



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 21, 2016
50 Major Besse Dr.**

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Fiona Cappabianca, Chair; Ellen G. Hoehne; Bill Knight; Jim Lamoin; Armand Maniccia; Jessica Richardson; Daniel Thibault; Kenneth P. Traub (6:58 p.m.); Peter Vergaro

Administration: David Bascetta, Director of Facilities; Joseph L. Campolieta, Director of Human Resources; Jerry Domanico, Director of Business Services; Le'Tanya Lawrence; Director of Student Services; Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Mark Winzler, Interim Superintendent; Elinor Carbone, Mayor

Absent: Joanne Brogis

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Ms. Battle spoke regarding some recommendations for the new Superintendent as discussed by the PTO; diligent in evaluating special ed, get input from teachers, business background, diligent in the reforms that come out for students.

Mr. Battle stated that he wants the school system to be part of the City's brand. He shared names of local prominent citizens that support this effort, they want to be recognized that really want the community to be involved in getting a Superintendent.

Mr. LaFreniere spoke stating that the budget cuts are already being felt. He is very concerned about a new Superintendent coming in at the start of the budget process and hopes the transition goes smoothly.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Teachers of the Year

1. Courtney Quigley (East); Mary Morton (Forbes); Jill Ciccarrelli (SW); Andrew Deacon (TF and District); Melissa Ferrucci (Vogel); Patricia Barnett (TMS); Maggie McGillicuddy (THS)

Ms. Lubomski stated we are very excited to honor the teachers of the year. They are outstanding and exemplary. They are nominated by their colleagues and peers and they know the work that they put in. Each teacher was presented a plaque by Mr. Winzler and the Board Chair.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Opening of School Report

Mr. Winzler reported that convocation was held on August 29th. The mayor, two state representatives and a state senator spoke. Opening day, four from Central Office went around to each school at different times throughout the day, it was one of the smoothest openings he's seen. One of the biggest changes this year is getting used to having less staff around but what has to get done has not changed, there's a shift in thinking and practicality. There are bumps in the road but we are trying to work together to address those.

Mr. Winzler report that they just finished an administrators meeting regarding the newest legislation that goes into effect October 21st, deals with student data. They have to collect the names of any company that any staff member uses for student data, have to write to them and send them a contract, if they don't send the contract back they can't use it. There's a 25 page document of all the state mandates on school systems. We are held accountable for all 25 pages. We are going down that list, it's been very busy but very fruitful.

2. SAT, SBAC Testing Presentation

Ms. Lubomski shared that this was the first year that all 11th graders took the SAT, previously they took the SBAC. English language arts tends to be stronger across the board. When you look at the scores, the combination of level 3 (meets and exceeds) and 4 was at 56%. It is a lot stronger than our math which is at 29.4%. We want to encourage all students to challenge themselves to move up to those level 3s and level 4s. For SBAC, 3rd grade through 8th grade is being tested on the computers and it can be tough for younger students to get on the computers and take the test without having much practice. Torrington in comparison to schools that are most like us, we still scored higher in English Language Arts as opposed to Math. This helps us to look at where we need to strengthen our programs. At the elementary level, we are starting with our coaches (in English language arts and numeracy), we are having them co-teach and talk about strategies and sharing their debriefs, etc. This will also be happening at the Middle School (currently only have one coach there)

C. Board of Education Procedures

The Chair shared that we discussed the procedures at the Retreat and asked the Board if there was anything they feels need to be changed.

Mr. Thibault shared under bullet point two, we have "let the Chair and the Superintendent know 24 hours after a committee meeting what we want on the

next agenda”, however it gives no timeline of when we will hear back or how you will get back to us, would like further clarification on these items as well as the items that come up last minute.

The Chair stated that the purpose is that the week of the meeting we aren’t stopping work at Central Office to address items that can’t wait until the following month. As long as the lines of communication are open, we are going to ease everyone’s meetings.

Ms. Richardson stated that it isn’t clear in the bullet point that this only refers to Subcommittees, the title should be changed.

The Chair stated the Subcommittees can put on their agendas whatever they want until they post their agenda however, when it involves Central Office they need advanced notification.

