

Board of Education

February 14, 2017

Chairperson Granato requested Board Members to turn off cell phones.

This meeting was videotaped and can be seen on the
Wethersfield Board of Education website.

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, February 14, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway. The following Board members were present: Mr. Cascio, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Hill, Ms. Moon, Mrs. Paradise, Mrs. Vasel, Vice Chairperson Morris and Chairperson Granato. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Sally Dastoli; Business Manager, Matthew Kozaka; Director of Human Resources, Trent Donohue; Director of Technology, Keith Rafaniello; Wethersfield Public Schools Supervisor of Literacy K-12, Darla Miner; Wethersfield Public Schools Supervisor of Mathematics K-12, Dr. Katarzyna Suarez; Director of Special Education, John Karzar; Supervisor of Special Education, Melissa Cook; Wethersfield High School Principal, Thomas Moore; Silas Deane Middle School Principal, Susan Czapla; Silas Deane Middle School Assistant Principal, Cynthia Fries; Charles Wright School Principal, Glenn Horter; Hanmer School Principal, Margaret Zacchei; Webb School Principal, Michael Verderame and Wethersfield High School Student Representative, Jack Breton.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Logan and Rory Granfield led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Student/Staff Recognition/Presentations

Mr. Emmett recognized Wethersfield High School Student Representative, Jack Breton, who placed first in the regional level Brain Bee National Neuroscience Competition recently held at Trinity College. He will compete in the national level competition at the University of Maryland in March.

Board Comments: Mrs. Granato commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

Mr. Emmett acknowledged and thanked WHS Teacher, Mrs. Ryba, and students of her *Wethersfield Studies* class who were present in the audience, for attending tonight's meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

a. January 10, 2017 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Forrest MOVED to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of January 10, 2017, as submitted. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Moon and VOTED unanimously.

b. January 24, 2017 Special Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Forrest MOVED to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of January 24, 2017, as submitted. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Fitzpatrick and VOTED unanimously.

4. Public Comment

Ms. Donna Messenger, 87 Clovercrest Road, spoke most favorably of Mrs. Susan Breeney, a former Teacher in the District, and encouraged the District to continue recognizing, honoring and retaining exceptional teachers.

5. Communications

Mr. Emmett reported a letter was received by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Public Schools noting WHS as fully accredited. During the January 23, 2017 meeting, the Committee on Public Secondary Schools reviewed the Special Progress Report provided by WHS, continued the school's accreditation and removed the school from warning for the standard on community resources for learning. The Committee was pleased to learn of the completion of the Renovation Project and the full occupancy of the building. School Officials are to keep the NEASC Committee apprised of any substantive changes going forward, as the accreditation status of WHS will next be reviewed when the Commission considers the evaluation report resulting from the 2021 onsite visit. Mr. Emmett thanked WHS Principal, Mr. Moore, for his efforts in the process and WHS students were congratulated.

Mr. Emmett noted that with regard to the WHS Renovation Project, the Building Committee recently met and is mindful of the commitment to purchasing the last portion of technology for the instructional program as they work within the parameters of the budget and contingencies.

There was a meeting on January 30, 2017 with Board Members, Mr. Emmett, Mr. Kozaka and Town Officials met with BlumShapiro regarding the Town's annual audit. The auditors reported there were

no findings pertaining to the Wethersfield Board of Education and advised the Board to continue to work on their Policies and Procedures Manual currently in place in the Business Office.

Mr. Emmett noted that Friday, February 17, 2017, District staff will have a Professional Development Day, and there will be no school for students that day. The entire District will be closed next Monday, February 20, 2017 for Presidents' Day. School will also be closed on Tuesday, February 21, 2017.

Mr. Emmett indicated Governor Malloy proposed his budget last Wednesday, February 8, 2017, and it is expected that budget will likely undergo many changes until the end of the fiscal year (June 2017). There are many unanswered questions regarding that budget, as the Special Education fund, Teachers' Retirement contribution and ECS figures have not yet been determined. There will be challenges, as the Town and Board Budgets must be set by May 15. Mr. Emmett's proposed budget as presented this evening will not take into account the aspects of the Governor's budget due to the rationale described hereinabove.

6. Action Items

a. Recommended Motion: Approval of Agreement to Address the Minimum Budget Requirement Non-Compliance

Ms. Moon MOVED to Table the Motion to approve the Agreement to address the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) Non-Compliance. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Forrest and VOTED unanimously. Discussion: Mr. Emmett. Board Comments: Ms. Moon commented.

7. Reports/Discussion Items

a. First Reading: Policy Series 3000

Mrs. Granato noted the Committee forwarded this Series to the Board as a First Reading and that final action by the Board regarding this Series will be taken at the next Board's next regular meeting on February 28, 2017. She inquired if Board Members had any questions or comments regarding this Series. Board Comments: Ms. Moon, Mr. Morris and Mrs. Paradise commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

b. Presentation of Proposed 2017-2018 Operating Budget

Mr. Emmett provided a report. Board Comments: Ms. Moon, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Cascio and Mr. Hill commented. Mr. Emmett and Mr. Kozaka also commented.

c. Announcements/Information

Chairperson Granato reviewed the items in Board Members' packets and reminded Committee Chairpersons/Board members to review scheduled meeting dates and times with their calendars. She advised Board members to verify their attendance at Committee Meetings with the Committee's Chairpersons, the Administrative Chairperson, and Mr. Emmett.

8. Board of Education

a. Meetings Held

Shared Services Committee: Mrs. Granato reported the Committee is looking into what services the Board of Education and the Town can share for better efficiency and, perhaps, cost savings.

