

July 6, 2009

(Please note: these minutes are in draft form and not yet approved by the Board of Education)

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, July 6, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Nonnewaug High School Library, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present were Superintendent Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.; Board members Scott Baider, Linda Bulvanoski, Deborah Corsico, Charles Cosgriff, Monica Gati, Carla Juhas, Stephen Paluskas and Stephen Sordi; Director of Finance and Operations Jay Hubelbank; Director of Buildings and Grounds Michael Molzon; a newspaper reporter and four members of the community.

I. Call to Order

Dr. Cronin called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Cronin led the Pledge of Allegiance

III. Election of Board Chairperson

Dr. Cronin requested nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mr. Cosgriff nominated Ms. Gati. Hearing no further nominations, Dr. Cronin requested a *motion to close nominations*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff. **The motion carried 8-0.**

Paper ballots were submitted and tallied, and Ms. Gati was voted Board Chairperson by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

She assumed the duties of Chair and took over the meeting at this point.

IV. Election of Board Officers

a. Vice Chairperson

Ms. Gati requested nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mr. Paluskas nominated Mr. Cosgriff. Hearing no further nominations, Ms. Gati requested a *motion to close nominations*. Ms. Corsico made the motion, seconded by Mr. Baider. **The motion carried 8-0.**

Paper ballots were submitted and tallied, and Mr. Cosgriff was voted Board Vice Chairperson by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

b. Secretary

Ms. Gati requested nominations for the position of Secretary of the Board of Education.

Ms. Corsico nominated Ms. Bulvanoski. Hearing no further nominations, Ms. Gati requested a *motion to close nominations*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff. **The motion carried 8-0.**

Paper ballots were submitted and tallied, and Ms. Bulvanoski was voted Board Secretary by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

c. Treasurer

Ms. Gati requested nominations for the position of Treasurer of the Board of Education.

Mr. Cosgriff nominated Mr. Baider. Hearing no further nominations, Ms. Gati requested a *motion to close nominations*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff. **The motion carried 8-0.**

Paper ballots were submitted and tallied, and Mr. Baider was voted Board Treasurer by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

d. Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Ms. Gati requested nominations for the position of Assistant Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Education.

Ms. Corsico nominated Mr. Sordi. Hearing no further nominations, Ms. Gati requested a *motion to close nominations*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff. **The motion carried 8-0.**

Paper ballots were submitted and tallied, and Mr. Sordi was voted Board Assistant Secretary/Treasurer by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

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V. Board Appointments (action anticipated)

a. **Board Clerk – Debra Carlton**

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to appoint Ms. Carlton as Board Clerk*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0.**

b. **School Physicians**

- a. Andrea Needleman, M.D., Health Director, MES, WMS
- b. Charles McNair, M.D., NHS
- c. Andrew Wells, M.D., BES

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to appoint the school physicians listed above*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0.**

c. **School Dentist – James Bauer, D.M.D.**

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to appoint Dr. Bauer as school dentist*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0.**

d. **School Attorney**

Sullivan, Schoen, Campana & Connon, LLC

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to appoint Sullivan, Schoen, Campana & Connon, LLC as school attorney*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas. Mr. Baider asked if the firm had submitted a retainer proposal, and was told they had and that it included a discount based on past use. All negotiations are included in the retainer and Dr. Cronin and Mr. Hubelbank worked out that deal with SSCC. **The motion carried 8-0.**

e. **Bank Designee – Webster Bank**

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to appoint Webster Bank as bank designee*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0.**

VI. Review of the Minutes ( action anticipated)

Regular Meeting of June 15, 2009

Ms. Bulvanoski made a *motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2009 Board of Education meeting*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and **the motion carried 8-0.**

VII. Correspondence

None

VIII. Report from Superintendent

1. **Preschool Update**

Dr. Cronin discussed the availability and advantages of housing the preschool within the middle school. They include: availability of the entire portable section at the rear of the school; a larger space; no conflict with start/end times at WMS; direct playground access; handicap access entrance; air conditioning for extended year; and dedicated bathroom facilities. Most significant is that Alice Jones has been an administrator at a school readiness and head start program in the past and so brings her experience to the setting. Chris Quirk has contacted parents regarding the change of location and will have a parent evening soon for the purpose of meeting the new lead teacher and seeing the facilities. Asked if parents will be surveyed, Dr. Cronin said feedback will certainly be sought. The staff (director, therapists, teachers) prefer the middle school location, he said. Asked if Ms. Jones will be active in programming it was told that she would be; the FCS area is available for use by preschool and middle school students.

