

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING November 14, 2019 - Page | 1

Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the District Office Board Room, Pawcatuck, CT. Members present were, Candace Anderson, Board Secretary, Jack Morehouse, Alisa Morrison, Farouk Rajab, and Craig Esposito. Also present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, Alexandra Kapell, Student Government Representative, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Board Presentations

Student Recognition AP/National Merit - Margo Crowley, Assistant Principal-Guidance at Stonington High School recognized the following students

National Merit commended Students:	AP Scholars:	AP Scholar with Honors:	AP Scholar with Distinction:
Will Cannella	Emmett Breen	Abby Gibson	Filip Aubrecht
Leila Robarge	Will Cannella	Rhys Hammond	Kaira Wiltshire
Liam Martley	Alexandra Kapell	Hanna Hong	
Hanna Hong	Liam Martley	Sam Light	
Abby Gibson	Audrey Mejza	Bryn Morgan	
	Dan Robinson	Hope Sowle	

Eversource Project Presentation – Peter Anderson, Director of Operations and Facilities introduced representatives from EMCOR (New England Mechanical Services) who spoke about a new incentive program available through Eversource and how it can benefit the district.

Jack Morehouse asked if there is any kind of ego feedback component, adding he recently read an article that if you let people know real time how much energy they are consuming they will consume less like 5% to 10%. He recently visited a college that when you walked in to the building they had energy orbs that in real time would let the occupants of the building know how much power was consumed in relationship to the average. Students there would get together and find ways to save energy. He asked if there was something similar available in Connecticut. EMCOR representative explained we can put something in place similar to that either adding a display in the lobby so they can see how they are doing on energy consumption or have the students work on this themselves.

State of the District Part II – Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent presented Part II of the State of the District covering Staffing and Retention. He added this is the second part of a five part series. Part one presented at the October Board meeting covered Academics and Programming. All presentations will be posted on our website after each Board Meeting. In his presentation he spoke on personnel, highly qualified staff, climate and culture, how we treat employees, professional growth and opportunities, recognitions and grant awards and supplemental supports.

A complete presentation can be found on the www.stoningtonschools.org website.

Communications & Recognitions

Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman recognized Heidi Simmons the newest Board of Education member who has been sworn in. Chairwoman Garvey explained due to the new charter Ms. Simmons cannot be seated at the Board table until after November 19th. Ms. Simmons will be attending the CABA conference tomorrow with Mrs. Anderson, Dr. Riley and myself. Chairwoman Garvey explained she has given Ms. Simmons a small orientation and she will also be meeting with District Office Cabinet staff to get a tour of each department and meet staff on Monday morning.

Chairwoman Garvey communicated that the high school opening night for the play will start this evening, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m., there are no matinees. She also mentioned the Lagrue Center has a video and display of the Pawcatuck Remembers which is there through December 15th. Many people contributed to this event and did an amazing job, we should take the time to visit, watch the video and take a look at the book that is also available.

Candace Anderson communicated she attended the dinner for the Principal of the Year honoring Principal Alicia Dawe, which dove tails very nicely with what Dr. Riley presented in his presentation tonight, finding the best people and keeping the best people. She added Dr. Riley in his tenure has found such great administrators that will take care of our kids. We are so fortunate to have made so much progress in such a short period of time in the past couple of years. She also commented on the goals and progress that have been made in a four year period. She added she feels fortunate to be part of this community and is proud of the district. She noted the dinner brought all that together and she didn't want to lose the opportunity to communicate this.

Chairwoman Garvey thanked Peter Anderson, his staff for the work they did in this short amount of time and Ana de Oliveira for getting all the details set up and everything together for the new Board Room to be ready, thank you we appreciate that.

