



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, October 13, 2016
50 Major Besse Dr.**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Fiona Cappabianca, Chair; Ellen Hoehne; Bill Knight; Jim Lamoin; Armand Maniccia; Jess Richardson; Daniel Thibault; Kenneth P. Traub

Administration: David Bascetta, Director of Facilities; Jerry Domanico, Director of Business Services; Le'Tanya Lawrence; Director of Student Services; Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Mark Winzler, Interim Superintendent

Absent: Joanne Brogis; Peter Vergaro; Joseph L. Campolieta, Director of Human Resources; Mayor Carbone

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Mr. Lafreniere spoke regarding the recent fund raisers held; 710 lightbulb (6 packs) were sold for \$3500 profit, candle fundraiser netted about \$13,000 in profit. He questioned the Board to see if the re-districting process has been looked at yet. He also asked that the board possibly consider moving public participation to after Information Sharing because some feedback may have an impact on the action items.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment that the spelling of 4(F) and 6(B4) is changed to read Wamogo. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. All in favor.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Superintendent's Report

1. Field Trips

Mr. Winzler spoke regarding the field trips, just regular field trips many yearly. Mr. Maniccia questioned how many teachers were going to the Model UN field trip. The Chair responded that it is one parent chaperone and one teacher.

2. Paraeducator Audit Update

Mr. Winzler updated the Board on the paraeducator audit. Not talking about money as much as talking about needs. IT became clear during the summer and as soon began that some new students came into the district and had complex needs. Step back and look first at existing personnel before we start hiring. Let's look at the way the present staff is being schedule to find out if there are any economies. The difference in the special ed students in this year and last year, you have ten more special ed students this year. The number doesn't mean anything, it depends on the needs. Ms. Lawrence, Jillian and Ms. Lubomski went into the schools to do an audit.

Ms. Lubomski shared that as they went to each school, they would meet with the administrators and the educators, review schedules, and review needs. So far at this point we have identify 17 new para needs but we have yet to go through the High School and Middle School and East School will be done Friday.

Mr. Winzler stated we do have Medicaid funds, we can fund up to 20 positions if need be without touching the general budget. Mr. Winzler stated the goal here is to education kids here onsite opposed to sending them to outplacements. He will provide the Board with a report with what the final number is and the funding.

Mr. Thibault commented we had cut 40 paraprofessionals in the spring and now are bringing back 17 because of needs, what is the limit to what our additional funds can bring in before we start laying off our regular staff that we brought back.

Mr. Winzler stated the audit is still in progress and until he has the complete report, he won't have the complete answers for the Board.

The Chair stated she would like to see some consideration in the placement of district programs, look at what buildings would better house some programs instead of causing disruptions.

B. Board Goals

The Chair stated that now that we have goals set she would like to suggest doing a workshop where we can brainstorm and look at what we are going to accomplish this year and how.

Ms. Richardson stated she thinks it is a good idea because many of the goals don't fit in with a specific committee.

Ms. Hoehne stated she feels that it is a good idea that ways the committees can be driven with what the Board wants.

C. Board Goals Marketing

Ms. Richardson requested feedback from the Board regarding the board goal “create a sustainable marketing and communication strategy for the Torrington Public Schools”. She asked “what we are hoping to achieve with this goal, what are we marketing, what are our benchmarks and how will we achieve this goal.” She shared what the School Improvement and Community Relations Committee discussed and shared pertaining to this goal.

Mr. Traub thinks the questions are good and the initial answers are pretty thorough. One thing he has heard from kids is that they have no idea how to get involved. We used to have clubs in the high school to do this type of work as an assignment, we aren’t doing any hands on work. Here’s an opportunity to take the business department in the high school for example, and let the kids do it. Nobody knows better than kids why kids are leaving.

Ms. Richardson shared what a sample job description for a Public Relations Specialist might look like. She stated what the committee needs the most is feedback as to if the Board wants to create a position such as this.

The Chair stated that last year the middle school had 315 students, only 215 of those kids went to the high school, in some way or fashion we have to address this.

The Chair stated if the Board is interested in pursuing this, we would like everyone’s opinion of what direction they would like to go, we cannot continue to waste time, before the School Improvement Committee spends any more time on this; we need to know if the Board wants them to spend time on this. Is the Board willing to commit money?

The Board agreed that a position is needed.

The Chair questioned if everyone was comfortable with a range such as 40-50K for a total package number including the position and marketing.

Mr. Traub stated that when you are talking about a whole package, it is going to be upwards of \$100,000 for everything.

