



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 18, 2016
THS Media Center, 50 Major Besse Drive**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Fiona Cappabianca, Chair; Joanne Brogis; Ellen G. Hoehne; Bill Knight; Jim Lamoin; Armand Maniccia; Jessica Richardson; Daniel Thibault; Kenneth P. Traub; Peter Vergaro

Administration: David Bascetta, Director of Facilities; Joseph L. Campolieta, Director of Human Services; Jerry Domanico, Director of Business Services; Le'Tanya Lawrence; Director of Student Services; Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Lynda T. Reitman, Interim Superintendent

Absent: Mayor Carbone

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

The Chair outlined the purpose and rules of the School/Community Session.

Ms. Strazgovino spoke on behalf of the TEA in opposition of closing any school this year.

Mr. Leverniere spoke regarding the upcoming TMS Washington D.C. trip.

Ms. Batastoni spoke regarding the closing of Southwest School.

Mr. Battle spoke regarding what makes our school system great, the music program. He also requested that the Board explain what acronyms mean during meetings.

Mr. Putnam spoke regarding budget issues.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Traub made a motion to amend the agenda to include (5) Torrington Energy Efficiency Project and Action Item (F) Approval of Torrington Energy Efficiency Project. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Superintendent's Report

1. Community Mapping

Ms. Reitman shared that our students came up with ways to help students with inadequate housing. They have been the inspiration for the website www.youth-help.org. Showing various programs and services available around the community to make sure students that are facing these issues have the resources they need.

2. THS Awards Night

Ms. Reitman stated that she attended awards night, we were treated to the sight of excellence in academics across the board. Really proud of our kids, over 200 recipients receiving awards.

3. NHS Induction

Ms. Reitman notified the Board that the National Honor Society Induction is upcoming and will be held in the Little Theater.

4. Junior Leadership NW Graduation

We are attending the junior Leadership NW graduation ceremony on Monday, honoring 13 of our students, participate in an 8 week program put on by the NW Chamber of Commerce, at the end of the 8 week internship they have a graduation ceremony.

B. Student Report

No student to report.

C. Staffing Reports

Mr. Thibault reported everything looks fairly good. March and April major reduction in absences. Went from spending \$56,000 on substitutes in April 2015 to \$36,000 in April 2016.

D. Early Retirement Plan

Mr. Domanico spoke regarding the early retirement incentive plan. The 403(b) incentive is in place for people who already have health insurance.

E. Mitigation Plan

Mr. Traub stated at this point have to get to the BOF, there was a whole week of payroll that got missed in the projections. We hoped we were moving towards the better but we are not. \$117,524 excess cost ECS funding that went to the City so we requested that as well. Looking to move \$20,000 from Vogel Wetmore contingency fund to operating. Our deficit is \$312,331. We have made several suggestions, the mayors wish is that we ask for the total dollar amount and it will be the city's decision of where they give us that money. If we get the money it allows us to still do the ADA project.

F. Update on Interim Superintendent Search

The Chair stated that there are eight candidates so far. We would like the resumes available at Migeon Avenue next week for Board members to go to HR and review the applicants. Would like to do interviews May 31 and June 1st.

G. District Calendar

Ms. Reitman stated that they had a request from Education Connection to take a look at our calendar. We are required 2017-2018 to have a regional calendar. However, this year, it created a problem for Adult Education. We were the only district taking our April vacation after Easter. Change to the calendar which moves April vacation before Easter which then changes the last day of school to June 9th and last day for teachers for June 12th.

Mr. Traub suggested moving April vacation to taking the 17th off and keeping the last day of school the same.

H. 2016-2017 Budget

The Chair stated likely mill rate not set until end of May beginning of June. Not in a position as a Board to wait to that time if we need to take any drastic measures. We can't wait a couple of weeks not knowing.

Mr. Traub would like to recommend to administration to start the re-districting process. At least take advantage of this three-four week time period, we can always pull the plug if we don't have to make any drastic cuts.

