

**COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
APPROVED MINUTES  
MEETING OF THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008**

Members Present: Larry Pietrantonio, Chairman  
Kathleen Ryan, Vice Chairman  
Cheryl Trudon, Secretary (arrived 7:43 p.m.)  
John Barrett  
Mary Kortmann  
Richard Williams

Members Absent: Michael Whitham

Also Present: Fred North, BOE Student Representative

Administrators Present: Sherry Holmes, Fiscal Services Director

Also present were Michele Mullaly, CNH Interim Principal; Raymond Grasso, CGS Principal; a few Contemporary Issues students; and a few citizens. All motions are directed to the Coventry Board of Education.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

By: Chairman, L. Pietrantonio      Time: 7:31 p.m.  
Place: Administration Building Conference Room

**II. SALUTE THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by L. Pietrantonio.

**III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

There were none.

**IV. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Information: Introduction of New Student Board of Education Representative – Fred North

L. Pietrantonio welcomed Fred North as the new Student Representative. He said he hopes Fred enjoys sitting with the Board over the next few months and he is sure he will learn many things.

**V. CONSENT AGENDA (VOTE: One vote for all items.)**

- A. Approve Saturday, March 29 CNH/GHR Field Experience to Ludlow, VT
- B. Accept Retirement of Sharon Davis, GHR Teacher

**MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.**

**By: J. Barrett      Seconded: K. Ryan**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

K. Ryan noted in reference to Sharon Davis' retirement that the Board appreciates her over 26 years of service to Coventry schools and her dedication to the students. She said the Board wishes her well in her retirement.

## VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. VOTE: Approve Minutes of January 29, 2008

**MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of January 29, 2008**

**By: R. Williams                      Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes 3-0-2 (J. Barrett and K. Ryan abstain)**

B. VOTE: Approve Minutes of January 31, 2008

**MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of January 31, 2008**

**By: K. Ryan                      Seconded: M. Kortmann**

Regarding page 4, paragraph 5, second sentence, K. Ryan asked it to read, "She added that the Board is about academics first and foremost, and academics and instruction need curriculum coordination."

Regarding page 6, paragraph 3, last sentence, J. Barrett asked it to read, "J. Barrett replied he did not have a target in mind, but 1.1 million is what he arrived at."

**Result: Motion to approve the minutes with noted changes passes unanimously.**

## IX. OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and VOTE: Possible Tape Recording of Board of Education Meetings

L. Pietrantonio said he would like to start with discussion first, before a motion is made, because it is unsure exactly what the motion would be.

J. Barrett asked since two members were currently missing and the superintendent was not present, perhaps the item could be tabled.

L. Pietrantonio said he did not have a problem with tabling the item to the next meeting.

R. Williams said he had been thinking about the subject and he would like to discuss it some this evening.

R. Williams continued that the people in this town deserve to see a video tape of the Board of Education meetings. He said he doesn't believe it will cost a lot of money and the information the public would learn about education in town is important. He added that a lot of money is being spent on education in town and video taping the Board of Education meetings would be the right thing to do for the public.

L. Pietrantonio said if the topic was going to shift to video taping versus audio tape recording, all Board members should be present to discuss it, especially because it will cost the Board money.

J. Barrett commented that John Elsesser, the Town Manager, told him in an email that a standard computer wire would need to be pulled through the conduit between the town hall and the administration building and two adaptors at \$50 each would be plugged into each end.

L. Pietrantonio said if the discussion is going to be about video taping, it can be placed on a future agenda item, but audio tape recording, which is scheduled for a vote tonight, would then be a moot point. He said video taping could be put on the first meeting in March to give staff enough time for research.

K. Ryan agreed that the item to be discussed and voted on tonight is audio tape recording. She said that is how the agenda was prepared and the Board has been supplied with information specific to that topic. L. Pietrantonio said technically they are different issues. He said there is a vote noted on the agenda this evening and the Board should stay with discussing audio taping.

R. Williams said he wanted to know how individual Board members felt about video taping.

J. Barrett commented that the town council video tapes and he believes, because the Board makes some of the most important decisions in town, the Board meetings should also be recorded. He continued that some parents cannot make it to meetings, and it would be much easier for them to see what is going on from their homes. He added since the minutes are just a summary people cannot get the flavor of what is being discussed. He said either minutes should be transcribed word for word, or a recording should be done.

C. Trudon asked if the discussion was about a live video feed or video tape recording. She said she believed the live feed would be much more expensive.

K. Ryan said there is a financial consideration related to video taping, which was discussed 2 to 3 years ago. She said that information should be brought back to the Board.

J. Barrett reiterated from the information he received from John Elsesser he thinks video taping can be done dirt cheap by tapping into the town hall's existing system.

L. Pietrantonio said we need to make sure we have accurate information and the Superintendent and staff can get that for the Board for a future meeting.

L. Pietrantonio asked if there was a motion tonight on tape recording, as warned on the agenda. There was none.

It was the consensus of the Board to bring back video taping and/or audio tape recording to the first meeting in March. L. Pietrantonio said the item would be discussed on March 13 and then warned for a vote on March 27.

R. Williams asked Ms. Mullaly if West Hartford video taped their Board meetings. M. Mullaly said they were televised live to the town and it was a source of information for the townspeople.

## **XI. REPORT OF BOARD MEMBERS**

Information: School Building Committee Report – L. Pietrantonio

L. Pietrantonio said the School Building Committee was getting closer to going out to bid. He said there was an issue with possible magnesium found in the wells at the high school complex and that is being looked into. He said hopefully they will go out to bid on the water project by March 1. He is scheduling a School Building Committee meeting for February 28 at 6:30 p.m.

C. Trudon asked to comment for the record on the cancellation of the eighth grade trip to Cape Cod. She said she hopes the trip is replaced with another sort of overnight experience and maybe it wouldn't have to focus on just science, but perhaps other academics could be included. She said the students really look forward to this overnight trip. She added it is the last "local" overnight trip they take before going to high school and possible overseas trips.

M. Kortmann agreed with C. Trudon and said eighth grade students used to go to Washington, D.C. and that was a very good trip for the students.

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: To adjourn the Board meeting at 7:56 p.m.**

**By: K. Ryan**

**Seconded: J. Barrett**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

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Respectfully submitted,

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Kimberlee Michaud  
Board Clerk

**February 28, 2008**  
**Approved**