Comments from Citizens

Faith Leitner commented on how she is glad to have attended tonight's meeting to hear all the great things that are happening in the district, we really have such wonderful things going on in this district and she is always looking to see about the good things. She thanked all Board Members for serving and taking time to commit to the Board. She also spoke about a recent article on the front page of The Day newspaper in which it mentioned the Board of Education being divided on the Chokas incident. She feels that it is disturbing and feels for the girls that were affected by this issue that it's still not been resolved. She added she feels that we owe it to the 30 girls that told the administration that this is not ok. She hopes that the Board will consider an individual investigation at least we could say to these women we did all we could do to investigate their claim.

Consent Agenda

- ^A Minutes – October 10, 2019
October 16, 2019
- B. Checks and Bills – October
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Transfers

The following motion was made by Candace Anderson and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 1: To approve the consent agenda items A-D as presented.
All: Aye

Second Read – Curriculum – Physical Science

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Candace Anderson:

Motion 2: To approve the Physical Science curriculum as submitted.
All: Aye

Approval of Board of Education 2020 Meeting Calendars

- A. Board of Education Regular Meeting Calendar
- B. Board of Education Finance/Facilities Sub-Committee Regular Meeting Calendar
- C. Board of Education Policy Sub-Committee Regular Meeting Calendar
- D. Board of Education Communications Sub-Committee Regular Meeting Calendar
- E. Board of Education Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee Regular Meeting Calendar

The following motion was made by Candace Anderson and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 3: To approve Board of Education meeting calendars A-E.
All: Aye

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Riley commented he was excited to see many students at the recent Pawcatuck Remembers event at the Lagrue Center and also mentioned there will be a performance at the high school this weekend.

CIP Preview - Dr. Riley reviewed why there is a need for some of the items on the CIP such as gym floor needing to be painted at the high school, and Hvac systems. He also mentioned that the tennis courts at the high school need resurfacing, they were resurfaced about five years ago and that the Town Recreation Department is interested in going half with us on the cost. The Board of Finance is aware of the cost. Items on the CIP for bond were also presented as well as the proposed EMCOR /Eversource project.

Jack Morehouse had questions regarding the recent purchase of the two bobcats and the difference between those and the multi seasonal tractor currently on the CIP and their use. Peter Anderson explained the difference between each. Dr. Riley noted that early at the Finance and Facilities meeting we spoke are the need of the Town, recreation and the district getting together and look at maintenance because the schools are very different now. We hope to meet and working together on this. Chairwoman Garvey explained that we will have a detail of each CIP item in December and asked for specifics on the multi-purpose tractor to see how it differs from another piece of equipment we might already have. Craig Esposito asked if this was the full list or just new additions. Dr. Riley explained these are the new added items we also have computer leases to add to the list.

Child Care – The Den – Dr. Riley thanked Mary Anne Butler and Kristen Oliverio for their time in this issue. He explained he has met with staff twice to explain the child care program. He summarized the program and added this program will help employees at no cost to the town, and no obligation to the Board, funding will come from the tuition. The program would start February 3, 2020. Deadline for signing up is December 16th. Children would need to be at 2 ½ by September 30th and parents must commit to an entire day and all 89 days to be able to have consistent staff. The hours will be 7:00 am to 4:30 p.m. with a couple of extended days for teacher Professional Development days and the cost is \$38/day. Dr. Riley added we will have a coordinator stipend position, lead person and assistants. The maximum enrollment is twenty children. See attached flyer.

Chairwoman Garvey asked how many are interested now. Dr. Riley answered we have 12-15 interested but need 17-18 financially to make this work. He explained if we are short we will open it up to grandkids of employees or other town departments. Candace Anderson asked would you foresee going down in age as the program gets more involved. Dr. Riley noted twenty is the maximum possible in the room and if you get into the infant the licensing will need to change and ratio also. She also asked do you foresee a way for students to volunteer in the program like child development or a senior project. He answered we are looking into all of those ideas. Our hope is to have this as a lab for the child development class and give the high school students experience on how to take care of children. Alisa Morrison inquired about state accreditation requirements. Dr. Riley said no we do not need to because we are a school district. Farouk Rajab said he appreciates everyone who was involved in putting this together and asked is there any initial cost to the room. Dr. Riley noted there will be initial costs in setting up the classroom and will meet with parents of the students for the design. This will have upfront costs in January that we would pay ourselves back from the tuition.

