

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MAY 9, 2013

Gail MacDonald, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at 7:02 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, Joni Moody, Student Government, members of the staff, students, and interested citizens.

Communications & Recognitions

Gail MacDonald shared an invitation with all Board members for the Adult Education Graduation Ceremony, to be held on Wednesday, May 15 at 6 p.m. in the high school commons.

Recognitions

Kevin Bornstein recognized Chris Stanley and the Chamber Choir for their awesome performance.

Dr. Van Riley recognized Ana deOliveira and Sandy Tissiere for their work in organizing the reception for "We are Stonington Public Schools" recipients and retirees. Dr. Riley also congratulated Board member, Alisa Morrison, for her dissertation.

Gail MacDonald recognized all went out and voted along with those who worked to get the community out to vote, which contributed to getting the budget passed by a huge margin.

Comments from citizens

Cindy Nadeau invited all to the PMS and MMS Unified Sports Track Meet on Thursday, May 16 at NFA both schools will be competing.

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes - April 11, 2013 (Special)
April 11, 2013 (Regular)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Transfers
- D. Personnel Report
- E. IDEA Grant 2013-2015
- F. Textbook Adoption: Magruder's American Government 2013-Second Read

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

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

Aye: All

Faith Leitner had questions and comments on item F of the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Leitner acknowledged that the textbook is a great textbook with very interesting topics. Mrs. Leitner inquired about the grade level in which the textbook will be used.

Administration noted that this would be used in grade levels 11 and 12.

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

Motion 2: To adopt item F on the Consent Agenda the textbook, "Magruder's American Government 2013".

Aye: All

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Van Riley reported on the following items:

- Building Committee to meet to update Education Specs, and will be bringing item back to the BOE in June
- Ed Specs should be ready by July
- Enrollment projections for the next 5 and 10 years
- Site building meetings are scheduled to look at their particular needs
- Upcoming meeting with Town regarding voluntary long-term care insurance program for employees
- Building tours are in progress with principals to look at equipment, staffing needs and summer cleaning
- Safety - working hard to implement and hope to have pilot program up and ready for fall
- Hiring - we were lucky to get advertising out early, this has helped immensely by providing the district with over 100 qualified applicants

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

Motion 3: To add an item to the agenda to discuss final budget approval.

Aye: All

Dr. Van Riley went over the proposed budget items that would cover the reduction of \$150,000. A handout was available that summarized the following recommendations:

- Substitutes - \$10,000
- Teacher Salaries - \$59,000
- Regular Transportation – \$18,000
- Out of Town Tuition - \$40,000
- Non-instructional Supplies – \$23,000

The Board had the following questions concerning the proposed recommended budget reductions:

- Transportation contract renewal impact to budget
- Middle school transportation
- Transportation contract in regards to need of a bid waiver
- Non-instructional supplies

Administration answered the Board's questions and will consult BOF on the need for a bid waiver for the transportation contract.

The following motion was made by Kevin Bornstein and seconded by Deborah Downie:

Motion 4: To move to accept Dr. Van Riley's recommendations to achieve the \$150,000 in reductions to the final budget.

Aye: All

Middle School Report

Dr. Van Riley suggested that a task force be formed to discuss improvements in instruction for our students. Dr. Riley also mentioned the need to offer a variety of extracurricular activities for students. Some of the other topics discussed were technology and world language requirements. Dr. Riley has met with non-profit organizations and SEF so that more opportunities could be offered to our middle school students.

The Board had the following questions for administration:

- Timeline
- World Language regarding studies on the advantage to starting at an earlier age
- Board role in task force
- Meeting scheduling as it relates to consideration of parent and teacher schedules
- Sports groups and coordinating with the various town clubs

Digital Literacy 1

Nikki Gullickson presented an overview on Digital Literacy 1 and explained the importance of this program for our students. Mrs. Gullickson noted that pre and post assessments will be done and benchmarks will be put in place to evaluate the success of the program.

