

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, May 4, 2009, following a district meeting in the Nonnewaug High School Library, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present were Board Chairperson Linda Bulvanoski, and Board members Scott Baider, Deborah Corsico, Charles Cosgriff, Monica Gati, Stephen Paluskas and Stephen Sordi. Also present, Director of Finance and Operations Jay Hubelbank; Director of Special Services Christopher Quirk; Nonnewaug students Joseph Pistritto and Michael DiMaio; a newspaper reporter and about seventeen members of the community.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Bulvanoski called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Bulvanoski led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Bulvanoski requested a *motion to add to the agenda the approval of minutes for both the special Board meeting of April 6, 2009 and the special meeting of April 8, 2009*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff and the **motion carried 7-0**.

Ms. Bulvanoski requested a *motion to move the preschool update to old business on the agenda*, as Dr. Cronin was not present and would not be reporting on that in his report. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, and the **motion carried 7-0**.

Ms. Bulvanoski requested a *motion to table executive session items until the next meeting*.

Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Ms. Gati, and the **motion carried 7-0**.

Ms. Bulvanoski requested a *motion to table Board of Education goals*, also under Dr. Cronin's report. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Baider, and the **motion carried 7-0**.

III. PRESENTATION

Nonnewaug High School students Joe Pistritto and Mike DiMaio each told of his experience at the Presidential Inauguration in January. Each was selected through different application processes to attend the event. Joe's comments were accompanied by slides of both the inauguration and the various seminars and sight seeing opportunities that were a part of his trip. Mike joked that his vantage point at the event was not as advantageous as Joe's but he, too, was grateful for having been able to attend. During his comments, Mike took the opportunity to remind the audience of the upcoming Gladiators event at NHS.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES

1. District Budget Hearing of April 6, 2009
2. Regular Board Meeting of April 6, 2009
3. Special Meeting of April 22, 2009
4. Special Board Meeting of April 6, 2009
5. Special Board Meeting of April 8, 2009

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IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES (Cont)

Ms. Corsico *moved to accept each of these five sets of minutes*, and the motions were all seconded by Mr. Paluskas.

The motions carried 7-0.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Bulvanoski noted correspondence from out-of-district parents offering gratitude for their student having the opportunity to attend the agriscience program. She acknowledged a second correspondence from a parent regarding a personnel issue.

VI. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Ms. Bulvanoski, though not able to attend the *Sound of Music* production at Nonnewaug this past weekend, reported that she had heard the performance was outstanding and thanked Walter Culup and Lucia Dressel, as well as the cast and crew, for a great job.

She also acknowledged the efforts of Jennifer DeWitt, of ASAP, and Maryanne VanAken who conducted a drug collection day recently, to dispose of prescription and other medications not being used.

VII. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Cronin was not able to attend the meeting.

VIII. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Pam Gengenbach, Woodbury, distributed copies of a letter she received from Dr. Cronin, as well as partial copies of court transcripts during which he testified about overcrowding at the Mitchell School and reconfiguration. His response to a question having something to do with had there not been overcrowding at that school, would he have proposed reconfiguring the schools, to which he responded probably not. Ms. Gengenbach took that to mean that overcrowding was the only reason for reconfiguration. She also questioned estimates of cost savings in moving the preschool from CAST to MES.

Tom Arras, Woodbury, referenced responses to questions from Art McNally about per pupil cost data. He noted that cost analysis for preschool is available but not cost of vo-ag students.

Susan Scherf, Bethlehem, thanked Mr. Hubelbank for an answer to her letter. She considers the processes of the Board of Education deplorable. She cited fewer students and teachers but no change in the budget. She does not consider Dr. Cronin to have taken a pay freeze because he has an annuity. She disapproves of all the new staff coming from Naugatuck. She reviewed her opinions that families have been lost to reconfiguration, bus rides are too long, dismissal is too early, and she suspects hidden costs.

