

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING November 14, 2013

Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Dr. Riley introduced Bill King and explained that he would be administering the Oath of Office to the newly elected Board members.

Swearing In of New BOE Members

Bill King, Business Manager, asked the newly elected members to rise and take the pledge of oath. The newly appointed Board members were Gail MacDonald, Faith Leitner, Alisa Morrison, and Alexa Garvey.

Board members also present were Craig Esposito, Deborah Downie, and Frank Todisco.

Also present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, Jon Dong filling in for Emily Craig of the Student Government, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Selection of Board of Education Chairperson

Dr. Riley explained the procedure for nominating and selecting a Board chairperson and asked a motion be made for nomination.

Two names were placed for nomination.

Craig Esposito nominated Gail MacDonald and Faith Leitner nominated Frank Todisco.

Gail MacDonald stated she would yield to Frank Todisco and explained her role as chair throughout the past years. Mrs. MacDonald thanked the Board and Craig Esposito for the nomination but asked her name be withdrawn.

Motion 1: To nominate Frank Todisco for Board Chairman.

The vote was as follows:

Gail MacDonald: Abstained

Craig Esposito: Abstained

Alisa Morrison: Yes

Deborah Downie: Yes

Faith Leitner: Yes

Frank Todisco: Yes

Alexa Garvey: Yes

Motion carried.

Frank Todisco was elected and assumed the duties of Board Chairman.

Selection of Board of Education Secretary

Frank Todisco called for nominations for Board Secretary.

One name was placed for nomination.

Faith Leitner nominated Deborah Downie for Board Secretary.

Motion 2: To nominate Deborah Downie for Board Secretary.

Aye: All

Frank Todisco introduced and thanked Brownie Troop 906 of Pawcatuck, for opening the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of "The Curious Savage" from SHS Drama Students

Frank Todisco presented the SHS drama club and Dr. Riley asked all to join him the auditorium for a preview of the "The Curious Savage" production.

Communications & Recognitions

Communications

There were no communications at this time.

Recognitions

Alisa Morrison recognized the SHS field hockey team for winning the CT Class S Field Hockey State Championships.

Allison Van Etten recognized two staff members in the Special Services department who will be retiring this month. Mrs. Van Etten recognized and thanked ELL Tutor, Joyce Obuchowski, for her dedication during her seventeen years with the district and Special Services Secretary, Susan Terkanian, for her integral part in the Special Services office and her twenty-six years of service.

Comments from Citizens

Sue Jones welcomed the new Board members. Ms. Jones also commented on the need for a student forum with question and answer sessions during Board meetings, the need to add cyber bullying to student handbooks and create not only student handbooks for students involved in athletics but also extracurricular with student signoff. Ms. Jones also asked that an item be added to the agenda giving students the opportunity to ask questions of the student government representative.

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes -- October 10, 2013 (Special)
October 10, 2013 (Regular)
October 16, 2013 (Special)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Transfers
- D. Personnel Report
- E. Field Trip Approval – SHS Students, CloseUp! Washington, D.C.
- F. Field Trip Approval – SHS Chorus to Orlando, FL
- G. Approval of Policy 5144 Discipline/Punishment
- H. Approval of 2014 Regular Board of Education Meeting Calendar

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

Motion 3: To approve the Consent Agenda Items A-H as presented.

All: Aye

School Security and Safety Report by Bill King and Ken Donovan

Bill King and Ken Donovan presented a report on school security and safety and an overview of current and future items, which will be installed and funded through the CIP. Bill King distributed to the Board the attached handout.

The Board asked for a breakdown of costs related to security and safety for our schools. The Board also requested an item be placed on the Board agenda quarterly, which would give an update on safety and security.

Captain Jerry Desmond was present and thanked everyone for their support and gave an overview of what has been currently placed in the schools, such as more presences of officers, drills with the officers and was happy to report that we are already ahead of what the State has requested be implemented in our schools.

Resolution from Dr. Riley to the Stonington Police Department

The following motion was made by Deborah Downie and seconded by Faith Leitner:

Motion 4: To approve the Resolution of Support for the Police Commission to continue to provide officer presence at the Stonington Schools.

All: Aye

CIP Report

Bill King presented the BOE Proposed CIP items for FY 2014-15 and explained the priorities of each item. Mr. King noted some of the major needs, which include roofing at Deans Mill School, technology, and baseball field. Mr. King entertained questions from the Board members.

The Board suggested that special bonding be requested in order to complete some of the larger items and noted that the longer items are not addressed the more costly they become.

Dr. Riley noted that the CIP will be put on the next agenda for Board action and asked the Board to forward any questions relating to the CIP to administration in order to prepare for the next meeting.

Frank Todisco asked the Board for permission to send another letter to the BOF and BOS requesting another joint meeting of the three Boards. All Board members agreed.

Approval of Teachers Union Contract for 2014-2017

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

Motion 5: To approve the Teachers Union Contract for 2014-2017

All: Aye

Approval of Paraprofessionals Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/2017

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 6: To approve the Paraprofessionals Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/2017

All: Aye

Approval of Nurses Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/2016

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 7: To approve the Nurses Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/2016.

All: Aye

Approval of Secretaries Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/17

The following motion was made by Faith Leitner and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 8: To approve the Secretaries Union Contract for 7/1/2013 – 6/30/17

All: Aye

First Read/Discussion – Policy 5123.3a Graduation Participation

Dr. Riley and administration gave examples of disciplinary incidents, which could interfere with graduation participation outlined in Policy 5123.3a Graduation Participation. Per the Board's request, Dr. Riley and administration agreed to get input by the first week in January from parents, teachers, and students on this issue.

Jon Dong, Student Government representative, commented that if a student commits a disciplinary incident during the beginning of the school year or during the first semester they should have another chance to recoup themselves, which would still allow them to participate in graduation ceremonies.

The Board commented that some items are too strict and the timing of such incidents needs to be reviewed and changed to later in the school year. The Board also discussed price levels associated with vandalism. The Board suggested that input from teachers and administration be considered, since they will be the ones to implement.

Schedule of Board Reports by Nikki Gullickson

Nikki Gullickson explained, per the Board's request, a tentative Board Reports calendar has been generated that timelines the various reports and their availability. Mrs. Gullickson noted the calendar would be updated as information becomes available.

Early Notification Incentive

Dr. Riley discussed the early notification incentive offered to certified staff. This incentive gives the district an opportunity to know who will be retiring and how many teachers needed for the new school year. Dr. Riley asked the Board to move forward with the early notification incentive.

The Board agreed to move forward with the incentive.

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent spoke on the following topics:

- Meeting between BOF and the Building Committee
- Technology update on Chromebooks, WiFi and staffing
- Cancellation of the annual Thanksgiving bonfire due to safety reasons
- Alternative Programs for students
- Appointment to NEASC
- Holiday break schedule at Central Office

Monthly Report

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

The Board had questions regarding:

- Achievement Gap
- Enrollment report
- Student Forum at both middle and high schools

Nikki Gullickson explained the reports that were submitted in regards to full day kindergarten and the results of these reports. Mrs. Gullickson also reviewed the achievement gap data and how it will be presented.

Bill King will review the November enrollment report and report back to the Board.

Dr. Riley welcomed the idea of an open student forum every so often during XBlock to give students more question and answer sessions with the Board and staff.

Committee Reports

The Board discussed different ways to present and report to the Board on the various committee reports and make the meeting schedules easier for the public and Board members to attend.

Faith Leitner reported the SEF appeal letter has been distributed.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

Sue Jones commented on the need of a full time choral instructor at PMS.

Items for Future Agendas

No future items at this time.

Board Comments/Concerns

Board discussed the upcoming CABA conference.

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

Motion 9: To adjourn at 8:58 p.m.

Aye: All


Deborah Downie, Board Secretary