

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held at Newfield Central School on February 26, 2015.

Members Present: S. Allinger, R. Borgella, H. Cooper, P. Miller, J. Pawlewicz, M. Rynone

Members Absent: G. Wiltsie

Also Present: C. Thomas, Superintendent; R. Hawk, H.S. Principal; C. Griggs, M.S. Principal; V. Volpicelli, Elem. Principal; C. Jackson, Dir. of Spec. Prog.; M. Jasinski, Dir. of Curr. & Inst.; J. James, Business Administrator; C. Shipos, District Clerk

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The meeting was called to order at 6:29 p.m. by S. Allinger, President.

Privilege of the Floor was offered to all in attendance. Y. Capogrossi spoke as a taxpayer, an employee and as President of the local Civil Service Employees' Association. She questioned some recent decisions made by the Board including the layoff of the Director of Technology and the creation of a new administrative position, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. She expressed her hope that the Board would focus on one member's stated goal, "to attract and retain quality educators," and questioned how that related to the CSEA currently being at impasse. P. Scott also spoke as a CSEA officer and member of the negotiating team. She shared her concerns regarding the proposed prescription plan that she fears will cost unit members more. K. VanEtten shared her own concerns and stressed the importance of health care to the working class employees who make up this unit.

R. Borgella thanked everyone for coming and sharing their views. He encouraged employees to look at the bigger picture when it comes to health care, and to realize that the members of the Board are also working class people. S. Allinger welcomed everyone and stated that it was wonderful to see so many people who felt comfortable coming to the Board with their concerns. She responded to a number of issues raised including the fiscal climate in NYS (Governor Cuomo holding education aid hostage), administrative changes within the district (unanimous decisions prompted by the need to save money and support faculty and administration through changing mandates and retirement of early childhood director), the mediation procedure (a learning opportunity and chance to improve communication) and the proposed changes in health insurance (necessary due to large increase in benefit costs each year). R. Borgella urged those present to contact state legislators with their thoughts on education and state aid via the links available on the school website.

(J. Pawlewicz arrived at 7:04 p.m.)

V. Tibbals and students Mackenzie Green, Jeffrey Allen, Rhianna Mosher, and Jordan Adams presented details of the proposed Class of 2016 trip to Baltimore in September of 2015. They reviewed the itinerary and educational components to the trip and asked for the Board's approval. M. Rynone objected to the early departure on Thursday, while S. Allinger asked about financial support for students who might not be able to afford the trip.

Motion was made by R. Borgella, seconded by H. Cooper, to approve the Class of 2016 senior trip, as proposed. Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

February 26, 2015
Page Two

Andrea Weare Orlando from C&S Companies gave a presentation on an energy performance contract program called Net Zero. Limited to \$100,000 and one school building per year, the program actually generates revenue for the district through a combination of state aid reimbursement and guaranteed energy savings. S. Allinger asked that the facilities committee investigate further and make a recommendation to the Board. C. Santospirito asked that C&S provide a template of the RFP (Request for Proposals) that would be the next step should the Board decide to proceed.

The administrative team presented information on the Eric Jensen conference they recently attended-- "Brain Based Training for Change Agents." Using quotes from the conference, administrators shared their enthusiasm, inspiration and ideas for implementation. C. Thomas stated that Newfield and two other districts in the TST BOCES area will be bringing Eric Jensen for a regional conference at Ithaca College in October of 2015. H. Cooper asked about the best way to share the information with staff and keep the message fresh. M. Rynone and J. Pawlewicz were concerned about the cost of the trip and the apparent lack of transparency. R. Borgella and P. Miller felt that the administration should be trusted to spend the money allotted for professional development as they saw fit. S. Allinger stated that professional development for administrators was a necessary investment in the leadership of the district and that the Board should not micro-manage. She went on to say that it was a matter of trust and that "it needs to start with us."

As part of the Administrative Reports, R. Hawk congratulated the varsity basketball teams on their successful seasons and invited everyone to the upcoming sectional games. J. James reported on the loss of the district's plow truck and the possible conversion to a "plow-only" vehicle (not for road use).

C. Thomas and J. James gave a presentation on the proposed Capital Budget. A conservative approach to the budget due to the lack of information on state aid, and a decrease in debt service, would result in an overall decrease in this component. \$100,000 for the proposed EPC is included; however, this would be offset by the use of the repair reserve created for this purpose. Possible equipment purchases as funds allow would include auto floor scrubber(s), a basketball hoop for the elementary gym, a window washer system, and a replacement pickup truck. J. Pawlewicz asked about the boiler replacement and/or repair. C. Thomas responded that this would be part of a future capital project (but not too far in the future!). Once an architectural firm is appointed, they will be integral in narrowing down and helping the Board select the best available option for voter approval. S. Allinger affirmed that the facilities committee would be moving this along.

Motion was made by H. Cooper, seconded by R. Borgella, to approve the following on a consent agenda:

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting(s) held on the following dates:

- a) January 22, 2015
- b) February 5, 2015
- c) February 12, 2015

Approval of the Claims dated January 22, 2015;

Approval of the Student Fund Bank Reconciliation;

February 26, 2015
Page Three

Approval of the attached recommendations from the Committee on Special Education and/or the Committee on Preschool Special Education (Attachment 14-15-47);

Approval of the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint the following individual(s), pending fingerprint clearance where necessary:

- a) Cortney Utter - 10 month, part time Teacher Aide at the starting rate (currently \$9.00/hr.) effective March 2, 2015 (probationary period through May 1, 2016)
- b) Redouane Elghazi - 10 month, part time Cleaner at the starting rate (currently \$9.00/hr.) effective March 2, 2015 (probationary period through May 1, 2016)
- c) Benjamin Mueller - two-year probationary appointment in the Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions (General) tenure area effective April 13, 2015 through April 12, 2017 at the 10-month salary of \$45,000 + MS stipend (to be pro rated)

Approve the following actions related to extra-curricular activities for the 2014-15 school year or season:

- a) Brenda Barnstead - Academic Advisor (.5)
- b) Casey Powers - resignation as Varsity Girls' Track Coach
- c) David Green - Varsity Girls' Track Coach

Approval of the districtwide teaching and non-teaching Substitute Lists (Attachment 14-15-48).

Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion was made by R. Borgella, seconded by P. Miller, to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of January 2015. Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion was made by P. Miller, seconded by R. Borgella, to approve the following Private/Charter School Transportation Request(s):

- a) Roberts - New Roots

Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion was made by H. Cooper, seconded by R. Borgella, to accept the following resignation(s) for retirement purposes:

- a) Margene Thomas's resignation for retirement purposes from her position of Elementary Teacher effective June 30, 2015, with thanks for her 38 years of service
- b) Jonathan Armstrong's resignation for retirement purposes from his position of Elementary Teacher effective June 30, 2015, with thanks for his 33 years of service
- c) Cindy Linville's resignation for retirement purposes from her position of Library Media Specialist effective June 25, 2015, with thanks for her 25 years of service

Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

February 26, 2015
Page Four

Motion was made by M. Rynone, seconded by P. Miller, to accept the donation of \$10,000 from the Newfield Community Fund of the Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund to be used for:

- a) \$5000 for music program in recognition of Sunny Miller
- b) \$5000 for technology program in recognition of Rick Ketcham

Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion was made by P. Miller, seconded by M. Rynone, to approve the first reading of the following policy revision:

- a) 8110 District Wellness Policy

Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Privilege of the Floor was offered to all in attendance. C. Githler cautioned against viewing the issues raised earlier in the meeting as a “tempest in a teapot” or writing them off as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). He said there is a real climate of mistrust brewing. S. LaBarge questioned the inclusion of the business administrator on the team who was sent for professional development and wondered about the effect this would have on student achievement. J. James responded that she represents the support staff and has made it a goal to include them in training opportunities. S. Allinger stated that everyone is responsible for the culture and climate of the school. J. Pawlewicz suggested using social media to reduce mailings and improve communications from the school.

Motion was made by P. Miller, seconded by M. Rynone, to enter Executive Session at 9:20 p.m. to discuss the employment history of a particular person. Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:37 p.m.

Motion was made by H. Cooper, seconded by P. Miller, to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m. Motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine L. Shipos
District Clerk