Maryann Sprague, Bethlehem, was concerned that the schools might be conducting parent workshops called "real life, real talk." She was concerned about a perceived relationship with Planned Parenthood. She asked about parent workshops about comprehensive health and wondered if K-5 students were being taught that same sex parenting is ok. Ms. Bulvanoski assured her that health class is not part of the K-5 curriculum.

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IX. REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Mr. Hubelbank explained that the region opts not to participate in the CT Healthy Foods Program because it causes loss of reimbursement and disallows most food sold at concessions and foods served at birthday celebrations. He assured the Board that all food served in school cafeterias meets or exceeds healthy food guidelines. He requested a *motion not to participate in the CT Healthy Foods Program for 2009-2010*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Baider and the **motion carried 7-0**.

Mr. Hubelbank reported that the administration is following all directives from the health departments regarding the flu situation and that notices have been sent to families.

He also responded to comments that the budget brochure was misleading as it lacked per pupil expenditure. He said that the 0.87% increase is compared to last year's budget, as all school budgets are. He reviewed that staffing is a function of enrollment and staffing reductions are proportional to the decreased enrollment at the elementary level. He added that teachers had been asked to consider a wage freeze and had met with their union.

He also addressed the costs associated with removing the portables at MES. The landscaping costs are those involved in leveling off the site to make it safe as it is in an area traveled by students.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reporting for the Facilities Committee, Mr. Baider said they had met tonight and discussed Woodbury Baseball's interest in leasing land from the region. Concrete has been poured for the WMS tennis courts. The committee also considered maintenance issues at the schools.

Reporting for the Personnel Committee, Ms. Gati reviewed the steps taken in the search for the next Nonnewaug principal. On April 22nd, the Board selected Lori Ferreira, pending a successful site visit a few days later. The site visit was positive and the Board is pleased with the outcome of the search, she said. Mr. Cosgriff added that everyone the Board members spoke with had enthusiastic comments about Ms. Ferreira. Mr. Sordi said the site visit was quite impressive in terms of what Lori's current staff had to say. Mr. Baider agreed that there was tremendous support for her initiatives, and he has a good sense of what she will bring to Region 14.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Bullying Policy

Action on this item was tabled.

2. Preschool Update

Mr. Quirk gave highlights including the recruitment of typical peers for the program. There was a meeting with parents of current preschoolers last week; furniture needed was identified; OT/PT staff has been consulted about playground equipment needs; and identification of what is currently stored at CAST was done. He stressed that the special services delivery staff are the Region 14 staff and they are unanimously on board with the move to MES. He commented that the move is designed to move the program forward and that we are not best served by doing anything simply because it is what we have been doing for 20 years.

Mr. Hubelbank responded to a number of mis-statements in a letter from one of the CAST directors.

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XI. OLD BUSINESS (Cont)

Mr. Quirk also explained the tuition costs associated with private placements and the cost effectiveness of an in-district program. He said the timing of Ms. Goodman's retirement, and growing numbers, make the timing for the move right.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel

a. Approval of Appointment to Administrative Position

Ms. Gati made a *motion to approve the appointment of Lori Ferreira to the position of Principal of Nonnewaug High School, effective July 1, 2009*. Mr. Cosgriff seconded the motion and the **motion carried 7-0**.

b. Approval of Leave of Absence

Ms. Gati made a *motion to approve the leave of absence of Amy Schmitt for the 2009-2010 school year*. Mr. Paluskas seconded the motion and the **motion carried 7-0**.

2. Review/possible action on Region 14 Educational Technology Plan (ED 616)

Action on this item was tabled.

XII. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Corsico did attend the *Sound of Music* and echoed Ms. Bulvanoski's praise for Ms. Dressel, Mr. Culup and the students, who she said did a tremendous job and are very talented.

Ms. Gati commented on the academic banquet at which Nonnewaug's very impressive top 10% were honored.

Mr. Paluskas, who participates on several scholarship committees, has been proud and amazed at the accomplishments of the students who, although not necessarily part of the top 10%, are very impressive.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paluskas made the *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Ms. Corsico. The **motion carried 7-0**.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Corsico, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
Regional School District #14 Board of Education