

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Regular Board of Education Meeting**  
Approved Minutes of Thursday, June 08, 2017  
Administration Building Conference Room

**Attendance Taken at 7:37 p.m.:**

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent:

Mary Kortmann

Also Present:

Ben Urbanski, Student BOE Representative

Administrators Present:

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

Audience members present: William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Steve Merlino, CHS Assistant Principal, Beth Giller, GHR Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Marybeth Moyer, CGS Principal and Wendy D'Agostino, parent.

**I. Call to Order**

W. Oros called the meeting to order at 7:35 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 noted how busy this time of year is both in-district and state-wide. He talked about some specific events.

W. Oros said how impressed he was with the progress of the Chinese program. He asked the administrators about how many students participated. Ms. Mullaly said 130 students participated. Ms. DeJulius talked about the scheduling process.

M. Sobol noted the visit to the dome and said he was blown away by the entire program. He gave kudos to the team.

E. Marchand said how wonderful the Chinese Program is and what a great opportunity this is for our students to have. Mr. Petrone said Coventry was very fortunate to have Mr. and Mrs. Gu, as they are very special educators.

#### **IV.A. Recognition: Parent Wendy D'Agostino**

Mr. Petrone talked about the dedication of the donated piano. He spoke highly of parent Wendy D'Agostino, who was present to share the story of the piano that was received. He added that the Steinway piano is worth over \$68,000 and it is over 100 years old. He said it was refurbished just over 7 years ago. He introduced Wendy who relayed the story of the donation. (A copy of her words are attached to these minutes.)

Mr. Petrone reiterated how important and special this is to Coventry and he reviewed the dedication event.

#### **IV.B. Information and Recognition: Student Board of Education Representative Report**

Mr. Petrone recognized Ben for his service on the Board. He said he has done an outstanding job as the student representative.

Ben reported how busy the end of the year is. He said graduation is next Saturday morning. He added how lucky he is to have been chosen to be this year's student representative. He thanked the Board for allowing him to participate.

#### **IV.C. Information: 2016-2017 Administrators' Goal Achievement Updates**

##### **IV.C.1. G. H. Robertson School**

Dr. Giller thanked the Board for the opportunity to share the goal achievement report for GHR for 2016-17. This document is available on the district's website. Dr. Giller shared the goal achievement presentation.

##### **IV.C.2. Capt. Nathan Hale School**

Ms. DeJulius thanked the Board for their support over the years. She shared the CNH Goal Achievement presentation for the 2016-17 school year. The full report is attached to the district's website.

M. Minor asked about cohort groups and how those are tracked. Ms. DeJulius, Ms. Mullaly, and Mr. Petrone talked to that point.

##### **IV.C.3. Coventry High School**

Mr. Blake thanked the Board of Education and shared the CHS Goal Achievement presentation for the 2016-17 school year. The full report is available on the district's website.

E. Marchand asked for the percentage of students involved in afterschool activities.

M. Sobol asked about the anticipated graduation rate. Mr. Blake said we are looking very good.

#### **V. VOTE: Consent Agenda**

**V.A. Accept the Resignation of Rachel Chirico, GHR Para-educator**

**V.B. Accept Resignation of Cheryl Villano, HEEC Teacher**





**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

M. Sobol went on to talk about the discussion of the MOA for the Preschool Fund. He said Fiscal agreed adjustments would be made to the Town Council's adjustments and the MOA would be sent back to the Town Council as a final draft, after the full Board has had a chance to review.

**XI. Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m.**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Sobol**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

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Respectfully submitted:

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme

**Approved:** June 22, 2017

June 8, 2017

Dear David Petrone and BOE Members,

Tonight I would like to thank Superintendent Dave Petrone and the entire BOE for this honor. I share this honor with all of my fellow CHS Boosters most especially Cliff Stone our President for the last four years. Without his guidance facilitating this piano into our school would not have been possible.

I would like to share a fantastic story that all began with a wish.....Every September Ned Smith our beloved band director would come to our first Booster meeting of the year and we would ask him for his wish list. First item on his list every year would be ...."we really are in need of a piano". To which we would respond...."sure we will get right on that". Upon Mr. Smith's tragic passing our first thought was we wish we could have fulfilled his dream of a new piano. Although this wish seemed unattainable, we just couldn't really let it go.

We even worked over a the last few months with Hannah Cole, Elisa Halves, Dena DeJulius, Joe Blake and Dave Petrone to cobble together enough resources to put together a proposed piano bid prospective. We included the entire Ned Francis Smith memorial fund, money from CHS and CNH music boosters as well as budget funds from both CNH and CHS.

But, then came a miracle and yes I firmly believe in miracles. I saw an ad for a Steinway Piano for sale. On a whim I sent a message to Karen and Chris Robinson, the piano sellers, I asked them if they might consider donating to a wonderful school system that is in need of a piano and who has suffered a very sad loss. Please call me if you would like to hear our story. Months went by, then on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 I received a call out of the blue from this wonderful couple who said Yes we would like to hear your story. After a 30 minute conversation my daughter Nina, David McArdle and I drove to Burlington Ct and visited with the Robinson's. We were graciously welcomed into their home and David was invited to play this incredible instrument while we talked. I shared my heartfelt feeling about our students and the loss of Mr. Smith. You see I feel at times my passion for Mr. Smith is sometimes not understood. In my perspective and what I choose to teach my children is that illness is illness and loss is loss. There is no illness or loss that should be more or less understood or respected, that the most important aspect of a person is how they lived their life. Mr. Smith lived a life with great passion for music and his teaching. He graciously gave 150% of himself to his position as CHS Band director. He guided and inspired his students in both music and life on a daily basis. His enthusiasm was infectious and is what inspired me to become involved the Music Boosters.

Thankfully, the Robinson's share my compassion and philosophy on life and were moved by our community's loss of such a beloved teacher. You see the Robinson's have been married for 52 years and are in fact high school sweethearts who met at age 17 in Band and music class. They shared how they too had inspiring teachers and had they suffered such a loss they weren't sure how they would have coped. Karen Robinson gently took my hand and so kindly said we are moved by your community's story and the loss of your inspiring director and we would love to help you fulfill this final wish. The Robinson's through a true act of genuine kindness wanted to donate their priceless piano to honor Ned Francis Smith and help our kids move forward and play on through this incredible gift. To these incredible donors they made it clear that evening and at last night's dedication their choice to give and pay it forward was about honoring Mr. Smith and our kids.

As, I stated before, I am a woman who believes in miracles. I feel my life has been blessed with three..... my daughter Nina, my son Nick and now this beautiful piano to serve as a permanent memorial to honor Ned F. Smith. If I never receive another miracle and if I never win the lottery that's fine with me..... I have truly been blessed. I am aware that I am shameless and dogged when it comes to all our kids especially our band kids current, past and future. Mr. Chris Robinson told me I had HUTZPA which is Yiddish for "not shy when passionate". I apologize if my HUTZPA ever offends it is not intentional, I just have trouble seeing clearly when the hearts and feeling of our children are involved.

Thank you for hearing this story and for this honor which I share with all of the dedicated parents in our community who selflessly volunteer for all of our kids. Thank you BOE for ALL of your tireless service to our children and our school system. It most certainly is recognized and is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Wendy D'Agostino