Ms. Richardson stated she wouldn't even consider closing two schools when the Board hasn't even heard if it's feasible, would it mean moving 7th grade to the high school or 8th grade? We do have to move forward looking at one school but we haven't even made a decision on the options we are willing to pursue. We need to hear some specifics.

The Chair stated we have limited time, limited resources. We can't have administration going in all different directions, we need to decide, do we want to close one school, close two schools, re-district?

Mr. Traub would like to recommend to administration to re-purpose Southwest School and move Migeon Ave. there. Mr. Maniccia, Mr. Vergaro, Dr. Brogis, Mr. Traub, Mr. Thibault, Mr. Knight and Mr. Lamoin in favor. Ms. Richardson and Ms. Hoehne opposed, does not feel that she has heard enough about the East School option. The Chair stated her concern is that Southwest is at capacity and there is no option for expansion there.

Ms. Lubomski compared closing East vs. Southwest school.

Mr. Traub made a motion to extend the meeting until 9:30. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposed, Mr. Thibault.

I. Torrington Energy Efficiency Project

Mr. Bascetta stated that they heard from new vendor Green Leaf. Stated they could do an energy efficiency project for Torrington School. Already had a vendor looking at that project. He presented the Board the price on both- JK Energy and Green Leaf. We've done business with JK Energy before. He would recommend staying with JK Energy.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Monthly financials

Mr. Traub made a motion to approve the monthly financials. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. All in favor

B. Approval of Early Retirement Plan

Mr. Thibault made a motion to approve the Early Retirement Incentive Plan. Ms. Richardson seconded the motion. The motion does not carry with six (6) opposed, Ms. Richardson, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Traub, Mr. Knight, Mr. Maniccia and Dr. Brogis.

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to include a minimum of 20 people needed to offer the early retirement plan. Mr. Domanico said it is included in the plan. Mr. Lamoin withdrew his motion.

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to re-vote on the early retirement plan. Mr. Vergaro seconded the motion. The motion passed with three (3) opposed, Mr. Maniccia, Dr. Brogis and Mr. Traub.

C. Approval of Mitigation Plan

Mr. Traub made a motion to send the Mitigation Plan to the Board of Finance. Mr. Thibault seconded the motion. All in favor.

D. Approval of District Calendar

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to approve the District Calendar as submitted. Mr. Thibault seconded the motion. The motion passed with two (2) opposed, Mr. Traub and Ms. Richardson.

E. Approval of Consent Agenda

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Traub seconded the motion. All in favor.

F. Torrington Energy Efficiency Project

Mr. Traub made a motion to keep the vendor the same for the Torrington Energy Efficiency Project. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Traub thanked everyone for the work that they have done. Mr. Traub asked that Board members leave elected officials alone when attending public events such as awards night.

Dr. Brogis said the awards night was wonderful.

Ms. Hoehne reported on East School; started planting garden, they have a float in Memorial Day parade, 80 students signed up to march. Literacy night was two weeks ago and it was well attended.

The Chair thanked the rest of the Board and everyone's commitment during Budget season.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Budget Committee – No report.
- B. Grievance Committee – No meeting held.
- C. Personnel Committee – Mr. Thibault reported now have an exit interview.
- D. Policy Committee – Ms. Hoehne reported, update on lunch program, outstanding balance \$852. Are going to look at laptops brought to school, policy for 8th grade graduation.
- E. School Improvement Committee – Ms. Richardson reported, awarded distinguished alumnus June 2nd, and discussed changes to website.
- F. Education Connection- No report, Dr.Brogis hopes to attend in June.
- G. Turf Field Committee- No report. Need a liaison. Mr. Maniccia volunteered. Mr. Vergaro volunteered to be the OPEC representative (post-employment benefits).
- H. Special Education Committee – The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 24th.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

- A. 2016-2017 Budget
- B. Monthly Financials

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, June 1, 2016 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – Policy Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m. – School Improvement and Community Relations Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 8, 2016 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – Personnel Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 15, 2016 (at THS)

6:00 p.m. – Regular BOE Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thibault made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.