

Board of Education

February 25, 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 25, 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, Mr. Carey, Mr. Cascio, Mr. Forrest, Mrs. Latina, Ms. McDougall, Ms. Moon, and Mr. Morris. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Finance, Timothy Howes; Director of Maintenance and Operations, Fred Bushey; Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Sally Dastoli; Director of Special Services, Emily Daigle; Director of Technology, Keith Rafaniello; Wethersfield Public Schools Supervisor of Literacy K-12, Darla Miner; Wethersfield High School Principal, Thomas Moore; Charles Wright School Principal, Glenn Horter; Emerson-Williams School Principal, Neela Thakur; and Wethersfield High School Student Representative, Sam Solberg.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

2. **Student/Staff Recognition/Presentations**

District Elementary School Art Teachers, Mrs. Rebecca Weaver, Mrs. Robyn Muir, Ms. Erica Nogueira, and Ms. Kaley Ripa, made a presentation regarding *Artsonia* on-line Art Gallery for K-12 students. **Board Comments:** Ms. McDougall, Mr. Cascio, and Mr. Morris commented.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

a. February 1, 2014 Special Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. DeAngelo made the following corrections:

Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 3. “Steinmiller-Paradis” is to read “Steinmiller-Paradise.”

Page 1. Add the following language after the first full paragraph (and create a new paragraph): “Mr. Emmett led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Ms. McDougall made the following correction: Page 2, Paragraph 4, Line 1. The word “increase” is to read “increased.”

Mr. Carey MOVED to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of February 1, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Moon and VOTED unanimously.

b. February 4, 2014 Special Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. DeAngelo made the following corrections:

Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 3. “Steinmiller-Paradis” is to read “Steinmiller-Paradise.”

Page 1. Add the following language after the first full paragraph (and create a new paragraph): “Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Mr. Carey MOVED to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of February 4, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cascio and VOTED unanimously.

c. February 8, 2014 Special Board of Education Meeting

Ms. Moon noted her name is to be deleted from Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 4, as she did not attend the meeting.

Mrs. DeAngelo made the following corrections:

Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 3. “Steinmiller-Paradis” is to read “Steinmiller-Paradise.”

Page 1. Add the following language after the first full paragraph (and create a new paragraph): “Mr. Moore led the Board and public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Mr. Carey MOVED to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of February 8, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cascio and VOTED unanimously.

d. February 11, 2014 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. DeAngelo made the following corrections:

Page 4, Section 8. Board of Education, Line 7. “OPED” is to read “OPEB.”

Page 6, Section 11. Board Comments, Line 3. Delete words 3 and 4 “Sam Solberg” (as his name appears twice).

Mr. Cascio MOVED to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of February 11, 2014, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. McDougall and VOTED 6-1-1 IN FAVOR, with Ms. Moon abstaining. [The voting occurred as follows: Aye: DeAngelo, Carey, Cascio, Forrest, McDougall, Morris; Nay: Latina; Abstain: Moon].

4. Public Comment

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented on the drop in the Town’s Grand List, increasing taxes, school choice options, and the WHS Renovation Project. He read portions from a February 21, 2014 *Hartford Courant* Op-Ed article by James C. Smith of Webster Bank entitled, Must Shore Up State’s Fiscal Foundation, and asked that the Board control spending.

5. Communications

Mr. Emmett reported the WHS Renovation Project continues with success as the abatement project scheduled during February school vacation week was completed. The Clean Air Notification was provided Saturday, February 22, 2014, and WHS Principal, Thomas Moore, then notified students and parents that school would be opening Monday, February 24, 2014 as planned. The Space Standards Waiver submission made Friday, February 7, 2014 was discussed at the Building Committee Meeting held yesterday evening, and the Form ED049R submission to the State is planned for tomorrow. The process of finishing concrete in the Band and Music areas of the building and preparation for the installation of structural steel is occurring. Mr. Emmett and Mr. Moore have discussed a plan to meet with WHS Senior Class Leadership to discuss options (which will include meeting with the Wethersfield Safe Graduation Committee)

pertaining to setting a date for the WHS Class of 2014 Graduation Ceremony. Mr. Emmett noted the District has taken five (5) snow days, which now places the last day of school at Tuesday, June 24, 2014. Therefore, any additional time taken (refer to the 2013-2014 School Year Calendar) will result in days taken from April vacation week beginning Monday, April 14, 2014.

6. Action Items

a. Motion: Amendment to Approval of 2014-2015 Operating Budget

Mr. Forrest MOVED that the Wethersfield Board of Education approve a 3.89% increase totaling Fifty-Five Million, One Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty-Eight (\$55,163,268) Dollars as the 2014 – 2015 Operating Budget rather than the 3.75% increase totaling Fifty-Five Million, Eighty-Eight Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty-Eight (\$55,088,268) Dollars (as presented this evening by the Administration this evening) for the 2014 – 2015 Operating Budget. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Morris and VOTED in a 4 - 4 TIE.

[The voting occurred as follows: Aye: Cascio, Forrest, Moon, Morris; Nay: DeAngelo, Carey, Latina, McDougall]. Board Comments: Mr. Cascio, Mr. Carey, Mr. Morris, Ms. McDougall, Mrs. DeAngelo, Ms. Moon, and Mr. Forrest commented. Mr. Howes also commented.

b. Recommended Motion: Approval of 2014-2015 Operating Budget

Mr. Carey MOVED that the Wethersfield Board of Education approve the operating budget for 2014 – 2015 as presented by the Administration in the amount of Fifty-Five Million, Eighty-Eight Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty-Eight (\$55,088,268) Dollars. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. DeAngelo and VOTED 7-1 IN FAVOR. [The voting occurred as follows: Aye: DeAngelo, Carey, Cascio, Forrest, McDougall, Moon, Morris; Nay: Latina].

Board Comments: Ms. McDougall, Mr. Cascio, Ms. Moon, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Carey, Mrs. Latina, and Mrs. DeAngelo commented.

7. Reports/Discussion Items

a. 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: Policy and Planning Committee: Mrs. DeAngelo noted the Committee met and continued reviewing the policy manual Section 9000 (By-Laws). Questions arose and Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise will provide answers from CABE to those questions at the next meeting. Memorial Day Parade Committee: Mr. Cascio mentioned nominations are being sought for Parade Marshals and a Guest Speaker and asked that any nominations of veterans for those positions be directed to Sal Cucia or Larry Spellacy. He noted it will be decided at the Committee's March 5, 2014 meeting whether the annual essay contest question will be changed. Special Board of Education Meeting Budget Workshop: Mr. Carey noted this workshop was the last Budget Workshop prior to the Budget Presentation made by Mr. Emmett this evening. A six hundred (600) page binder was received in response to Public Act No. 1360 (An Act Concerning the Consolidation of Non-Educational Services) with Mr. Emmett providing a dissertation of the Budget. Initiatives and the Budget Presentation made during tonight's meeting were discussed. CREC Council Meeting: No Report was made. School Project Building Committee: Mr. Emmett noted Mrs. DeAngelo and Mr. Morris represented the Board at this meeting. He indicated the progress of the renovation project and the upcoming meeting of the Finance Committee (attended by Mrs. DeAngelo, Mr. Emmett, and Mr. Howes) were discussed during this meeting.

b. Meetings Scheduled

Chairperson DeAngelo announced the following meetings are scheduled: Human Resources and Personnel Committee; Student Programs and Services Committee (Mrs. DeAngelo noted the meeting will be rescheduled.); Finance and Information Management Committee (Mrs. DeAngelo noted the meeting will be rescheduled.); Memorial Day Parade Committee; Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative; and School Project Building Committee. In order to ensure a quorum at Committee Meetings, Chairperson DeAngelo advised Board members to verify their attendance at Committee Meetings with the Committee's Chairpersons and Administrative Chairperson.

9. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

10. Public Comments

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented on student enrollment and questioned the need for a Pre-Kindergarten program in the District. He emphasized education costs reduction and commented unfavorably regarding the Board's process in approving the 2014-2015 Operating Budget during tonight's meeting.

11. Board Comments

Ms. Moon commented favorably of attendance at various Board Budget Meeting Workshops by the Mayor and Members of the Finance Committee.

Mr. Solberg mentioned the WHS Design Team is excited to be representing Wethersfield as one of five (5) finalists advancing to the AbilityOne Design Challenge National Finals on February 26-28, 2014 with their assistive technology device design *The Path*. The Team has interviewed with *WFSB*'s Scot Haney and with the *Hartford Courant*. Refer to the following link for information regarding the device:

<http://www.wethersfield.k12.ct.us/page.cfm?p=2368&newsid=344>

Mr. Cascio congratulated Mr. Solberg, Wethersfield Design Team, and WHS Staff on the success of their design and advancement into the AbilityOne Design Challenge National Finals on February 26-28, 2014. He thanked WHS students and Staff for their flexibility with academic/athletic schedules and their patience/understanding during the school renovation process. He also thanked Mr. Maltese for orchestrating sporting event schedules at many schools and Mrs. McPhee for her hard work in managing that calendar during the school renovation process. Mr. Cascio clarified that the Board was not handling its open discussion of the 2014-2015 Operation Budget during tonight's meeting as an auction, as was stated by a member of the public this evening.

Mr. Carey inquired and Mr. Emmett clarified that the Pre-Kindergarten program in the District is a peer program (having a mix special needs and typical peer students) that has been in existence for many years. It was also clarified by Mr. Emmett that unemployment expenses go back several quarters prior to the Budget proposed at tonight's meeting.

Chairperson DeAngelo thanked the Board for engaging in lively debate/discussion during the entire budget process.

Mr. Carey MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Moon and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Steinmiller-Paradise, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary