

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING July 11 2013

Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were Faith Leitner, Secretary, Deborah Downie, Alisa Morrison, Frank Todisco, Kevin Bornstein and Craig Esposito.

Also present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Communications & Recognitions

Communications

Faith Leitner and Alisa Morrison communicated on the high school graduation noting that it was an outstanding event and ran very smoothly.

Gail MacDonald shared a communication from a student who requested the district work towards serving more healthy foods and more choices of food in our schools. Mrs. MacDonald has been in contact with Tim Paquette who suggested a student food advisory council be created to address these issues in the future.

Recognitions

There were no recognitions at this time.

Comments from Citizens

There were no comments at this time.

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes –June 13, 2013(Regular)
May 8, 2013 (Special Joint Mtg.)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Textbook Adoption: Discovering Our Past A History of the United States
by McGraw Hill – Supporting Info -Second Read
- E. Policy 5113 – Attendance/Excuses/Dismissal – Second Read
- F. Policy 5113.2 – Truancy – Second Read
- G. Policy 6145.1- Extra-Curricular Eligibility – Second Read
- H. Official Replacement of Finance Manager

The following motion was made by Frank Todisco and seconded by Alisa Morrison:

Motion 1: To approve the Consent Agenda Items A-H as presented.

All: Aye

Approval of Superintendent's Annual Evaluation/Contract Extension

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Frank Todisco:

Motion 2: To extend the Superintendent's contract by a year, and to give a 2.5% increase and to approve the Superintendent's Evaluation as amended.

All: Aye

Gail MacDonald added the Board is certainly more than pleased with Dr. Riley's performance and look forward to working with him in the following years.

Dr. Riley thanked the Board for the positive evaluation and for their support.

Board Handbook – First Read

Gail MacDonald explained the handbook is something the Policy Committee has been working on for quite a while on. Mrs. MacDonald noted that this document will be continued to be updated as needed. Mrs. MacDonald mentioned that this handbook will be on the Board agenda in August for approval.

Kevin Bornstein spoke of the process in which the handbook was started and how the Board used handbooks from other districts as examples to create this Board's handbook.

Frank Todisco noted that this will be helpful for a new member joining the Board and it will help them understand the expectations and how all the pieces come together.

Education Specifications/Elementary

Dr. Riley distributed the Educational Specifications for Elementary Schools with the newly revised specification spreadsheets for both West Vine and Deans Mill Schools. Dr. Riley asked that the Board approve the new revisions.

The Board had questions regarding the K-4 Ed Specifications relative to class sizes, preschool, green concept, and other specs.

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

Motion 3: To approve the K-4 Educational Specification narrative with the addition of the detail specification spreadsheets for West Vine and Deans Mill Schools as presented.

All: Aye

Funding – SAT, PSAT, AP Testing

The Board discussed the form in which students will pay for the testing. The Board wants to make it clear that students will only have one test paid for per year.

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Van Riley reminded the Board of the following important dates:

- August 3rd Board workshop on policies and procedures
- Aug 19th New Teacher Orientation to be held at SHS
- Aug 20th Administrative Retreat to be held out of district

Presentation on Reading Intervention Data/Supporting Information By: Tim Smith, PMS Principal

Tim presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Read Naturally Live Program at Pawcatuck Middle School. Mr. Smith shared detail and supporting data on the program and how well it has been working at the middle school to increase student's reading fluency and reading level.

The Board asked if this program would be continuing in the new school year and how it is being used with the curriculum recently approved. The Board also asked how students are identified and how special education students benefited from this program. Gail MacDonald requested data from both middle schools to see if there is a correlation between students who participate in the program and those who are enrolled in the Free and Reduced program. Gail MacDonald asked if there are students that would not be a good fit for the program. The Board also asked how many of the kids this year will continue to use the program. The Board requested a revised copy of the presentation.

Mr. Smith explained this will continue to be used and feels this is one more tool and intervention in the toolbox along with the new curriculum. Mr. Smith went on to explain that students are identified not only by the CMT test results but also with benchmark assessments. Mr. Smith noted that with special education students there was a mix of results. Mr. Smith reported that fifty percent of the students will be in the program again this school year and noted that some students are not a good fit due to attention issues. Mr. Smith explained that these students are primarily special education students who already receive extra help. Nikki Gullickson provided more detail on what tools and strategies are currently used to identify students.

Legislation re: Communication to Parents

Gail MacDonald asked for the Board's comments on the issue of the legislation regarding communication to parents since this would be the last time the Board meets before CABA's deadline for any changes. The Board agreed to contact CABA requesting that this be a priority and put on their agenda for further discussion. The Board discussed ways to communicate to parents that adhere to the new legislation and will also work with the Board of Selectman on other methods. The Board also will request further interpretation from Nick Grello on this legislation.

SHS Update – SHS X-Block and AP Courses

Dr. Riley reported he sent a memo to the Board and local press in reference to this issue. Dr. Riley stated a decision was made to leave the X-Block as it is for the next school year and to look further into this issue. Dr. Riley noted that the administration looked at the AP courses and based on Mr. Freise's recommendation were able to add an additional AP section to the schedule for AP Psychology and that AP Calculus will be left as is since all twenty-six students enrolled will be able to take the course.

The Board asked by adding an additional AP Physics class did the other classes get bigger or were any other classes affected. Mark Friese reported that none were affected.

Monthly Report

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

Faith Leitner asked Bill King who the sponsors were for the softball scoreboard and feels that it would be good to know to thank them for their support.

Bill King reported that the following sponsors were: South Shore Heating and Cooling, SNS Electric Co., Inc., Marinello Schools of Beauty, Connecticut Community Credit Union and LaQuinta Inn & Suites with one sponsor panel remaining.

Faith Leitner had questions about the First Student contract and the status of relocation of the bus depot.

Bill King explained the steps that are in process for the relocation and has notified First Student that the move will be made sometime at the end of the calendar year.

Gail MacDonald asked if the percentage increases for the contract renewal with First Student are in line.

Bill King shared the information supporting the increases in the contract.

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Frank Todisco:

Motion 4: To approve the extension of the contract with the percentages as listed above with First Student.

All: Aye

Faith Leitner spoke of an article in the Day newspaper pertaining to State testing and what impact that will have on the evaluation system.

Nikki Gullickson responded to Mrs. Leitner's question.

Committee Reports

Alisa Morrison reported that the turf will be delivered on July 22 and that the project is on track and will be finished in early August. Mrs. Morrison noted that there will be an emergency meeting next week to discuss various issues including the payment of new nets, which are now estimated at \$10,000.

Faith Leitner reported on the Building Committee meeting and mentioned that Cindy Ladwig from the Town Clerk's office was present and discussed FOI issues, specs were distributed and the POCD document was discussed and approved.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

There were no comments at this time.

Gail MacDonald requested that item “XVI-a” be added to the agenda to discuss the approval of individual employee contracts.

Approval of Individual Contracts

The Individual Contracts for approval are:

Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent
Business Manager
Computer Technician I
Computer Technician II
COTA – (salary re-opener)
Director of Technology
Facilities Manager
Food Service Director

Dr. Riley noted that all contracts are ready to for approval with one modification to the Assistant Superintendent’s contract regarding mileage.

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Frank Todisco:

Motion 5: To approve the individual contracts with one modification to the Assistant Superintendent’s contract.

All: Aye

Items for Future Agendas

No items discussed.

Board Comments/Concerns

Gail MacDonald reminded the Board that the retreat is on August 3 at Ender’s Island and asked that Board think about items for that agenda.

Faith Leitner asked for a list of hours of operation for all the schools during the summer time.

The following motion was made by Gail MacDonald and seconded by Kevin Bornstein:

Motion 6: To adjourn at 8:39 p.m.

Aye: All


Faith Leitner, Board Secretary