2. **Board/Administrators Retreat**

Dr. Cronin indicated that he wants to schedule an administrative council/Board of Education workshop retreat prior to the start of the next school year to look at a three year strategic plan and 2009-2010 goals. He hopes to schedule an evening in late August, maybe 6:00-9:00 pm

### 3. Bethlehem Elementary School Improvement Plan – Year end report

Dr. Cronin provided a handout showing DRP and writing test scores of Bethlehem Elementary students from this school year. The results showed a large majority of students scoring at or above benchmark standards and significant increases from fall to spring.

#### IX. Privilege of the Floor

The Board welcomes commentary from members of the community regarding agenda items or other topics of interest. The participating time will be limited to (3) minutes per person and (20) minutes overall to guarantee efficient operation of the meeting. In the event of a lengthy agenda, the (20) minute limit may be modified. Citizens wishing to make comments are requested to fill out the speaker sign-up sheet prior to the start of the meeting, recording their name and address, which must also be stated at the beginning of their public comment. Courtesy is expected during privilege of the floor, and we request that speakers be concise and respectful in their comments. Gossip, defamatory comments, abusive or vulgar language will not be permitted. Speakers are asked not to be repetitious of comments already made to the Board. Public comment is normally not invited for topics listed for action after having been publicly discussed at one or more meetings. Comments will be heard and considered. Generally, the Board will not discuss or address or act on an item not on the agenda. The primary purpose of the meeting is for the Board to conduct its business as charged by law. Spontaneous discussion, as well as disorder or disruption, prevent the Board from doing its work and will not be permitted.

Susan Scherf, Bethlehem, cited a school district in California which was in violation of loss of instructional time after having shortened math classes by 5 minutes. She suspects R14 could be similarly in violation, to which Dr. Cronin assured her we are not. She said dismissal at BES still takes too long (as long as ½ hour) and hopes this problem will soon be resolved; otherwise, she will call for an audit from the state. Dr. Cronin explained that R14's hours of instruction are submitted to the state and that Ms. Scherf's calculations are not accurate. She asked if he was calling her a liar, and said she wants the state to see the loss of academic time. Buses, too, are 20-25 minutes late, she said, and this was refuted by Mr. Hubelbank, who said bus arrival and departure times are recorded daily. She also noted that a ruling from the court is expected within a couple of weeks and hopes there is a plan if the ruling goes in their favor. She feels there is "jumping around" with the preschool, and hopes there is a plan if the region should lose the lawsuit.

#### X. Report from Director of Finance and Operations

##### 1. Discussion/possible action on waiving the bidding process for the hot water heater at Woodbury Middle School

Mr. Molzon explained the water heater issues at WMS and limitations of the current one as well as options for a smaller boiler that would quickly heat hot water without unnecessarily storing large amounts of unused water. He answered questions about re-piping, added costs for controls, simplifying the system, breakdown of costs for materials and labor, time needed for the work, and his preference to use the company that is familiar with the building (Schmidt). In doing the work they will avoid disturbance of asbestos as opposed to removing it.

Ms. Corsico made *a motion to accept the proposal submitted and to waive the bid policy*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas. Mr. Baider requested a reporting of all costs associated with this project, such as electrical and plumbing. **The motion carried 8-0.**

##### 2. Discussion/possible action on increasing lunch prices for 2009-2010

Mr. Hubelbank offered a handout explaining school lunch program costs; explained that the self-sustaining program ran at a deficit this year; added that the amounts of free, government provided foods, such as cheese, have diminished; and told that the region has few free/reduced qualifying families and therefore does not received much back on that. He proposed a small increase to student lunch prices and requested a motion. Mr. Paluskas made *a motion to increase elementary school lunch prices to \$2.35 and middle/high school lunch prices to \$2.75*, seconded by Mr. Baider and **the motion carried 8-0.**

##### 3. Update on summer facilities projects

Mr. Hubelbank also provided information about summer facilities projects as well as financial information about the newly installed tennis courts at WMS. Mr. Molzon expressed his gratitude to the Board for having taken on this project with the goal of doing it right.

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**4. Update on end of year close out for 2008-09**

Mr. Hubelbank provided a preliminary end of year budget report. Dr. Cronin asked for a list of projects for the non-recurring capital account. Mr. Sordi asked if vo-tech transportation can be bid out. Mr. Hubelbank said it is more common to try to combine with other districts; also, there have been occasions when Education Connection has provided help, such as in transporting to ACES in New Haven.

**5. Update on start up for 2009-10**

Mr. Hubelbank showed anticipated start up costs for next year, noting that several more teachers are yet to be hired.

