both WMS and NHS are strong – and the school security meetings which took place at that, and all, schools. Vincent reported on activities at the elementary schools, including a collection for Sandy Hook relief, upcoming sports day and student-faculty basketball game at MES, interaction between student buddies in grades K and 5 and between high school Spanish Club and elementary students, Traveling Thursdays visit to Russia at BES, drawing club, Book Buddies, High Touch High Tech, and Winter Concert.

VI. Report from the Superintendent

Mr. Goeler reported on a meeting with his teacher evaluation committee and the number of observations that will be required starting next year – 150% more time will be needed to accomplish this in order to meet State standards, and this unfunded mandate will affect the budget. He also attended an assessment/accountability subcommittee meeting at CAPSS on the Smarter Balance assessments. The first Superintendent's Roundtable was taped and is airing on NEAT TV, the search for a DF/O continues, and he had the pleasure of attending a Unified Sports basketball game today, noting that the athletes did a great job and the fans were very enthusiastic.

Mr. Bauer requested that ideas for topics of future roundtable discussions be forwarded to himself or Ms. Zmek.

VII. Privilege of the Floor

None.

VIII. Report from the Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Turk has 6 reports to deliver to the BoE, along with reports on transfers and special education. He and Mr. Goeler had a long and productive meeting with the auditor about his report, and will hope to share that with the Finance committee as soon as possible. He had a motion to offer regarding the bus contract, which Mr. Bauer preferred to add to the agenda under New Business. He requested a motion to that effect. Mr. Cosgriff entered a *motion to add to the agenda, under New Business, discussion and possible action on the bus contract.* Seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 7-0.**

Mr. Turk added that an RFP for food service is in final review, and one for the auditor is being reviewed for completeness by our current auditor. Secretaries are ready to commence with negotiations, IAs have requested information for same, and custodian negotiations is also coming down the pike. He was visited by new Woodbury BoF chair, Bill Butterly, by appointment, and had a drop in visit from First Selectman Stomski. The Board has been invited to the 2/13/13 meeting of the BoF, at which the town auditor will report on the agriscience audit.

IX. Committee Reports

Bylaws: Mr. Swendsen reported that the committee met tonight and reviewed a punch list of critical policies in need of revision. He offered two to the board and asked that they review them prior to the next meeting. There are also 17 bylaws in the 9000 series which were done in 2010 that need to be reviewed and 55 policies on the "critical list." He will be bringing to Finance a recommendation to review policies by series, which will be costly. The 17 bylaws, for example, will run \$750 and the 55 on the critical list will cost \$5500 to review/revise.

Public Relations: Ms. Zmek's committee hosted a visit from the Trumbull PTSA this evening and heard interesting ideas on how to present the budget to various community groups. Their ideas will help parents be more involved. She will have another meeting next week on community surveys.

Facilities: no report; Mr. Chapman indicated he hopes to meet next Monday or Tuesday.

Finance: Mr. Bauer reported that this committee did meet on the types of reports desired from the business office, as well as the budget presentation/format and ways to improve how it is communicated.

Personnel: no report; has been assisting in interviews for Director of Finance/Operations

Planning: Ms. Van Aken's committee met last week with Sgt. Roden and discussed increased presence in the buildings and the possibilities for SROs and the impact of that on the budget.

Negotiations: paras are in arbitration; secretaries and custodians upcoming. Mr. Cosgriff is looking for additional participation from ad hoc negotiations committee members, to help familiarize them with the process.

Building: will meet tomorrow evening at 7 pm.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

For purposes of discussion, Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the bus contract*, entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Ms. Van Aken. Mr. Swendsen asked for an update on garaging the buses in both towns. Mr. Turk explained that the value of this would be offset by too many negatives, including traveling mechanics and the need for security at both locations. In the end, he said, it made little financial sense to house the buses in separate towns. Mr. Chapman assumed the next multi-year contract would include, perhaps as add alts., items such as where the buses will be kept. The increases in the contract are 2.5% for 2013-14 and 2.75% for 2014-15. The **motion previously made carried 7-0.**

(The second agenda item in this category was held until after the final two categories)

XII. Board Announcements

Ms. Van Aken announced an ASAP town hall meeting on 2/6/13 at 7 pm at the Woodbury Senior/Community Center entitled "Good Kids, Bad Choices." Also, on 2/21/13 at WMS, there will be an internet safety meeting. Ms. Zmek noted the MES Science Fair tomorrow evening, and that Team Beta would be there, too.

XIII. Privilege of the Floor

Jessica DiFabbio, FFA representative for NHS, updated the board on activities in that program, including the Farm Bureau dinner on 1/24/13, February ski trip to Mohawk, Hunger Banquet, and FFA Week beginning on 2/15/13 and including a faculty appreciation breakfast on 2/26.

Deb DeSorbo, Woodbury, asked if a schedule for budget workshops is available yet, and was told one would be within the next couple of days.

Jill Buban, MES parent, asked if a SRO is planned for each school, and was told that, for the balance of this year, Sgt. Roden is rotating officers though each school and that 1 SRO per school is hoped for in next year's budget. Ms. Buban also asked if a curriculum coordinator/director is also in next year's budget. Mr. Goeler said it is, as that work has not gone away.

Mr. Swendsen commented that he understood that a room has been made available at BES for a trooper. Mr. Bauer knew of this arrangement and feels it is a mutually beneficial one.

Jim Crocker, Woodbury, asked for clarification of where we are with SROs. Mr. Bauer responded that a strategy in Woodbury is in place at no additional cost to the district where officers rotate through the schools, and that we are in the process of finding out what the schools need and what that will cost. Mr. Goeler added that the current plan allows us to see how it works and how students respond to it. Mr. Crocker asked if there has been communication with the First Selectman about this. Mr. Chapman responded that the short term plan is in place, and a long term solution is under deliberation. Ms. Zmek added that the board is looking at how other districts utilize SROs and how they become embedded into the school community, even serving as guest speakers in class. Mr. Crocker asked if it is ok to have the schools no different than they were in November. Mr. Goeler assured him that lock down drills are being practiced and security enhanced. Mr. Crocker asked if we have "decided not to put a human being at each school" and was told that we have.

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to move to Executive Session for the purpose of the Superintendent's evaluation, and to invite the Superintendent*. Entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 7-0**. The Board went into executive session at 8:52 pm.

XIV. Adjournment

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Mr. Swendsen. The **motion carried 7-0**. The meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 10:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sophieane Bartlett, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 2/6/13