

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Unapproved Minutes of Thursday, May 11, 2017
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

William Oros, Chairman
Jennifer Beausoleil, Vice Chairman
Michael Sobol, Secretary
Frank Infante
Mary Kortmann
Eugene Marchand
Mary Minor

Others present:

Benjamin Urbanski, Student BOE Representative

Administrators present:

David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Audience members present: Tim Dillon, CHS Teacher; Alex Bohr, CHS Student; William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Marybeth Moyer, CGS Principal; Ronda Lezberg, incoming CGS Principal; Beth Giller, GHR Principal; Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology; Todd Giansanti, Director of PSSS and Joseph Blake, CHS Principal.

I. Call to Order

W. Oros called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

W. Oros led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

There were none.

IV. Report of Superintendent

Mr. Petrone reviewed the various events taking place around the district. Specifically noted by Mr. Petrone, E. Marchand, M. Minor, and J. Beausoleil was the outstanding production of *The Masked Musketeer* by the CNH Drama Club and also how impressive the CNH Art Show was.

Mr. Petrone also mentioned the recent invitation Angela Puccia received from UConn where she will be working over the summer with engineering students.

Mr. Petrone noted that the *Washington Post* rankings came in and Coventry's standings have improved greatly for 2017, ranked at #8 in Connecticut and #842 in the nation.

E. Marchand said he hopes the community is watching and noted how much this says about how the district manages their dollar.

IV.A. Information: 2016-17 Innovative Grant Update - Geodesic Dome Aquaponics Green House

Mr. Petrone noted that Mr. Dillon and high school student Alex Bohr were present to give an update on the dome. He also noted the Board is invited to tour the dome on June 1.

Mr. Dillon thanked the Board and introduced Alex Bohr and noted he is the student in charge of the dome and explained his role. Mr. Dillon shared a video of the dome's progress.

E. Marchand asked how water is getting to the dome. Mr. Dillon said water is recycled continually within the dome and occasionally it needs to be topped off.

Mr. Dillon continued talking about the dome and what the Board should expect to see on the tour.

J. Beausoleil asked Alex his thoughts on the dome. Alex talked about the sustained temperature of the dome.

Mr. Dillon said this has been a tremendous experience.

E. Marchand wanted the public to know that Mr. Petrone is one of five Superintendents who were asked to work with Lyle Kirtman on a new book focused on Superintendents and what characteristics are needed to be a successful school leader. J. Beausoleil congratulated Mr. Petrone on this and said it was a professional and personal honor for him.

IV.B. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Ben Urbanski said the past two weeks have been the busiest, including the AP exams and noted the proms are coming up on the next two Saturdays. He also talked about the concerts and the upcoming middle school band concert.

IV.C. Information: 2016-2017 Administrators' Goal Achievement Update

IV.C.1. Physical Plant and Facilities

Mr. Petrone introduced Mr. Trudelle to begin the goal achievement presentations. Mr. Trudelle shared a slide show presentation with the Board reviewing the different areas of achievement. The full goal achievement report will be available on the district's website.

E. Marchand asked about the work order process. W. Trudelle explained how that works and that it will save the district money overall. The Board asked various questions regarding tracking equipment, labor, and cost analysis.

IV.C.2. Technology Department

Mr. Petrone introduced Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology, who shared the Technology Department's goal achievement for the 2016-17 school year. The full achievement report will be available on the district's website.

F. Infante noted his appreciation for the technology department. He asked how secure the iPads are. Ms. Drury and Mr. Petrone explained how that information can be tracked. E. Marchand asked how many times there are issues with iPad use at the high school. Mr. Blake answered saying very low, less than once a month would be an average.

The Board continued the conversation about the improved use and tracking of technology at the schools.

IV.C.3. Pupil and Staff Support Services

Mr. Petrone introduced Mr. Giansanti who shared the 2016-17 goal achievement presentation for the Pupil and Staff Support Services department. The full goal achievement report will be available on the district's website.

M. Minor asked about the Autism Committee and the scope of it. Mr. Giansanti talked to that explaining there are several families on the committee and also staff. Mr. Petrone added that there is a police officer who also serves on the committee.