Mr. Rafaniello reported on how the combined IT services are working and spoke of the example of how the recent memorial service for Police Dog, Thor, provided what the Police and the community desired. The Committee will look at the success of other Towns in terms of what they are doing with regarding to combining services.

Facilities and Maintenance Committee: Mr. Cascio reported the Committee looked at the NESDAC study and next steps for what and how our facilities and schools will be addressed.

CREC Council: Mrs. Granato reported the Council recently reworded their mission statement, vision and goals. Their new strategic plan was presented at this meeting. Their mission is to work with Boards of Education of the Capitol Region to improve the quality of public education for all learners. CREC views the current budget deficit as challenging yet presenting opportunities. Their strategic plan is to build a culture of working with the region (as the education service center for the Capitol Region) and not pitting CREC against the Towns it serves. Mrs. Granato, Mr. Emmett and Ms. Moon attended the Legislative Breakfast on Thursday, January 26, 2017 to talk to District legislators about unfunded mandates and other concerns.

Special Board of Education Meeting – Retreat: Mrs. Granato reported that work continued with facilitator, Lyle Kirkman for leadership to foster student learning through community support and engaged staff. The Board is working through a Steering Committee to create a strategic plan.

Co-Chair of the Committee, Mr. Cascio, indicated a discussion and the establishment of a timeline is expected to occur by May 2017 as the result from information submitted by Board members regarding

a mission and vision for the Board of Education. Board members, Administrators, faculty, staff and a component of the parent/student community will be involved in this process.

Memorial Day Parade Committee: Mr. Cascio reported the parade will take place on Saturday, May 27, 2017 (with the parade course as in the past and with the parade course beginning at CT DMV). There will be an essay contest for Grade 8 SDMS students regarding the topic, “What Does Memorial Day Mean to Me”?

Special Board of Education Meeting – Budget: Ms. Moon noted Administrators, Town Council members and members of the public were present for the meeting. The Meeting Minutes were included in Board Member packets. The input during this meeting was a great step in this process.

Joint Town Council/Board of Education Finance Committee: Mr. Emmett noted Town Officials and BlumShapiro were present for this meeting (refer to the Communications portion of tonight’s meeting).

Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative Committee (WECC): Mr. Forrest indicated there was a beta test of the Virtual Family Resource Center (an online resource for families to obtain information regarding health, childcare, educational, recreational information, events calendar) that will be made available to families in Wethersfield. The community leadership program “People Empowering People” is now in session with twelve (12) individuals enrolled.

Community and Public Relations Committee: Mr. Hill reported the official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for WHS was discussed and will possibly be held in April. The Board’s Mission and Vision Statement was also discussed, including the idea of reaching out to PTOs, Chamber of Commerce and businesses, as well as students and parents. Learning of opportunities on how to utilize the WHS building was also discussed.

School Projects Building Committee: Mr. Emmett indicated that budgets and contingencies are being reviewed. There was a discussion of visibility and/or noise generating matters from neighbors regarding the HVAC units at WHS. Partial screening and/or landscaping has been discussed with Wethersfield Planning & Zoning Commission in this regard, and Mr. Emmett will share any information he learns about this matter with the Board. Ms. Moon commented.

Finance and Information Management Committee: Ms. Moon reported there is a deficit of \$118,636 in the current budget (\$50,000 due to electricity budget overage). An RFP for transportation will go out in the next couple of weeks. She commented favorably on the positive feedback the Board received from BlumShapiro during the annual audit meeting.

b. Meetings Scheduled

Chairperson Granato announced the following meetings are scheduled: CREC Council, Policy and Planning Committee, Student Programs and Services Committee and School Projects 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

Mr. Cascio commented favorably of the PTO meetings he recently attended at Charles Wright School (with Ms. Moon) and SDMS (with Mrs. Vasel) to discuss the Board of Education Budget.

Mr. Forrest commented favorably of the PTO meeting he recently attended with Mr. Morris at Highcrest School. He advocated for the Board to begin the process of addressing our elementary school buildings and for that dialogue to include implementation of Pre-K 3 & 4 programs.

Mrs. Granato indicated the Board's Evaluation of Mr. Emmett is available to the public. She commented favorably for the Professional Development forum she and Mr. Forrest recently attended and the great work being done at the schools.

Mr. Breton commented favorably of the WHS Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS) Team who placed within the top five (5) groups in the country for their assistive technology design. He also spoke favorably of WHS *BlueEagle News*.

Ms. Moon spoke of the recent Hunger Action Team meeting and the idea of students including the opportunity to donate to the food bank during WHS Drama Club's production of the musical "Sister Act" (March 10-11, 2017).

12. Proposed for Executive Session

a. Contract Discussion and Possible Ratification of the SEIU Local 2001, CSEA, CTW Custodial Maintenance

Mrs. Fitzpatrick MOVED to leave public session and enter Executive Session at 8:19 p.m. for purposes of Contract Discussion and Possible Ratification of the SEIU Local 2001, CSEA, CTW Custodial Maintenance. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Forrest and VOTED unanimously.

Present for executive session: Mr. Cascio, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Hill, Ms. Moon, Mr. Morris, Mrs. Paradise, Mrs. Vasel, and Chairperson Granato.

Administrators: Mr. Emmett

Others: Mr. Kozaka, Mr. Donohue and Attorney McHale (8:53 p.m. arrival, 9:21 p.m. departure)

Mr. Forrest MOVED to leave executive session and re-enter public session at 9:21 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cascio and VOTED unanimously.

Mr. Forrest MOVED that the Wethersfield Board of Education ratify the proposed agreement between Wethersfield Board of Education and CSEA. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Moon and VOTED unanimously.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Vasel and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John Morris, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary