

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MARCH 8, 2012

Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were Faith Leitner, Secretary, Deborah Downie, Alisa Morrison, Kevin Bornstein, Frank Todisco.

Late Arrival: Craig Esposito – 8:08 p.m.

Also present were Leanne Masterjoseph, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, Reka Keller, Student Government, members of the staff, students and interested citizens.

Gail MacDonald welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Communications & Recognitions

Recognitions:

Leanne Masterjoseph recognized the following:

- “We Are Stonington Public Schools Award” recipients for March were:
 - Elise Adcock
 - Libby Hall
 - Roger Nadeau
 - Deborah Pratt
 - Amy Sisk
- Everyone associated with the production of the play “Sound of Music”
- Christian Rogerson who was named a finalist in the 2012 National Merit Scholarship Competition
- Amy Manning and Alex Schroeder for being recognized as SHS 2011-12 CIAC Scholar-Athlete Award winners
- Dana Shroyer and Gabrielle Zelepos for receiving the 2011-12 CAS Fine Arts Award
- Elias Gharios and Melanie Floyd as recipients of the 2011-12 CABA Leadership Award
- Staff member Feng Xue Sure who recently became a naturalized United States citizen
- Board of Education members and presented them with a gift of appreciation

Gail MacDonald congratulated all who received the various awards.

Gail MacDonald recognized everyone who played a part in supporting families, staff and students during the recent difficult event in our schools.

Communications:

Leanne Masterjoseph received communications on the success of the play “Sound of Music”.

Leanne Masterjoseph also received communications through phone and email regarding discussions on the 2011-12 school calendar.

Board members received communications regarding cost of MMS field trips.

Deborah Downie received communications regarding the play “Sound of Music” and the 2011-12 school calendar.

Faith Leitner received communications from the Mystic Garden Club in regards to honoring SHS student who recently passed and commented on the recent talk on Channel 12 from Virginia Brown, Director of Special Services on our excellent representation at Avalon.

Gail MacDonald made note of a CABA article, Relevance of School Boards, mentioning a Governor’s town hall tour.

Comments from Citizens

Gail MacDonald asked that citizens keep comments to a two minute limit per person and opened the meeting to comments from citizens.

United Way representatives presented Leanne Masterjoseph with the Volunteer of the Year 2011 Chairman's Award.

Elias Gharios commented on keeping the graduation date as is for various reasons.

Sue Jones thanked Gail MacDonald for her presentation to the Board of Finance and reminded everyone to show their support at the upcoming deliberations.

Jonathan Towne commented on the graduation date and urged the Board to keep the date as is.

Tony Gharios thanked the Board for all they do and also asked the Board to consider not changing the graduation date.

Bill Cutler commented on the recent staff member's US citizenship and suggested that students cover the same questions for citizenship in their studies.

Chris Blanchard commented on the graduation date and asked the Board not to change the date.

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes –February 9, 2012 (Regular)
February 23, 2012 (Special)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Inter-Account Transfers

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Faith Leitner:

Motion 1: To approve the Consent Agenda items A through C as presented.

Aye: All

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Faith Leitner:

Motion 2: To move item seven on the agenda 2011-2012 Calendar Confirmation up in the agenda.

Aye: All

2011-2012 Calendar Confirmation

The Board discussed the 2011-12 calendar in regards to firming a graduation date and the total number of school days in the 2011-12 school year. The Board asked administration for their input.

Dr. Murphy gave the Board clarification on the impact of the suggested changes to the 2011-2012 calendar.

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The following motion was made by Kevin Bornstein and seconded by Alisa Morrison:

Motion 3: To make up the required three days on April 11, 12, and 13th changing the school year from 182 school days to 180 school days for students K-12, ending the school the year on June 8, 2012

Aye: All

Motion amended by Alisa Morrison to have June 8, 2012 as a half-day session.

Aye: All

Gail MacDonald explained that the 2011-2012 calendar change to 180 school days will be for all K-12 students.

Gail MacDonald asked that the 2012-2013 calendar be revisited at a later date.

Gail MacDonald asked the audience for their support at the upcoming Board of Finance deliberations on the 2012-2013 Proposed Budget.

Elementary Building Project

Gail MacDonald recapped last month's discussion with the Building Committee and the Selectman.

Gail MacDonald and the Board members discussed strategies on how to move forward with the Elementary Building Project. The Board discussed a need for a meeting with the Board of Selectman.