J. Beausoleil asked about the metrics for timeliness of meetings and cases that need auditing. Mr. Giansanti spoke to that adding the office just completed a state desk audit and passed with high marks.

F. Infante asked about dyslexia and what is in place to identify and assist those students. Mr. Giansanti talked about that and noted that there is a battery of different programs in place to assist every learner.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

V.A. Accept the Resignation of Kate Arey, Human Resource Specialist

V.B. Approve the 2017-18 Tuition Rate for Non-Resident Students at \$14,255

MOTION: Approve the consent agenda as presented

By: J. Beausoleil

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VI. Report of Chairman

W. Oros asked if there were any questions.

E. Marchand asked how the tuition rate is calculated. Mr. Carroll explained it is based on the ED001.

W. Oros noted all of the good things that are happening at Coventry Public Schools and said this relates to the law of the harvest. He asked the Board to think back to when they started five years ago and reflect on how far they have come and how well the Board operates. He said the Board is a model to others.

VII. Communications

W. Oros noted the two communications that are available on CABA-meeting, which were sent to the Town Council. He added, that an effort was made to be sure the Town Council had the information they needed to make financial decisions and noted no official response was received from the Council.

M. Sobol said information has been updated now that more "known data" is available. He said it was encouraging to see that the new Town Finance Director validated that the Board data was accurate.

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VIII.A. Approve the Minutes of April 20, 2017 - Special Meeting

MOTION: Approve the Minutes of April 20, 2017

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes 5-0-2 (J. Beausoleil and F. Infante abstained)

VIII.B. Approve the Minutes of April 27, 2017

MOTION: To approve the minutes of April 27, 2017

By: M. Sobol

Seconded: J. Beausoleil

Discussion: J. Beausoleil asked for the following changes:

Page 4, 5th paragraph under the Fiscal report, the first of the first sentence should read, "J. Beausoleil commented on the age of the BOE financial information the Town Finance Committee and the Town Council have in front of them during... "

Page 4, 6th paragraph under the Fiscal report, the second sentence should read, "J. Beausoleil agreed but noted the request should be to add the information not only to the next Finance meeting, but also the next Town Council meeting so when they are deliberating they have the most up to date information and the Council would not have to wait for Finance to meet."

Result: Motion to approve the Minutes of April 27, 2017 with noted changes passed unanimously

IX. Old Business

IX.A. Discussion and VOTE: Approve Revised Policy 6120 Parent and Family Engagement

Mr. Petrone reviewed Title I student numbers.

MOTION: To approve the revised Policy 6120 Parent and Family Engagement

By: J. Beausoleil

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

IX.B. Discussion and Possible VOTE: CECC Board of Directors' Request

Mr. Petrone reviewed the history of this item, specifically the proposal of how the Preschool Fund would be handled and the communications back and forth between the schools and the Town Council. Mr. Petrone said this is a top notch preschool and the district is investing in the community and it will save the district money in the long run. J. Beausoleil said this partnership makes sense and noted it is not new, it has been in place for over 30 years.

The Board talked about all of the positive aspects of acquiring the preschool. Mr. Petrone said the State uses our program as a guide and our application as a guide; Coventry is a model for other districts. The Board reviewed the fund and how it would be used moving forward.

J. Beausoleil asked if an opinion was sought from the new Finance Director. Mr. Carroll said yes and a few questions were cleared up and she was comfortable with it.

M. Minor said the Board has been discussing this for a long time. She said the language that is used sometimes confuses the issue. She continued and said it doesn't feel like a takeover, but more that the district assumes it, with the roles already being established. She said so many things will not change, she said the Board has a role and obligation and that has to continue regardless. M. Sobol reviewed the last paragraph of the CECC request to assume the program, which noted all highly positive things.

F. Infante said this is happening at no cost to the district and if that ever changes, the details would need to be re-thought. The Board agreed. Mr. Petrone said the focus is to be sure this is never put on the back of the taxpayers.

M. Minor said it is the Board's responsibility to close the loop with the Town Council. J. Beausoleil reviewed her motion saying it includes an option for future collaboration at any time.

MOTION: Authorize the Superintendent to develop and implement a plan to assume the management of the private pay preschool classrooms and program, maintain accreditation, develop self-sufficient funding mechanism, and manage or implement fiscal practices using the current fund and/or future funds.

By: J. Beausoleil

Seconded: M. Sobol

Discussion: M. Kortmann said she wanted to note it would not look exactly the same, but the management part of the preschool itself will look different. F. Infante asked about the current management. Mr. Petrone talked about the current Board of volunteers and how they operate now. F. Infante asked about the existing staff and what happens if they don't want to stay, could they open a preschool down the street. Mr. Petrone reviewed that item and said he did not believe that was of any concern. M. Sobol said it has been a long two years and he is very happy this is finally happening. W. Oros said he was pleased with the motion and reiterated that it leaves it open for future collaboration with the Town Council.

Result: Motion passes unanimously

IX.B.1. Discussion: Assign BOE Representative to CECC Acquisition Ad-Hoc Committee

W. Oros asked if M. Sobol would want to serve as the representative. M. Sobol agreed.

J. Beausoleil thanked Mr. Petrone and Mr. Carroll for their perseverance through the process.

IX.C. Discussion and Possible VOTE: FY2018 Budget

The Board briefly discussed that there wasn't any new information to share and that the Town Council has not made any decisions regarding a Town Meeting or Referendum.

X. New Business

X.A. Information: School Building and Energy Efficiency Building Committee Update

Mr. Trudelle shared the slide show he presented to the School Building and Energy Efficiency Building Committee and the then to Town Council.

E. Marchand asked the locations of the asbestos. W. Trudelle reviewed those locations and reviewed how they go about removing the asbestos.

The Board talked about different aspects of the proposals, would it be bonded and what would be done when.

Mr. Trudelle and M. Kortmann confirmed it has been forwarded to the Town Council for their review.

X.B. Capital Projects Update - Tennis Courts

W. Trudelle reviewed the status of the tennis courts. He said the bid process was broken up into different sections and that the site work and prep work is in the process now. The Board asked questions about lighting and public participation. Mr. Trudelle said this extra court will allow CHS to host tournaments.

M. Kortmann asked about the track repair. W. Trudelle said they will start at the end of the month and will be done before graduation.

XI. Report of Board Members

E. Marchand asked to give a quick update on the Town Walls Committee. He reviewed what was discussed at this week's meeting and noted there is a time element. W. Oros said the item could be added to the May 25 meeting for discussion.

XI.A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of May 11, 2017

M. Sobol reviewed details of the Fiscal Committee meeting. He noted the state came back with 74.53% for excess cost reimbursement.

MOTION: To add to the agenda a discussion and possible vote regarding an amount to return to the Town in exchange for CIP funds to be unfrozen
By J. Beausoleil Secoded: M. Kortmann
Result: Motion passes unanimously

M. Sobol said the other item discussed at Fiscal was preparing for a 90 day budget. He said Bob and Amanda will work together to come up with known needs. Mr. Carroll said he has already done a three year look back for comparison to develop a plan for July 1, 2017, if needed.

XI.A.1. Discussion and possible vote regarding an amount to return to the Town in exchange for CIP funds to be unfrozen.

Motion: Authorize the Superintendent to communicate with the Town Council and Town Manager that the Board would like to earmark \$60,000 of this year's appropriations to be returned to the general fund with the condition the Town Council will unfreeze the same amount in Technology CIP funds
By: M. Sobol Secoded: M. Kortmann
J. Beausoleil asked for a friendly amendment to request a response within 30 days.
M. Sobol accepted the amendment.

Discussion: F. Infante asked where the unexpended funds are coming from. M. Sobol reviewed the different lines with unexpected balances, which included adjustments to excess costs, the decline in magnet school enrollment, and vacancy savings due to resignations and unpaid leaves. He added this is not at all due to poor management, but to unforeseen conditions, beyond the Board's control.

J. Beausoleil said the Board started the year significantly upside down in Special Education. She continued saying the district made accommodations for this at the beginning of the year, and the settling of all of that is a part of this unexpended funds. She added that there are still items left in the year to take care of, such as legal expenses for negotiations.

M. Kortmann reviewed how the CIP funds were originally frozen. The Board talked about this item.

Result: 6-1 (M. Minor opposes)

XII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:58 p.m.
By: M. Sobol Secoded: J. Beausoleil
Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: _____