

Board of Education

February 11, 2014

Chairperson DeAngelo requested Board Members to turn off cell phones.

This meeting was recorded and videotaped. The tapes are available in the Town Manager's Office.

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, February 11, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway. The following Board members were present: Chairperson DeAngelo, Vice Chairperson Steinmiller-Paradise, Mr. Carey, Mr. Cascio, Mr. Forrest, Mrs. Latina, Ms. McDougall, and Mr. Morris. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Finance, Timothy Howes; Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Sally Dastoli; Director of Maintenance and Operations, Fred Bushey; Director of Special Services, Emily Daigle; Wethersfield High School Principal, Thomas Moore; Webb School Principal, Michael Verderame; and Wethersfield High School Student Representative, Sam Solberg.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Morris led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Student/Staff Recognition/Presentations

There were no Student/Staff Recognition/Presentations made during this meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

a. January 25, 2014 Special Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. DeAngelo made the following corrections:

Page 1, Paragraph 1, Lines 7-8. Change "Silas Deane Middle School Assistant" and replace it with "Webb School."

Page 1, Add the following sentence to create a new paragraph after Line 10: "Mr. Howes led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance."

Mr. Cascio MOVED to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of January 25, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Forrest and VOTED unanimously.

b. January 28, 2014 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. DeAngelo noted the following correction to Page 2, Section 5. Communications. The language in Lines 1-3 and to be deleted and replaced with the following language: “Mr. Emmett acknowledged and thanked Mr. Carl Christie, member representative of the Rotary Club of Wethersfield/Rocky Hill. He noted the donation of dictionaries was the Club’s eighth (8th) consecutive donation of dictionaries made to Wethersfield Grade 3 students.”

Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise MOVED to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of January 28, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cascio and VOTED unanimously, with Mr. Carey abstaining.

4. Public Comment

Paul Copp, 100 Executive Square, commented on his letter to the Editor that appeared in last week’s edition of the *Rare Reminder*. He mentioned that the Board of Education has an indirect responsibility in handling of the WHS Renovation project. He suggested the Project Management Company be fired and that the architect for the project be reviewed.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented on his attendance at the recent meeting of the Building Committee. He spoke of awareness concerning debt load the Town has undertaken, flat test score results and continued tax increases. He noted Wethersfield should live with the money originally budgeted for the WHS Renovation project.

George A. Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, requested that Wethersfield Taxpayers be regarded by the Board of Education as stakeholders in Board of Education matters.

5. Communications

Mr. Emmett indicated that due to the abatement project scheduled during February school vacation week, the Wethersfield High School building will be closed completely beginning Friday, February 14, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. Hazardous materials will be removed as a part of the ongoing renovation project. Specifically, the west side of the building including Gym B, the

wrestling room, and the hallways surrounding the auditorium will be a part of asbestos and PCB abatement and removal. It is imperative that no student or staff member enter the building during the period of abatement. The District plans to receive a clean air bill of health when this abatement is finished so that school may resume according to schedule on Monday February 24, 2014. Information will be posted on the District's *facebook* page as well as on the Wethersfield Public Schools website <http://www.wethersfield.k12.ct.us>. Also, it is expected that Gym A will be available for use upon return from the school break. Mr. Emmett mentioned the Space Standards Waiver submission was made on Friday, February 7, 2014, and Mr. Emmett will be working with the WHS Renovation Project's Architect on upcoming submission of Form ED049 to the State. Mr. Emmett, Mr. Howes and Mrs. Dastoli attended a Staff Meeting at Highcrest School today for purposes of developing a focus group regarding the search for a new Principal at Highcrest School, and Mr. Emmett is meeting with the Highcrest PTO on Thursday, February 13, 2014, for purposes of developing a focus group of parents in this regard. Information obtained from the focus groups will be utilized by the hiring committee. The expectation is to have a Principal in place at Highcrest School as of July 1, 2014. Mr. Emmett noted the upcoming Budget Workshop scheduled for Saturday, February 15, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Stillman Building's Lower Level Conference Room. Mr. Emmett expressed his appreciation of this Board's flexibility pertaining to their attendance at committee meetings. He noted meetings this week include Policy and Planning Committee review of the 9000 Series and a review of School Improvement Plans with Principals. He also noted The Board is looking to expand Community and Public Relations and explore opportunities for Shared Services.

6. Action Items

a. Recommended Motion: Approval of 2014-2015 School Year Calendar

Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise MOVED that the Wethersfield Board of Education approve the 2014 - 2015 School Year Calendar as recommended by the calendar committee. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Forrest and VOTED unanimously. Board Comments: Mrs. Latina and Ms. McDougall commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

7. Reports/Discussion Items

a. Wethersfield Community Response Team (W.C.R.T.)

Mrs. Daigle provided a report. Board Comments: Mrs. Latina, Ms. McDougall, Mr. Morris, and Mrs. DeAngelo commented.

b. Announcements/Information

Chairperson DeAngelo reviewed the items in Board Members' packets and reminded Committee Chairpersons/Board members to review scheduled meeting dates and times with their calendars.