The Board was in agreement to look at a plan of up to \$100,000.

D. Purchasing Procedures Policy (3010) Revision

Ms. Hoehne shared that this is a policy the district desperately needs. This is a policy that will help in everybody following the same rules.

Mr. Domanico stated these have been looked at by the auditors, they have not seen any issues or problems with it.

Mr. Traub questioned the policy number. Mr. Winzler stated since it is a special meeting, you can either not do this tonight or you can leave it two policies, you can agree by common consent to change it all to #3010.

Mr. Domanico stated there is already an awarding of contracts policy so then you would have policy 3000 awarding of policies and policy 3010 which would also include awarding of policies.

The Chair stated we don't want to have two contradictory policies, we will bring this back to the Board in November.

E. Roll Call Update

The Chair stated from now on instead of calling everyone on the roll call, the Board members will be called and those will be called present that are also at the Board's table.

F. Superintendent's recommendation to re-appoint Scott Arigoni for three-year term as Wamogo Agricultural Education Advisory Committee member for Torrington

Mr. Winzler shared the Board has to vote to appoint Scott to the Committee.

G. Educational Specifications for THS Oil Tank Project

Mr. Bascetta asked that the Board read through the educational specs, approval of the educational specs have to be voted on and then ask the City Council to establish the building committee.

There was a question as to the wording of the action item since it is a Special Meeting.

Mr. Winzler stated the cleanest way to do it is probably to pull it off the Consent Agenda and vote on it separately.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Budget Committee- Mr. Traub reported that they did the monthly financials, we approved a few budget transfers, requested one transfer to come back to the committee, had an RFP update, reviewed ed specs for Fuel Tank replacement project, at the next meeting will look at Student Use Policy, re-discuss the Latin Online learning, continue to discuss the 2017-2018 budget projections, RFPs
- B. Grievance Committee- Mr. Lamoin reported they had one grievance, ended up being denied.

- C. Personnel Committee- Mr. Thibault reviewed 3 year historical chart of staffing, seen 10-20% drop on a monthly basis.
- D. Policy Committee –Ms. Hoehne reported that they had an abbreviated meeting discussed policy 3010
- E. School Improvement Committee- Ms. Richardson reported that in November they will be hearing any new course proposals
- F. Education Connection- Dr. Brogis absent.
- G. Turf Field Committee- The Chair reported no update
- H. Special Education Ad-Hoc – currently on hold

ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Consent Agenda

Ms. Richardson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the following amendments; item (5) taken out, in the Board of Education Regular Meetings of September 21, 2016 change the spelling in Committee Reports (A) and (E) to NEASC, Committee Report (F) should be changed to read “Ed Advance” and Mr. Campolieta should be marked as present. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.

B. Educational Specifications for THS Oil Tank Project

Mr. Traub made a motion to approve the Educational Specifications for the Torrington High School Fuel Tank Replacement Project:

1. Request that the City Council establish a Building Committee for the proposed project naming Mr. David Bascetta, Director of Facilities as the Building Committee.
2. Authorizing at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the proposed project
3. Authorizing the filing of the grant applications for the project
4. Authorizing funding for the project

Ms. Richardson seconded the motion. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Thibault questioned if there was any news on getting the wi-fi working on the tablets.

Mr. Traub stated no members of the budget subcommittee were present last night and only the alternate was there so he could not approve the minutes. Mr. Traub questioned

for liaison assignments if he has to contact the Superintendent before he calls the principal.

Mr. Knight stated tomorrow evening the Middle School will be holding their fall festival.

Ms. Hoehne stated she is looking forward to the workshop

Ms. Richardson shared that she attended her first Unified Soccer game and it was a lot of fun (7 teams participated), the first year there were only 3 teams so it's really growing.

The Chair thanked all the administration in the buildings and the Board for making the budget cuts work the best they can, asked everyone to be patients as we work through this. Echoes Ken's concern about attendance, if you can't make it, let someone know, the next couple of weeks it's critical that we have attendance especially during the Superintendent interviews.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

- A. New Courses
- B. Paraprofessional Audit
- C. Purchasing Procedures Policy
- D. Monthly Financials
- E. 10 Year Enrollment Projections

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, November 2, 2016 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – School Improvement and Community Relations Committee

7:00 p.m. – Policy Committee

Wednesday, November 9, 2016 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. – Personnel Committee

6:30 p.m. – Budget Committee

Wednesday, November 16, 2016 (at THS)

6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thibault made a motion to adjourn at 7:46 p.m. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. All in favor.