



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 29, 2017, 6:30PM
50 Major Besse Drive**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Fiona Cappabianca; Joanne Brogis; Ellen G. Hoehne; Bill Knight; Armand Maniccia; Wendy Pataky; Jessica Richardson; Kenneth P. Traub; Daniel Thibault; Peter Vegaro

Administration: David Bascetta, Director of Facilities; Denise L. Clemons, Superintendent; Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Steven Manley, IT Director

Absent: Le'Tanya Lawrence; Director of Student Services

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Public participation was held after Discussion Item C – Torrington Public School Restructure per the approval of the amended agenda.

Keri Hoehne spoke about East School closure.

Jason Lafreniere spoke about the DC Trip and Capital Budget.

Kathleen Pelky spoke about East School closure.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair entertained the motion to amend the agenda as follows: Move item H, Torrington Public School Restructure after Item B. Also, move School/Community Session Public Participation after Torrington Public School Restructure item is discussed. This motion was made by Mr. Knight, seconded by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.

8:50PM - The Chair entertained the motion to extend the meeting till 9:15PM. Ms. Richardson made the motion to approve the extension, Mr. Knight seconded. Y-8, N-1 (Thibault). Motion carries. Meeting is extended till 9:15PM.

9:08PM - The Chair entertained the motion to extend the meeting till 9:20PM. Ms. Richardson made the motion to approve the extension, Mr. Vegaro seconded. Y-7, N-2 (Thibault and Traub). Motion carries. Meeting is extended till 9:20PM.

9:18PM - The Chair entertained the motion to extend the meeting till 9:30PM. Ms. Richardson made the motion to approve the extension, Mr. Traub seconded. Y-7, N-2 (Thibault and knight). Motion carries. Meeting is extended till 9:30PM.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Faculty Recognition: The following staff members were presented with certificates by Ms. Clemons and the Chair for various outstanding reasons.

1. Hillary Sterling – TMS
2. Leanne Maguire – TMS
3. Emily DiCostanzo – Torrington
4. Brendan Eckert – Torrington
5. Diane Hart – Forbes

B. Student Recognition: The following students were presented with certificates by Ms. Clemons and the Chair for various outstanding reasons.

1. - Jay Barrera – Forbes
2. Steven Robertson – Forbes
3. Jocelyn Smith – Forbes
4. Hannah Turgeon – Forbes
5. Abbey Young – Forbes
6. Avianna Tjeda – Southwest
7. Saige Zolla – Southwest
8. Austin Shewchuk – Southwest
9. Jazmine Cote – Southwest
10. Nathan Gryniuk – Torrington

C. Torrington Public School Restructure

There was a lot of discussion on this topic. The TPS Ad Hoc Committee met a few times and discussed the following options:

- Option A – East renovate as new, add 5 classrooms; adds 125 students; total of 550 students; Total cost: \$41,379,674, estimated net cost to the district \$17,843,000. Estimated reimbursement from the state is \$23,536,063 at a rate of 74.29% from 2017-2018. All students would have to be moved out during the renovations; portable classrooms would have to be used.
- Option B – Put larger school on the TMS property; use East school plan and place at TMS; Total Cost: 52,745,154, Net Cost \$21,541,147 with state reimbursement Ms. Clemons said could look at grade level configurations.
- Option C- Close one elementary school, the closing and selection of school would be the choice of the board. The closing would allow for redistricting and addressing the racial imbalance as well as reduce the middle school bullying that occurs, because students of different racial backgrounds are not together at each of the elementary schools.

-The TPS Restructure Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation is to close East School while the board decides how they want to go forward. The new board would have to evaluate all of these different options which would be done beginning of next year and it would be incorporated into next year's budget.

-The Superintendent stated that at this time she believes it can be done since there was preliminary work done prior to her coming into the district. The projects that we have received have shown a downward trend in Torrington and we would lose approximately 100 students per year. If we place the East School students in other schools we would still be in the constructional domains. In doing this, we would show good faith efforts for the racial imbalance citation.

-East school would be closed for about 4-5 years, give or take.

-There is space in other schools that could be repurposed back into the classroom if needed.

-The Superintendent stated that when she dealt with a similar situation in a different district, she held public forums after the decision was made and there was a lot of support from community and staff to help with the logistics.

-The Superintendent also stated that if we became an Alliance District, we should have money freed up to use it for enhancement programs because the state would give us resources to help the kids who are struggling educationally.

-It was said that the parents would know as soon as spring what school their child would be attending. Pre-planning is key.

-The Chair stated that when we look at the amount of work that East School needs, the cost is over 4 million dollars that we do not have and that does not include any of the additional things that should be done. She has concern about renovating East School because of asbestos and other issues that would arise once we actually start to inspect the building.