Policy Regarding Dogs/Pets on Fields and Property

Chairwoman Garvey asked that Dr. Riley give background on this issue. He explained an issue came up because there were questions from recreation about what our policy was for dogs and pets on fields. The Town of Stonington, through the Board of Selectmen, Stonington Public Schools and the Recreation Department met. He noted our policy has been no pets on our campus. This would be a consistent policy for recreation and us for games and practices. He explains this usually goes through our Policy Committee but in this case all three entities are asked to approve this policy. He notes this would go to the Policy Committee to get the proper placement in our policy manual. Dr. Riley asked the Board for their approval.

The Board discussed their concerns regarding the policy. Farouk Rajab voiced that he would like to change the word "dogs" to "animals" in the third paragraph; "Exceptions to this are "Service" – "Guide" and/or "Assistance" dogs He explained this would make the policy ADA compliant and added miniature horses can be used as service guide and/or assistance. Craig Esposito asked is this intended to be only dogs? The Board continued discussion regarding changing the word "dog" to animals in the policy. Dr. Riley agreed having animals in the policy would be helpful. Alisa Morrison noted that at the playground at the high school dogs are not allowed. Jack Morehouse asked if they have considered having an area just for dogs. The Board discussed different areas in which dogs are allowed. Alisa Morehouse suggested maybe further note on the policy that no dogs only when there are games going. Chairwoman Garvey asked do we have rules that dogs are not allowed on school property. Dr. Riley noted we do have signs now. Chairwoman Garvey asked would this be redundant if we already have signs. Dr. Riley explained many of the fields are town fields, we are ok the way things are now. Mr. Morehouse spoke about the field that the Sharks Soccer play on where dogs are there at the games and those families get used to that and continue when the players move on to the high school. He voiced he understands the issue but wishes there was an area where people can take their dogs. Dr. Riley noted if we do this we need a place where dogs can run and this might push the Town to do that. Dr. Riley suggested the Board pass the policy but go back to the groups and voice it was very important for the Board of Ed that people in town have an area where their dogs can run and that if we don't do that the Board may rescind this.

Chairwoman Garvey summarized changes to the policy of changing the wording to "animals" not just dogs. She asked for a motion.

The following motion was made by Farouk Rajab and seconded by Candace Anderson:

Motion 4: To approve the policy as amended with the stipulation we send Dr. Riley forward to express that the Board wants further research and continue to peruse an area for animals to be off leash with their owners and with that we withhold the right to rescind this policy if that is not perused.

All: Aye

Monthly Reports

The Board had no questions on the monthly reports.

Committee Reports

Craig Esposito reported minutes were accepted at the Communications Committee meeting. Chairwoman Garvey spoke on the K-12 Building Committee that they continue to work on the punch lists. The Board of Finance approved funding for the testing cycles that will be ongoing for the PCBs and if results come back strong from the state we can then stop testing.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

There were no comments from citizens relative to Board action on this agenda.

Items for Future Agendas

Chairwoman Garvey noted we have items for future agendas: CIP for approval next month, State of the District III, School Start Times Report, and SEA Contract Approval.

Candace Anderson spoke she had a community member contact her asking how to contact Board members and where those contacts were on our website. She noted it would be nice to have an "App" for the Stonington Schools website. She requested this item be added to a future agenda for the Communications Committee. Mrs. Anderson also voiced that a parent and involved community member reached out to her and asked if he/she cannot get to the district events is there anyway the district could stream the presentations, Board meetings or plays. Chairwoman Garvey noted we do have a TV station here doing the meetings now. Mrs. Anderson suggested could we maybe involve students to do this and feels this would be a way to get everyone engaged.

Board Comments and Concerns

There were no comments or concerns.

Adjournment

The following motion was made by Alisa Morrison and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 5: To adjourn at p.m. 8:23 p.m.

All: Aye


Candace Anderson, Secretary