BOE Proposed Budget 2012-2013

Gail MacDonald reported on the Board's presentation on March 7th to the Board of Finance. Gail noted the deliberations will be on March 21st, March 28th and April 4th.

Field Trip Approval – Costa Rica 2013

Leanne Masterjoseph introduced the teachers, Nori Lembree and Jennifer Stefanowicz, involved in the organizing of the Costa Rica 2013 field trip.

Alisa Morrison noted that she attended the presentation at the high school on the field trip and believes it to be a very organized trip.

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Faith Leitner.

Motion 4: To approve the proposed school sponsored trip to Costa Rica for students in February 2013

Aye: All

Retirement 2011-2012

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Alisa Morrison.

Motion 5: To accept the following 2012 retirements with regrets and appreciation for their many years of service. To spread across the minutes resolutions commemorating the retirements of Joyce Birtcher and Ginny Bitting.

Aye: All

Annual Contract Non-Renewal Authorization by the BOE

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Frank Todisco.

Motion 6: To authorize and direct the Superintendent of Schools, in her capacity as Chief Executive of the Board of Education, to make and communicate decisions concerning the non-renewal and termination of certified professional staff in the Board's employ and to furnish written notices of non-renewal and termination and, where required, reasons therefore, to affected non-tenured teachers, as provided in provisions of the Connecticut Teacher Tenure Law applicable to non-tenured teachers.

Aye: All

Gail MacDonald explained that the Board is required to give the Superintendent this permission so that notifications can be made by April 1, 2012.

LEARN Board of Directors

Gail MacDonald noted that this may be part of the committee reports in the future, and that the Board of Directors from LEARN will be sending out a regular written report of action after each meeting.

Committee Reports

- Safe School Committee – Deborah Downie reported that the next meeting will be March 9th.
- Special Services Committee – Deborah Downie reported that a guest Music Therapy Speaker attended the meeting. Deb noted that there will be some interesting and exciting events coming up such as a transition event coming up in April, Special Olympics.
- Data Mining Committee – Craig Esposito noted that the meeting on Monday reviewed the list of possible data requests.
- SEF Committee – Faith Leitner reported that the committee met on Monday and wrapped up the recent fundraiser which will become a yearly fundraiser, Blue Mondays were also discussed and reported a donation of alto saxophone.
- STEM – Kevin Bornstein noted that there will be a meeting this week.
- Athletic Committee – Alisa Morrison reported that discussion focused on athletic philosophy and work with the Policy Committee will continue. Next meeting scheduled for March 29th.
- Fields Task Force – Alisa Morrison noted that next meeting will be on Monday 12th and discussion will focus on forwarding a plan to the Board of Selectman.
- Revenue Generation Committee – Frank Todisco reported that the committee met on March 7th with discussions on the progress of Save Me A Seat Sponsorship, softball scoreboard, and screen showing during the play.
- Policy Committee – Frank Todisco reported that the committee is waiting on revisions to two policies.

Gail MacDonald reported on the upcoming event A Day on the Hill and shared that she would be attending.

Monthly Reports

All monthly reports were presented in written form as part of the Board packet.

Bill King addressed the Boards questions on protocols covered in the Operations Monthly Report.

Alisa Morrison asked for comments from Administration in regards to progress of CAPT testing. Administration answered the Boards questions.

Faith Leitner noted that she is pleased to see a large number of volunteer coaches.

Kevin Bornstein asked for comments from Administration on Cohort 3. Administration answered the Boards questions.

Gail MacDonald thanked Administration for their work on the monthly reports.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

Gretchen Noonan commented on the 2011-2012 calendar changes.

Bob Mitchell asked the Board about the upcoming Board of Finance meeting schedule.

Board Comments/Concerns

Kevin Bornstein suggested that correspondence be written in response to the middle schools field trips.

Gail MacDonald noted that correspondence has already been sent.

Gail MacDonald noted that the Chief Darren Stewart has been chosen to receive the Distinguished Chief Award from the Police Commission Association of Connecticut which will be presented on May 30th. Gail also mentioned that an opportunity to take out an advertisement is available which would create funds for a scholarship given to those interested in studying Criminal Justice.

Gail MacDonald noted that the Governor is touring a series of town halls in the state including one in New London. Gail offered the Board an opportunity to submit questions that can be taken to the referendum.

The Board discussed topics that will be discussed on March 14th, at A Day on the Hill.

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Kevin Bornstein

Motion 7: To adjourn at 9:12 p.m.

Aye: All



Faith Leitner, Board Secretary