The Chair questioned if they would like to vote on it tonight with the changes as discussed or would the Board like to see it brought back before them next month.

A straw poll taken decided that it could be voted on with the discussed changes (Mr. Lamoin, Mr. Maniccia, Mr. Vergaro, Ms. Hoehne, Ms. Richardson) Mr. Thibault stated he would like to see it in writing before being voted on. Mr. Knight abstained.

D. 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Board of Education Goals

The Chair stated the Board had discussed these at the retreat, wanted to see if anyone had any other comments before they were voted on. No further discussion.

E. Capital Projects

Mr. Winzler stated that the Chair asked at the last meeting, with our “less deficit” we come back with a list of capital projects and then go ask the Board of Finance to consider that. Mr. Bascetta and Mr. Domanico presented these projects to the Budget Committee.

Mr. Bascetta stated that the Solar Project at Torrington School would cost around roughly \$430,000. We compiled the information on the solar and the energy efficiency so it reduced the cost by \$359,814 dollars. The other project was the windows at Vogel-Wetmore school, it’s not really a window replacement as much as it is a trim and frame workup. The other project was at the Administration Building; roof replacement, underground tank removal, heating system, brick repointing and repair, repair façade and replace door and windows and trim for a total of \$382,475.

The Chair stated we have to go before the Board of Finance to ask to move this money into Capital or to return the money to the City.

Mr. Traub stated that we transferred capital to operating then we didn't need all of it. This is capital that we moved to transfer a shortfall we didn't need, it was moved there as a safety blanket.

The Chair questioned if anyone wanted to look at IT or if everyone felt comfortable moving forward with Torrington Solar Project and Vogel-Wetmore Windows. A straw poll taken, all in favor.

Mr. Domanico stated that it isn't a done deal we still have to get the Board of Finance on board with this.

F. Agenda Format Change

The Chair stated that she moved the Committee reports before the action items. Also, the Board cannot approve Subcommittee minutes only the Subcommittees can so it was changed to "Receipt of minutes". Also, we removed homeschool notices because the Board can't approve or disapprove those, we can still get updates on those.

G. Staffing Absence Report

The Chair stated there was some confusion as to why this item was pulled from the agenda at the Personnel Committee meeting. It was her understanding that at the Retreat, it was discussed reviewing the Absence Report, if it was a function of the Board. If we want to discuss the time people are taking off, that needs to be discussed at contract negotiations.

Mr. Knight stated we were surprised at the Personnel Committee meeting that it wasn't going to be part of our meeting. While he doesn't want to know if a teacher was absent a day or two, however, if there are chronic absences, he would like to know.

Mr. Lamoin stated he doesn't feel the report needs to be as detailed before but would like to be able to know how much we are spending on substitutes.

Mr. Vergaro and Mr. Maniccia were in agreeance about leaving the Staffing Absence Report off the agenda. Mr. Vergaro stated that its helps with morale for the Board not to review it.

Ms. Hoehne stated that maybe a generic report once a year to the Board would be helpful other than that it should be left to the buildings and the HR department.

Ms. Richardson stated she feels that it is something best left to administration.

Mr. Traub stated a tremendous amount was gained through those reports as far as budgeting for substitutes, we got to discuss and see the fill rates for substitutes that were falling way off, thinks a lot of good data came out of it, doesn't think it needs to be monthly.

Mr. Thibault stated the Personnel Committee was supposed to review the three year report at the last meeting and he did not recall at the Retreat it being decided to pull the Staffing Report from the agenda. We had the information so we knew how much we were budgeting for substitutes. He feels that it is valuable information.

The Chair stated that going forward people need to be upfront and say it at the time we are addressing it. We need to make sure we are oaring in the same direction. The Chair stated she will work with administration to create something that does not identify certain staff members.

H. Update on Superintendent Search

Mr. Winzler shared that the posting is all over New England and today and tomorrow are the focus groups with parents and community and faculty and staff. Once that is wrapped up, they will compile all of that information into a document (along with the online surveys) that is categorized that says this is what your community is looking for. After, that document will be posted on the website and will help identify candidates and help the Board with the questions they will ask. There are three meetings October 17, 19th and 20 related to the Superintendent Search.

I. Change of Date

The Chair stated need to change the Regular BOE meeting due to conflict with the Superintendent search. The date that was suggested was October 13th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Budget Committee- Mr. Traub reported that they talked about monthly financials, we didn't have anything glaring, and everything seems to be running fairly well. Two budget transfers were moved to the full Board, they were to cover the Superintendent Search and NEASC. We discussed the filing of the ED01. We got an RFP update.
- B. Grievance Committee- Mr. Lamoin reported there was one grievance that was denied and came up with an alternate. The other grievance that was brought forward was cancelled.
- C. Personnel Committee- Mr. Thibault stated they reviewed the appointments and resignations sheets. The Board discussed whether that is the Personnel Committee's responsibility to approve the appointments and resignations. The Chair stated that she feels it is helpful for the Board to get the information to see what positions are filled or vacant. A straw poll taken- receive the appointments and resignations and not vote on; all in favor.
- D. Policy Committee –Ms. Hoehne reported that they talked about Student Activity fees, was not worth pursuing. She was very disheartened to hear that the BYOD network at the high school is not working, not really productive for our students.

Students contacted her and would like to bring in devices other than the eleven inch screens.

- E. School Improvement Committee- Ms. Richardson reported NEASC committee chairs gave them an update. In January, they plan on coming back to give an update on the progress. They have been working on marketing and communication in regards to the BOE Goal for 2016-2017.
- F. Education Connection- Dr. Brogis was absent, no report. Mr. Domanico stated they changed their name to Ed Advance.
- G. Turf Field Committee- The Chair reported no update, hopefully a meeting scheduled in the next couple weeks.
- H. Special Education Ad-Hoc – currently on hold

ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Board of Education Procedures

Ms. Richardson made a motion to approve the Board of Education Procedures. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposed, Mr. Thibault.

B. Approval of 2016-2017 Board of Education Goals

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the 2016-2017 Board of Education Goals. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. All in favor.

C. Approval of 2017-2018 Board of Education Goals

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to approve the 2017-2018 Board of Education Goals. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

D. Approval of Field Trip

Mr. Traub expressed his concern regarding the cost of the trip. He stated there are a lot of other environmental studies that can be done in our area to save a lot of money. Ms. Richardson made a motion to approve the field trip. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposed, Mr. Traub.

E. Approval of Consent Agenda

Mr. Lamoin made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Vergaro shared his concern that he feels that it is becoming political and that the roll call shouldn't show which political figures are absent from meetings. Mr. Traub made a motion to re-open the Consent Agenda. Ms. Hoehne seconded the motion. Mr. Lamoin made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposed, Mr. Vergaro.

Mr. Thibault stated he would like the Board to consider moving the meeting to 6:30p.m. in the future.

Mr. Traub stated he would like to see the Board go back to a 7:00 meeting.

Mr. Maniccia agreed a later meeting time would work better for him.

Mr. Knight agreed with a later meeting time. He shared that Torrington School has been very active, they unveiled their first fundraisers for the year, one being selling Yankee candles the other being selling LED lightbulbs. They also held a dance on Friday.

Mr. Lamoin reported that School Governance is looking for three more parents and a community leader, if anyone wants to volunteer the first Monday of every month.

Ms. Hoehne stated that we are Board of ten and we all really need to work together, we need to look going forward and not looking back. We can agree to not agree, we need to not take things personally.

Ms. Richardson stated she would also agree with a later start time. She has also heard good things and thanked the staff.

The Chair thanked the staff for the way they handled the situation at East School on Friday. She wants the Board to work in a more cohesive direction going forward.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

- A. Superintendent Search (The Chair)
- B. Financials (The Chair)

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, October 5, 2016 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – Policy Committee

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

Wednesday, October 12, 2016 (Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – Personnel Committee

6:30 p.m. – Budget Committee

Thursday, October 13, 2016 (at THS)

6:00 p.m. – Special Board of Education Meeting (Tentative)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thibault made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Traub seconded the motion. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.