The Board asked about the impact on staffing with this new program, grade level participation, and timeline of assessments.

Nikki Gullickson explained that current staffing will be used to support this program, grade 5 and 6 will participate in this program, and assessments will be reported, as they are available.

Dr. Van Riley explained by adding this program, students will have a better understanding of the responsibility of the use of internet, texting, and social media. Students will be aware that social responsibility and consciousness is an important part of using these kinds of things.

Preschool Program

Dr. Van Riley explained the current preschool configuration and the proposed changes for next year. Dr. Riley noted that there will be a program at the high school in which students will have the opportunity to have early childhood experience and a second preschool program at the Central Office.

The Board had questions regarding:

- Participation levels
- Opportunity for additional slots
- Ratio of special needs to typical peers
- Security at both locations
- Tuition fees
- Staffing

Allison Van Etten answered the Board's questions:

- Ratio of 50 to 50 is district's goal
- "Buzz in" and cameras will be set up in both Business office and Superintendent's office,
- No additional staffing needed
- Program expanded from 4 day to 5 day program
- Participation varies on number of special needs students
- Additional door needed at high school site
- Tuition comparable to area preschools, scholarships available

Approval of Business Office Reorganization

Dr. Van Riley recommended returning to the old configuration of one Business Manager rather than the two separate individuals. Dr. Riley proposed a salary of \$95,000 for the new Business Manager, which will create a savings of approximately \$80,000 when combining the Operations Manager and Finance Manager positions. Dr. Riley explained that these funds would be used for supports to the Business Manager, curriculum, and HR supports.

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

Motion 5: To approve the reorganization of the Business Office as proposed by Dr. Van Riley and to reassign Bill King to the position of Business Manager.

Aye: All

Superintendent Evaluation Schedule

The Board agreed to start the Superintendent's evaluation process at a 6 p.m. meeting on June 13, 2013.

Monthly Report

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

The Board had no questions for administration.

Committee Reports

Alisa Morrison shared that the groundbreaking event held on Friday, May 1, was very nice and well attended. Crews are making great progress.

Craig Esposito invited any interested Board members to LEARN's annual breakfast meeting on June 13. Mr. Esposito will inform LEARN of those interested in attending.

Faith Leitner noted that the next SEF meeting will be next Monday, May 13, and discussion will focus on grants. Mrs. Leitner also reminded the Board of the Building Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 14.

Gail MacDonald spoke of last night's BOF meeting which focused on the security proposal.

Frank Todisco proposed that a letter be drafted to the BOF and copied to the BOS and the Police Commission requesting direction to what the next steps in the process are and reiterating the Board's support in the security issue. Frank Todisco noted that some challenges that will be faced if funds are not secured. Gail MacDonald will draft this correspondence. Alisa Morrison noted that this topic should be part of the School Safety Committee.

Alisa Morrison reported on the Athletic Committee meeting where focus was on raising the standards to a 2.0 GPA for students and extending extracurricular activities. Both issues will be brought to the Policy Committee for review.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

Antonio Pereira commented on Digital Literacy 1 and safety concerns at the high school.

Sue Jones congratulated Bill King on his new position. Ms. Jones commended Ana deOliveira for the new and improved board packet format on our website. Ms. Jones also commented on extracurricular activities in the middle schools.

Items for Future Agendas

- Revenue from athletic events

Board Comments/Concerns

Faith Leitner commented on the great PTO/Booster group meeting, which took place at Central Office before the election.

Gail MacDonald reminded the Board that Board representation is still needed for the search committee for the Assistant Principal interview committee.

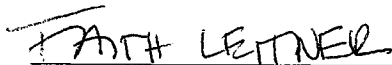
Executive Closed Session – Administrator Negotiations

No executive closed session took place.

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

Motion 6: To adjourn at 8:24 p.m.

Aye: All


Faith Leitner, Board Secretary