-If we created a new elementary school, we would be closing down two elementary schools.

D. Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent presented a PowerPoint on Alliance District. She also thanked and commended the board members that were leaving.

E. Alliance District

PowerPoint presentation presented by the Superintendent. CT General Statute Section 10-262U establishes a process and allocates increased Education Cost Sharing funds "to support district strategies to dramatically increase student outcomes and close achievements gaps by pursuing bold and innovative reforms." The Priorities for designated Alliance Districts are: Transition to Common Core State Standards and next generation assessments, Educator Evaluation and Support, Interventions in Low-Performing Schools, and K-3 Literacy. All districts are expected to develop systems, processes and infrastructure in these critical areas. This is something the state assigns to us, we did not apply for it.

F. Monthly Financials – Change due to Board of Finance Approved Budget

G. (\$396,048.00) \$74,149,114.00

The reduction that the Board of Finance needed us to do was done. There was no impact on our budget, this was the budget the board voted on, just updated numbers.

H. YTD Budget

We are right where we need to be. The only concern is if the Governor implements another cut, in which case we would need to come up with another \$100,000.

I. Proposed Capital Budget Plan

Same Capital Budget plan as last year because there was no existence of capital this year. Deadline to go to the City Department is January 1, 2018. It was decided that this plan would go back to the Budget Committee for some corrections.

J. Student Funds and PTO Use List

There needs to be work done to the list to make it “useable.” The people who are responsible for accounts need to be assigned and the money that is in the accounts needs to go towards whatever the money was meant for.

K. RFP – Occupational Therapist

The name was changed, it went from being Business Manager to Director of Finance and Operation. The RFP did go through Budget and they were fine with it.

L. Energy Projection for Southwest School

This is a four year pack back plan with a \$51,000 incentive. Our Electric bill would go down by a \$100.00 a month. Budget believes it is good to move forward.

M. Contract Extension for Burlington Construction on State Project No. 143-0072CV

This was vetted in Budget. The capital project was not able to be finished this summer and we need to extend the completion date another year so they can finish the project.

N. Contract Extension for Jespersen’s Landscaping for Mowing and Grounds

We received good feedback about this Landscaper. They have proved themselves and they are willing to keep his pricing level for 2 years beyond. Budget approves.

O. The Torrington High School Fuel Storage Replacement Project

The Torrington High School Fuel Storage replacement Project State #143-0073CV has reached substantial completion phase. The Building Committee of said project is asking The Torrington Board of Education to close the project at this time.

P. Web Filter Renewal

This is yearly subscription service. It would save us a substantial amount of money to add the Web Filter capability to the Firewall.

Q. Director of HR Salary

The request to increase the HR salary to what it was in the past, about \$30,000, in order to become competitive.

R. Field Trips

1. THS Field Trip – Overnight trip, Niantic, CT, May 2018

2. TMS Field Trip – Washington, D. C., May 2019

3. THS Field Trip – Ireland, England and Wales, April 2019

The fieldtrip information is included in the packet. There was discussion on the THS Field Trip to Ireland, England and Wales regarding the high cost of the trip.

S. Food Service Charging Policy #6194

This was discussed at length in Policy and it is believed to be a good policy.

T. Attendance Policy #6066

This was decided to be brought forward after much discussion. There are areas that need to be further discusses but those will be discussed in the future. The building administrators did have input into this policy. There was concern about this being a mid-year rollout. The board decided that is it better to have something in place than nothing and they can change the policy as needed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget Committee

Nothing new to report besides what was covered in tonight's meeting.

B. Grievance Committee

Nothing to report.

C. Personnel Committee

Nothing to report.

D. Policy Committee

Food Service Charging Policy and Attendance Policy was discussed and decided to be brought forward to the full board.

E. School Improvement Committee

This meeting they met at East School. Ms. Richardson was given a lengthy tour in which she received feedback. One of the main highlights was that there is a true family sense of community there. The negative is that the building has issues. They are doing a good job of making the best of what they got.

F. Ed-Advance

Dr. Brogis will e-mail to the board the update.

G. Curriculum Committee

Nothing to report.

H. Torrington Public School Restructure Ad Hoc Committee

This was covered in the discussion item.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Proposed Capital Budget Plan

This item is being moved off of the agenda and is being sent back to the Budget Committee.

B. Torrington Public School Restructure

Mr. Thibault made the motion to temporarily shutter East School beginning in the 2018/2019 fiscal year, while keeping it under Torrington Public School control, for the evaluation of the building and grounds for future during which time there will be redistricting of students to other buildings. Mr. Knight seconded the motion.

Y-6, N-3 (Hoehne, Richardson, and Pataky). Motion carries.

C. RFP – Occupational Therapist

Mr. Knight made the motion to approve this item, Mr. Traub seconded. All in favor.

D. Energy Projection for Southwest School

Mr. Knight made the motion to approve this item, Mr. Thibault seconded. All in favor.

E. Contract Extension for Burlington Construction on State Project No. 143-0072CV

Mr. Traub made a motion to approve this extension, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

F. Contract Extension for Jespersen's Landscaping for Mowing and Grounds

Mr. Traub made a motion to approve this extension, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

G. The Torrington High School Fuel Storage Replacement Project

“The Torrington High School Fuel Storage replacement Project State #143-0073CV has reached substantial completion phase. The Building Committee of said project

is asking The Torrington Board of Education to close the project at this time.”

Mr. Traub made a motion to close this project, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

H. Web Filter Renewal

Mr. Thibault made a motion to approve this renewal, Mr. Maniccia seconded. All in favor.

I. Director of HR Salary

Dr. Brogis made a motion to approve the new HR Salary range, Mr. Knight seconded. All in favor.

J. Field Trips

1. THS Field Trip – Overnight trip, Niantic, CT, May 2018

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve this field trip, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

2. TMS Field Trip – Washington, D. C., May 2019

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve this field trip, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

3. THS Field Trip – Ireland, England and Wales, April 2019

Mr. Thibault made a motion to approve this field trip, Dr. Brogis seconded.

Y-7, N-2 (Hoehne and Traub). Motion carries.

K. Food Service Charging Policy #6194

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve this policy, Dr. Brogis seconded. All in favor.

L. Attendance Policy #6066

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve this policy, Dr. Brogis seconded.

Y-7, N-2 (Vegaro and Knight). Motion carries.

M. ~~Possible Action~~ On the Pension Agreement Between the City, Board and Local 1579

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve this item, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor.

N. ~~Possible Action~~ Concerning the Tentative Agreement Between the Board and Local 1579 For a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve this item, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor.

O. Approval of Board of Education Meeting Minutes – October 25, 2017

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.

P. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2017 (5:30PM)

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by Ms. Pataky. Y-6, N-0, Obstain-3 (Knight, Thibault, and Traub)

Q. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2017 (6:30PM)

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by Ms. Pataky. Y-6, N-0, Obstain-3 (Knight and Thibault)

R. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Monthly Financials

2. Receive Subcommittee Minutes:

i. Policy Committee – October 24, 2017

ii. School Improvement Committee – October 4, 2017

iii. Budget Committee – October 18, 2017

iv. TPS Restructure Ad Hoc Committee – August 22, 2017 & November 15, 2017

3. Appointments & Resignations-none

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Mr. Traub seconded. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Traub – Goodbye to the board members, it has been fun and I am leaving much more educated.

Mr. Thibault – It has been an amazing 7 years working with Ken, a great 3 years working with Jess and Bill, and a great 6 months working with Wendy.

Mr. Vegaro – Words are not adequate for the thanks to the outgoing board members. I am going to miss Ken when budget starts. Thank you Denise for all your hard work, I believe it is important to thank you and cheer you on publically.

Mr. Maniccia – Thank you to all the board members, it is truly a lot of work.

Dr. Brogis – Echo the same thoughts as Mr. Vegaro. I will miss Ken's wealth of knowledge.

Mr. Knight – I learned a new language when I came onto the board. It has been a pleasure of serving with you and I wish the incoming board success.

Ms. Pataky – Thank you, it has been a long road even though I have had a short time here. I have bitter sweet emotions to saying goodbye to all of you. Thank you to Fiona. Denise, you are doing a great job and I have full confidence in you and your vision.

Ms. Hoehne – East School had a Veteran's Day celebration, they honored 42 veterans. First grade is sponsoring a coat drive. Thank you to the board members that are leaving, a special thanks to Ken.

Ms. Richardson – I voted against the closure of East School because I did not feel like I had enough information but I am confident in Denise's leadership and the board that you will handle this in the best way possible. Thank you everyone.

Chair – It is very sad to be losing half the board. We may not always agree at times but as a group we worked good together and we made a lot of progress and tried to fix a lot of things. I appreciate all the sacrifices all of you have made and all your families have made. We will miss all of you.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

1. Monthly Financials
2. Plan for the Redistrict
3. Community Group Together for Board members to Determine Next Steps

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on December 20, 2017.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, December 6, 2017 (at Forbes School)

6:00 p.m. — School Improvement and Community
Relations Committee **POSTPONED**

7:00 p.m. — Policy Committee **POSTPONED**

Wednesday, December 13, 2017 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:30 p.m. – Personnel Committee

7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee

Wednesday, December 20, 2017 (at THS)

6:30 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting
(sched. for 3rd Wednesday due to Winter Break)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thibault made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Traub seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:35PM.