

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING July 14, 2016 - Page | 1

Frank Todisco, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were Faith Leitner, Secretary, Deborah Downie, Alexa Garvey, Terry Stefanski, and Craig Esposito.

Members Absent: Alisa Morrison

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

Communications & Recognitions

No communications and recognitions.

Comments From Citizens

No comments from citizens.

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes – June 9, 2016 (Regular Meeting)
June 22, 2016 (Special Meeting)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Assistant Superintendent Contract Renewal – 2.5% increase and one year extension – \$150,040
- E. Director of Special Services Contract Renewal – 2.5% increase and one year extension - \$138,990
- F. Director of Finance Contract Renewal – 2.5% increase and one year extension - \$123,000

The following motion was made by Deborah Downie and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 1: To approve the Consent Agenda A-F as presented.
All: Aye

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Van Riley reported on his trip to California. The Superintendent also spoke on the reason behind removing items from the agenda and explained this is due to back up for these items not being ready. Dr. Riley apologized and assured the Board that in the future administration will do its best to have the documents ready and if not will put those items off to the next meeting unless there is an urgency on an item we will get those documents to the Board as soon as possible.

West Broad Historical Artifacts - Discussion and Direction

Dr. Riley explained that there are three boxes that were found in the West Broad Street School basement, such as school records, pictures and other things. There was a request from Alicia Dawe to donate these to the Historical Society and wanted to give the Board a chance to see them. Dr. Riley explained no motion is needed. Frank Todisco asked the Board if there was any objection to donating the items to the Historical Society the board had no objection.

Substitute Teacher Rate Comparisons

Dr. Riley explained that the comparisons showed the average is a little over \$83.75/day and noted that we pay \$80/day. Dr. Riley also stated that the highest rate in the comparison is \$90/day and lowest rate is \$70/day from area districts. If we did increase, it to \$85/day it would be a budget impact of \$15,600, if we increase by \$7 it would go up \$21,000 and \$10 would be a little over \$31,000.

Faith Leitner explained, as you know this is an issue that I have brought up in the past and honestly feel we had paid our substitutes back in 2008 at \$85/day. Ms. Leitner also noted she feels they deserve \$85/day as some of our substitutes actually live in our community and feels strongly to bring it back to where it was seven years ago. Frank Todisco stated there is a motion on the table and added he will vote in favor of this motion because as I look at the districts being outlined here, neighboring districts' rate, like Groton; \$90/day, N. Stonington \$85 and Ledyard \$90 are closer to our rate. Mr. Todisco added the districts on lower end are further away so raising it to \$85 will put us in the ballpark with neighboring districts. Dr. Riley added that we had two more retirements and feels at this point we will be able to cover this with the retirement funds.

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

Motion 2: To increase the teacher substitute rate to \$85.00/day.

Faith Leitner – Yes

Frank Todisco – Yes

Deborah Downie - No

Craig Esposito – Yes

Alexa Garvey – Yes

Terry Stefanski - Yes

Motion Passes 5-1

Approval/Discussion - Board of Education Goals -2016-2017

Dr. Riley spoke on the Board of Education goals, which were put together based on discussion at the Board retreat. Dr. Riley explained we are using our committees to create some of them and all are specific enough that you can look back mid-year and end-of-year and know whether they have been accomplished or not. In the past there were generic goals and noted that he is very pleased on how they came out. Alexa Garvey said they look good and are more formal. Frank Todisco feels this accomplishes what was discussed and are also more measurable. Craig Esposito had questions about the facility section and feels there should be an item to reflect more on long term planning. Dr. Riley will add a fourth goal item that will better cover this request and reference the specific facilities report which the Board will use for its yearly review of facility's needs and budget development. These changes will be brought back to the Board.

District Reorganization – Information

Frank Todisco explained there would be no action on this item. Mr. Todisco explained this item is more for discussion purposes, and if the Board feels, they need additional information, or wants to express concerns and questions. Dr. Riley explained that the Central Office staff for a very long time has consist of two levels, one being the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent as one position and the second all the other clerical support positions. Dr. Riley adds that for a number of years it has not been clear as to what these individuals' duties are. Dr. Riley explained that Gary Shettle has put a lot of work into this study, where he has gone to other districts comparing salaries, and has come up with a program, job descriptions, and salary comparison that is comparable to area districts. Mr. Shettle in doing this has now defined the Human Resource duties and now provides a career ladder, which we currently did not have. Dr. Riley stated if the Board likes this idea, then we will bring back these contracts for approval at the next meeting.

Craig Esposito questioned why there were blank boxes in the organizational chart. Dr. Riley and Gary Shettle explained that it was the way it was printed, really for no reason. Frank Todisco shared his thoughts and feels this is part of a much larger discussion at every level. Mr. Todisco also added that from our lowest paid to the highest paid employee we are at the bottom compared to area district. Mr. Todisco stated this is a reclassification and increase for a number of positions but yet we have no plan and have put little time in coming up with a plan to increase the rest of our employees which he stated is a very big concern of his. Mr. Todisco feels a bigger discussion should take place and would like to see us do this as part of the budget process as opposed to after we begin our fiscal year. Deborah Downie agreed with Mr. Todisco with respect to do these changes during budget season and not after, which she explained is the reason for her vote on the substitute teacher pay increase. Mr. Todisco explained his biggest concern is the range of percentage of increase in the reorganization of Central Office staff.

Dr. Riley explained this is not an increase on our budget as we have taken all the increases for hours and salary out of the overtime/extra time account; this is budget neutral and even after that have approximately \$20,000 still for an emergency. Craig Esposito asked what the actual increase is and how much of that increase is actual. Terry Stefanski agreed with Mr. Todisco that we need to take extra time to review this. Faith Leitner asks if the qualifications on the job descriptions are the qualifications for the current people in the position.

Monthly Reports

The Board did not have questions on the monthly reports.