Ms. Gengenbach mentioned \$320,000 in unreimbursed costs due to the region moving a program.

Mr. Hubelbank replied that the region felt it acted within the guidelines that were given and is fighting that decision.

**XI. Old Business**

**Football Co-op Update**

Considerable discussion took place regarding the co-op with Region 12. Dr. Cronin felt the bottom line in Dr. Storm's memo is the agreement that the 2 boards will discuss the co-op at the end of the year. It was made clear that Region 12 is setting up an account to collect all fees and that their students must be covered by insurance. Mr. Baider felt the language implied that Region 14 is contracting with Region 12 parents, which it cannot do. There was also concern about a no-cut clause and the inability to refuse additional players. Mr. Hubelbank reminded that after the first year, the co-op can be dissolved at any time. Dr. Cronin considers us to be back to square one. He feels badly for the kids, as they lack the backing of their town's school board which must decide if it wants the co-op.

Former Region 12 board member, Larry O'Toole, compared this co-op to others in which Region 12 participates but, in those, the region pays only for coaches and not for things like ice time, for example. He is optimistic that the new board will support the co-op and urged trying it out for a year to see how it goes. Mr. Baider stressed the importance of the agreement stating we are partnering with the board, not parents. It was decided that the memo of understanding would be redrafted with Region 14's two main points addressed, and Region 12 can either sign it or not. Mr. Paluskas worried that the rewrite might not meet CIAC requirements; therefore, it was decided that the contract would be faxed to Paul Hoey at CIAC.

**XII. New Business**

**1. Personnel**

**A. Approval of Appointments to Teaching Positions**

- a. Debra O'Leary, 1.0 School Psychologist, Woodbury Middle School
- b. Marcia Peterson, 1.0 Social Studies Teacher, Nonnewaug High School
- c. Jessica Margiotta, 0.4 English Teacher, Nonnewaug High School
- d. Katie Donoghue-Bossolt, 1.0 Special Education Teacher, Bethlehem Elementary School
- e. Allison Croze, 1.0 Mathematics Teacher, Woodbury Middle School
- f. Charles Von Hollen, 1.0 Computer Technology Teacher, Woodbury Middle School
- g. Jennifer Armour, 1.0 Guidance Counselor, Woodbury Middle School
- h. Dorine Russo, 1.0 Guidance Counselor, Nonnewaug High School

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- i. Joanna Gaffney, 1.0 Social Studies Teacher, Woodbury Middle School
- j. Sharon Zguzenski, 1.0 Mathematics Teacher, Nonnewaug High School

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to approve the above listed appointees*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas and the **motion carried 8-0**. Mr. Baider asked if these, for the most part, replace retirees, to which Mr. Hubelbank responded with a handout showing which ones did. Dr. Cronin added that stimulus money covered several positions, which allowed funds for a Dean of Students at the high school. This position will be combined with athletic director, allowing the teacher who currently serves as AD to have more teaching time.

#### B. Approval of Appointments to Extra Duty Positions

Please refer to handout in Board packet

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to approve the list of extra duty assignments*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas. Ms. Juhas questioned the athletic academic advisor position, and wondered if non-athletes are afforded the same academic support. Dr. Cronin assured her that this service would be opened up to all needy students. **The motion carried 7-0-1**, as Mr. Sordi abstained from voting.

#### C. Approval of Leave of Absence

Tara Prescott, Kindergarten Teacher, Bethlehem Elementary School, until approximately November 23, 2009

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to approve this leave*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas and the **motion carried 8-0**.

### 2. Approval of Board of Education 2009-2010 Meeting Dates

Please refer to handout in Board packet

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to approve the list of meetings*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas and the **motion carried 8-0**.

### XIII. Board Announcements

Mr. Sordi spoke about his experience at Gradnite and how impressed he was by the effort and how grateful he was to have been asked to attend. He knows what a high risk night graduation is and appreciates this activity as a way to keep the students safe. He observed the results of much planning and cooperation, was impressed with security and supervision, and thought the activities were incredible. He named a number of the organizers, and saw it as an example of the community pulling together. He suggested a thank you letter from the Board, to which they agreed.

### XIV. Executive Session

Mr. Paluskas made a *motion to go into Executive Session to discuss administrative union contracts*, seconded by Mr. Baider, and the **motion carried 8-0**. Mr. Hubelbank was invited to attend. Following the session, Ms. Corsico made a *motion to accept the salary adjustment to the middle school assistant principal salary*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

### XV. Adjournment

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas and the **motion carried 8-0**. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Linda Bulvanoski, Secretary  
Regional School District #14 Board of Education