8. Board of Education

a. Meetings Held

Chairperson DeAngelo announced the following meetings:

Shared Services Committee: Mr. Emmett indicated the Committee's area of focus at this time is Information Technology (IT). Mr. Emmett will be working with Mr. Bridges on the issue, as there are opportunities for Mr. Rafaniello to provide technical expertise and assistance to the Town. Special Board of Education Meeting, - Budget Workshop 02.01.14: Mr. Carey noted Mr. Howes and Central Office Staff provided information and facilitated discussion regarding increases in defined benefits (increase of \$150,000); OPEB Trust contribution doubled (from \$78,000 to \$156,000); health insurance premiums (increase of 3%); retirement. Program improvement, Professional Development, and additional Columbia Workshop curriculum resources were also discussed. Special Board of Education Meeting, - Budget Workshop 02.04.14: Mr. Carey indicated that Mr. Bushey reported on the Maintenance Budget. Matters discussed were: Leasing of computers (to help with SBAC testing), current 2:1 (student to technology) ratio with ultimate desired attainment of 1:1 ratio, increased electricity costs, water costs, budget item addition of six (6) sets of doors for security purposes, increased heat energy costs (increase of \$90,000), increased transportation costs, and pupil tuition. Special Board of Education Meeting, - Budget Workshop 02.08.14: Mr. Carey mentioned there were discussions pertaining to: supply lines decreasing, new text books, capital outlay decrease, new equipment for classrooms [projectors, Wi-Fi access points for SBAC testing, ninety (90) new computers (replacements)], and new initiatives.

Policy and Planning Committee: Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise noted the Committee is in the process of redoing the policy manual Section 9000 (By-Laws) with additions and deletions made to that section. The entire Board will receive the revised section prior to it being sent to the CAFE Office.

Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative: Mr. Forrest indicated the group discussed four (4) matters: 1) the creation of a comprehensive brochure for families with children ages eight (8) and under that would contain information of resources available in Town for those children; 2) the creation of “Family Fun Night” that would be held on a regular basis (i.e. prior to the school year) where representation from resources mentioned in the brochure referred to above can be presented to attendees in a fun manner; 3) creation of a mechanism to identify and list children in Town who are of Pre-Kindergarten age; 4) obtaining five (5) parents in Wethersfield who can get involved in WECC in order to encourage early childhood school readiness in Wethersfield.

School Project Building Committee: Mr. Emmett thanked Mr. Morris for his attendance at this meeting which focused on value engineering lists. There is an ongoing review at these meetings of reducing costs. Bids for concrete, masonry, structural steel, general trades, roofing, aluminum windows, entrances and storefronts, drywall and plaster, acoustical, plumbing, fire protection, HVAC, and electrical were approved. The Committee rejected an elevator bid and a painting bid. Mr. Emmett mentioned there was a Communications Subcommittee Meeting held simultaneously with the School Project Building Committee. Mr. Bushey, Mr. Moore, Ms. McDougall, Building Committee Member, Diane Fitzpatrick; and Town Engineer, Mike Turner also attended this joint meeting. The abatement scheduled during February school vacation week and the posting of the abatement schedule information on the District website and *facebook* page were topics discussed. Mr. Emmett noted the Finance subcommittee meeting scheduled Monday, February 10, 2014 was cancelled and is rescheduled to Monday, February 24, 2014.

Finance and Information Management Committee: Mr. Carey indicated Mr. Howes provided his monthly update for the fiscal year and noted that fifty eight (58%) percent of the budget allocated for the 2013-2014 school year has been spent to date and is basically at the same percentage point as last year. The pupil tuition line item is at a deficit of \$1.2 million with the District awaiting \$1 million from an Education Cost Sharing (ECS) State grant. It was reported that the substitute line item is doing fairly well at this point. There were discussions pertaining to the 2014-2015 Budget.

b. Meetings Scheduled

Chairperson DeAngelo announced the following meetings are scheduled: Policy and Planning Committee; Memorial Day Parade Committee; Student Program and Services Committee; Special Board of Education Meeting Budget Workshop; CREC Council Meeting; Human Resources and Personnel Committee; and School Project Building Committee.

9. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

10. Public Comments

There were no comments made by the Public during this portion of the meeting.

11. Board Comments

Mrs. Latina inquired and Mr. Moore indicated there is no update regarding the date for the Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2014.

Sam Solberg, WHS *JETS* Team member, noted that the Team has placed in the top five (5) nationally in the Source America/Ability One Design Challenge and will be travelling to Virginia to compete in the national finals February 26-28, 2014. He also mentioned he has received feedback from WHS students overwhelmingly in support of the graduation ceremony being held at Wethersfield Cove. He mentioned there was a discussion of the matter during the recent meeting of Class Officers that resulted in exploring the idea of having the 2014 Class Gift be a monetary gift toward the purchase of a tent to be used for graduation ceremonies at Wethersfield Cove.

Chairperson DeAngelo indicated she learned of many great things happening in Town during the “State of The Town Breakfast” she, Ms. Moon, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Emmett recently attended on Thursday, January 30, 2014. She, Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise, Mr. Cascio and Mr. Morris also enjoyed attending the Transition Academy Open House on Friday, January 31, 2014. Chairperson DeAngelo indicated Transition Academy students learn life skills and have had job placement opportunities. She informed the public of the strong commitment from Board members and Mr. Emmett in the subcommittees they serve.

Mr. Morris MOVED to leave public session and enter executive session at 7:58 p.m. for the purpose of Discussion pertaining to the Process for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Carey and VOTED unanimously.

Present for executive session: Mr. Carey, Mr. Cascio, Mrs. DeAngelo, Mr. Forrest, Mrs. Latina, Ms. McDougall, Mr. Morris, and Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise. Others: Mr. Emmett, Mr. Howes.

Mr. Carey MOVED to leave executive session and re-enter public session at 8:32 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cascio and VOTED unanimously.

Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. DeAngelo and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Steinmiller-Paradise, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary