

East Haddam Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Cafeteria
March 15, 2005
7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Pamela Gourlie, Everett Herden, Nick Iacovelli, Melissa Ziobron,
Tom Miett, Manny Misenti, Dora Lyman, Bob Mather

Members Absent: Steve Quinn

Student Council Members Present: Emily James, Justin Christopher

Approximately ten community members including staff were present.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Pam Gourlie at 7:01 p.m. in the Nathan Hale-Ray High School cafeteria.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CHAIR

A. CABE – Award of Excellence Presentation

Frank Emanuele, CABE representative, presented two awards to the Board for the quarterly newsletter and special projects.

B. Student Council Representatives' Report

Justin Christopher informed the Board of the students' Soup Fundraiser in which special bowls would be sold filled with soup. He stated that the raised funds would be donated to feed the hungry.

C. NEASC Survey

Pamela Gourlie referred to correspondence addressed to Board members, dated March 3, 2005 from Cheryl Matthewson and Eileen Roark requesting members to complete a confidential survey to assist in the collection of data regarding the strengths and weaknesses of our school. Mrs. Gourlie informed the Board of an inaccurate code in the letter and referred to an email including the correct code. She stated that school computers were available for the implementation of the survey if needed.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CHAIR (Cont'd)D. 2005 CABE Convention

Mrs. Gourlie conveyed to the Board of the CABE/CAPSS Convention on November 18 & 19, 2005, stating that proposals for content for the convention from Board members and Superintendents were requested by the organizers.

IV. ACTION ON MINUTES

MOTION: Mather, Iacovelli; to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on February 8, 2005 with the following amendments:

- 9th page, last paragraph, strike “in universal” and replace with “State funded and mandated”.
- 9th page, last paragraph, strike “She questioned how some could accept universal Pre-K but then have differential instruction in higher grades”.
- 9th page, 6th paragraph, after Mr. Misenti suggested, strike “the two-hour delays during inclement weather to be added to the end of the year” and replace with “there would not be school on those days that would require a delay. These days would be made up at the end of the year or during spring vacation”.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEESA. 4-8 Middle School

Melissa Ziobron informed the Board that the School Building Committee had met on March 2, 2005. She provided the Board with two schematic maps of the potential site for the school including the compilation of data from the GIS, survey and preliminary scheme. The maps included, but were not limited to, the drive to the school, playfields, existing houses, boundaries, topography, wetlands and septic. She informed the Board that the maps were working documents which were not a final representation of the new school site. She stated that engineers would be returning to the site to investigate a possible vernal pool. She informed the Board that 15 acres of the land is located in East Hampton and that the town attorney would be contacted to look at different options in regards to this land. She stated that David King had informed the Committee that it is not an uncommon practice to purchase adjacent land in other towns. She stated that an Engineer had been hired to monitor ground flow. She stated that property negotiations were still being performed and that the specifics would not be discussed unless the Board was to go into executive session. Mr. Iacovelli advised the Board that the Board of Finance's meeting included within their budget, several six-figure expenses stemming from the current high school. He stated that perhaps through better inspections during the building process that these

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

types of mistakes could be avoided. Mrs. Ziobron replied that she would pass this information on to the chair. She stated that this project would be different as the Building Committee would have an on site Project Manager. Mrs. Gourlie stated that Board of Education takes the responsibility of the project and cares about the integrity of the project. Mrs. Ziobron informed the Board that the Town had approved an advance of \$155,000 to start the preliminary stages of the project including septic design which will allow the Building Committee to be ahead on the project. Board members reiterated the importance of having the Building Committee's chairman, Todd Moss attend Board of Education meetings. Mrs. Gourlie stated of the importance of keeping the community informed on the project. Mrs. Ziobron relayed an error in the Middletown Press that misquoted costs of the project and advised that Todd Moss had contacted the paper in an attempt to correct the error.

B. Middle and Elementary Schools' Capital Improvements

Dr. Durham stated that the Committee met with Bob Carroll several weeks ago and that they approved 7 small projects included on the agenda. He informed the Board that the projects were all complete and that the Board needed to approve them. He stated that the Ed Specs for the roof replacement at the middle school had also been approved.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLSA. International Business Course Project Presentation

Mr. Rinaldi introduced high school business education teacher, Leslie Corey, and two students, Ellen Quinn and Heather Walters, who made a short presentation on an import/export project from the new International Business course. The project is a program offered by Junior Achievement International, Inc. for high school students called Globe. Hale-Ray students were paired off with a partnering school in Indonesia called Jakarta International. Students set up the import/export company, naming it CONNITL, which stands for Connecticut International. Students sold stock certificates to share holders, raising \$320.00. They exported Altoids to Indonesia and scarves, Beng-Beng candy bars and Kopiko coffee candy were imported into the U.S. Mary Jane Plude volunteered to help with the project. The group was to receive a profit from sales of the product, but when the Tsunami disaster directly impacted the family of one of the students, they decided to become a non-profit organization, donating all profits (\$1,446.73) for relief to this family. Communication was made via the internet and email. It was stated that the Indonesian participants was a club and only met weekly, attributing to poor communication for the students at the high school. Mr. Mather expressed pride for the students participating in the program and their choice to donate their monies for Tsunami relief. Mrs. Ziobron questioned why Altoids were chosen. Mrs. Corey stated that it was a product which was not available

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)A. International Business Course Project Presentation (Cont'd)

in Indonesia. Mrs. Corey informed the Board that the class incurred a shipping cost of \$322.00. Dora Lyman questioned what the class would change the next time. Mrs. Corey replied the implementation of a quicker response from the partnering school would be helpful. It was stated that this was probably the same type of problems of international import/export businesses deal with on a daily basis and yet, communication had certainly been accelerated verses many years ago due to the advent of technology.

B. School Lunch Program

Mr. Carroll discussed the following documentation:

- Document titled East Haddam Public Schools Food Services Program. The document lists the historical pricing of lunches served at the elementary school and middle school/high school starting from 1997 to date. The financial status of each school year including profit (loss), BOE subsidy and fund balance is listed from 1997 to date showing a current 2003/2004 loss of (\$10,330), a BOE subsidy of \$13,423 and a fund balance of \$24,035.

Mr. Carroll stated that Chartwells have been providing the school lunch program and require additional funds than are collected from students in the upcoming school year. Mr. Carroll stated that surplus could be used or the increase in cost could be passed on to the students. He noted that there is a line item in the budget of \$10,000 which is the Board's commitment to Chartwell's. He stated that an increase of \$0.25 in two years would keep the lunch program within budget. Mr. Mather stated that a \$0.25 increase would cost the average student \$33.50 a year for lunches. He questioned how many meals were served on average each day. Mr. Carroll replied in the month of February, for 15 days, about 4,000 meals a day were sold district wide with 70% of them sold at the elementary school. Dr. Durham stated that the middle school provided the biggest profit because the students purchase ala-cart in addition to the hot lunch program. Mr. Carroll recommended an increase of the cost of lunches over several years so that the budgetary allotment would not need to be increased. Mr. Herden questioned if federal subsidiaries were available for needy families. Mr. Carroll responded affirmatively, currently including 3 – 4% of students. Board members discussed the nutritional value of the lunches provided and of the opportunity to provide students with various food options. Dr. Durham stated that Chartwells had done a good job at keeping costs down. The majority of the Board agreed to keep the school lunch price the same and revisit options next year. Mr. Herden questioned if Board members could visit and purchase a lunch. Dr. Durham responded affirmatively. Dr. Durham stated that the district could not run a lunch program as efficiently as Chartwells. He stated that Mr. Carroll meets quarterly with them and has successfully reduced the line item budget amount from \$20,000 to \$10,000 over the past several years.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)C. Middle School Principal Selection Process

Dr. Durham reviewed the tentative plan and time schedule for the middle school principal selection. He informed the Board that the appointment of the selection committee would be comprised of one administrator, four middle school teachers, one non-certified staff, four parent/representatives from the community and one Board of Education member. He stated that there were currently 8 community volunteers offering to help with the selection process. He informed the Board that he anticipated more volunteers and that the final choice would be chosen via a lottery selection at the end of March. He stated that he would meet with the Committee for a brief training session and identify selection criteria on April 4. They will review the applications from April 6–14, select candidates to be interviewed on April 14, and conduct interviews between April 25 and May 6. The Committee will convene after the last scheduled interview to select finalists. He stated that the selected finalists will interview with the Superintendent between May 9 and May 13 and the Board will interview the final candidates between May 16 and May 27. Site visits, if needed, will be made between May 31 and June 3. The Board will select the new principal on June 7. Mr. Mather volunteered to be the representative Board of Education member.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTSA. Long Range Planning

Mr. Iacovelli informed the Board that the Long Range Planning Subcommittee met March 3, 2005. He informed the Board that they reviewed the progress of the School Building Project. He stated that to date, thirty-nine students and one community member have used the technical center and that the next meeting is scheduled for April 7 at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Iacovelli, referring to the 2005-06 draft school calendar, informed the Board that because New Years day falls on a Sunday, the following Monday would be a day off. Dr. Durham stated that this was a bargaining agreement in the contract.

B. Finance

Mrs. Gourlie stated they have not met but that they had reported to the Board of Finance and would be meeting soon.

C. Policy

Mrs. Lyman stated that the Policy Subcommittee had met on March 1. She informed the Board that the Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 9325.2 (Agenda Format) and the Committee agreed that "Other" as a category on the agenda is inappropriate. She stated the policy with the revision will go to the full Board for a second reading. She informed the Board that they reviewed policy 5131.81 (electronic devices) which would be further reviewed at subsequent meetings. Policy 6153 (Field Trips) also

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)C. Policy (Cont'd)

was reviewed and Form 1 would be revised to identify who the chaperones will be and align with the general requirements stated in the policy including schedule, itinerary and housing arrangements. She stated that they revised Form 2 to read "for use on one-day field trips only." She informed the Board that the Subcommittee's next meeting would be April 7. Mrs. Ziobron stated that they did not agree that "Other" as a category on the agenda was inappropriate. Mr. Iacavelli stated that he had researched other Boards' and Committees' agendas and determined that they did not contain an "Other" category. She stated that having the opportunity to add on to the agenda is important so that Board members would be able to ask further questions. Mrs. Lyman stated that the right to ask questions on various topics was not being taken away, as Board Members have the opportunity to call ahead and have items included on the agenda. She stated that the purpose of the Board meetings is to focus on the agenda. Mr. Iacavelli stated that further questioning on a topic should be addressed to various subcommittees. Mr. Herden stated that not having "Other" on the agenda seems very final leaving issues unresolved. Mrs. Gourlie disagreed stating that the Board member could address the unresolved issue with herself or Dr. Durham whom could help the Board member rephrase the issue to bring it appropriately to the Board. Mrs. Gourlie stated that the purpose of the change is not to cut anyone off but to keep the focus on the meeting. Mr. Herden requested that direction be a consideration of the next policy meeting. Mrs. Gourlie stated that for the record she would like to personally thank the Policy Subcommittee for their hard work.

D. Transportation

Mr. Mather stated that they had not met and had no new information.

E. Personnel and Negotiations

Mr. Iacovelli stated that the Committee had not met and had no new information.

F. Ray Board Liaison

Mr. Iacovelli stated that the Ray Board had not met and that the Ray School Educational budget had been forwarded which would be incorporated into the next meeting.

G. LEARN

Mrs. Gourlie stated that she attended the February and March meetings. She stated that the March meeting included strategies, 22 part communities, constructing educational finance for the new millennium and CMT scores. She updated the Board on the new magnet school in New London specializing in science for ages 3, 4 and 5. She stated that there were currently 410 spots with 500 applications.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)H. Curriculum Council Liaison

Mr. Herden stated that the Curriculum Council had met February 14th and that they are working on the development of uniform assessments regarding the social studies program. He stated that in Math they were looking at the algebra pilot program including Algebra, Part 1. In science, the revisions were due February 28th and would be discussed at the next meeting. The health curriculum was reviewed. In Language Arts the evaluation process is currently taking place in grades 1-4. In technology education they are looking at a world technology course, currently there is no tech. ed. in the middle school and this would be a pilot program in an effort to generate interest. He stated that the new reading program is in the budget for the K-8 grades for the 2005-06 school year. He stated that CAPT science activities have begun. He stated that they have identified that organizing and interpreting data was a discovered weakness.

Dr. Durham stated that the Curriculum Council met March 14th. There was continued discussion on the Language Arts curriculum selection process for new reading materials. He stated that 2 of the 4 series had been selected to pilot at the elementary school grades 1 – 4 and that two teachers from each grade would pilot the program for 7 to 8 weeks. He stated that they would determine which of the two would support the revised curriculum and make a recommendation to Committee so that it can be purchased in July. He stated the other initiative in Language Arts, is the completion of the evaluation performed in January and February, of which a small group of teachers got together with Mr. Rinaldi to make revisions to the Language Arts program which would be implemented prior to the start of school. He stated that the science curriculum is being completed this year with a draft for Dr. Durham's review and that it should be available for Board review in April or May. He stated that the April meeting of Curriculum Council will be reviewing the New England College Curriculum accreditation standards. Mr. Misenti questioned when students are exposed to the program Excel. Dr. Durham replied that as part of the middle school computer curriculum in the 8th grade, all students are exposed to Excel. He stated that the Excel program is integrated in other class assignments.

I. Open Space Committee Liaison

Mrs. Ziobron expressed frustration with the priorities of the Open Space Committee. She stated that she questions if all of the Committee members are a true representative of the Commissions and Boards with which they represent. She informed the Board that on March 13th, she attended the walk of the Gelston property on Daniel's and Bogel Road. She stated that Mr. Casner had collected 200 signatures to bring the issue to referendum. Dr. Durham questioned why the Board has a liaison to the Open Space Committee. Mr. Mather replied that originally there was concern that the Board of Education and Open Space would be interested in the same land. Mrs. Ziobron responded that it was her understanding that the Committee was formed with a liaison from every Commission. Mrs. Gourlie stated that having representation from all Commissions helps in determining how the purchase of open space will

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)I. Open Space Committee Liaison (Cont'd)

directly effect them. Mrs. Ziobron stated that conflict of interests of various members could hinder the process. Mr. Iacavelli questioned if open space land could be developed. Mrs. Ziobron replied no. Mr. Misenti stated that the purpose of Open Space Committee Members is to represent the interest of the Board and that it is the Boards responsibility to give direction.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

There were no communications or audience of citizens.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

MOTION: Ziobron, Lyman; to add an Item E onto the Agenda under Old Business to discuss the Curry Transportation Case.

FAVOR: Iacovelli, Lyman, Ziobron, Misenti, Miett, Herden

ABSTAINED: Mather

ABSENT: Quinn

MOTION CARRIED

A. Strategic Plan

Dr. Durham reiterated comments made to the Board of Finance that about 95% of the strategic plan is already implemented and therefore there is no significant impact of new dollars for next year. This is not to suggest that the strategic plan is complete, only the initiatives are on going. He stated that over the next several years the district needs to evaluate and look to modify the strategic plan.

B. 2005-06 School Calendar

MOTION: Iacaveli, Mather; to approve the 2005-06 school calendar as recommended by long range plans.

FAVOR: Iacovelli, Lyman, Ziobron, Misenti, Miett, Mather

OPPOSED: Herden

ABSENT: Quinn

MOTION CARRIED

IX. OLD BUSINESS (Cont'd)C. Senior Class Trip Request

MOTION: Ziobron, Iacovelli; to approve the Senior Class Trip Request.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

D. CMT Follow-up Request

In an effort to express his view point clearly, Mr. Misenti requested the opportunity to have Mrs. Ziobron read a letter with which he had written for the Board of Education. Mr. Misenti stated that after reflection on discussions at the last meeting, he would like further discussion on the results of the Connecticut Mastery Test with an effort to partake in discussion of strategies and options to improve academic achievement. He stated that the Board of Education provides the direction and is responsible for the performance of the district. He reiterated the mission of a Board of Education. He stated that he disagreed with some comments indicating that the annual testing required is onerous and that testing equals accountability writing that without it we would be operating in a vacuum. He stated that the result of the CMT tells us that about twenty percent of the students in our district are not reaching the minimum expectations of academic achievement which should not be acceptable in East Haddam. He stated that grouping by level of achievement where students are given the opportunity to move from group to group (contingent upon their level of achievement) is a better option as well with smaller sized classes for students who need individual instruction. He wrote that reading is the key to education, students in all grade levels should have a portion of their school time allocated to current events and that test taking has become an important part of life and meaningful careers. He stated that students need to be taught how to take tests. He further wrote that if the Board of Education fails to adopt strategies that improve academic achievement, fails to insure that students in our district achieve their personal potential, and fails to prevent students from being left behind, they will not have shortchanged the students, but will have shortchanged the people they represent.

E. Curry Transportation Case

Mrs. Ziobron questioned if the bus was currently picking up the student. Dr. Durham responded affirmatively and that services started today. Mrs. Ziobron questioned if any compromises were made. Dr. Durham responded that they would be picked up at the driveway. It was stated that the decision is final. Dr. Durham stated that the policy needs to be reviewed. Mrs. Gourlie stated that the current policy offered the arbitrators latitude. Dr. Durham stated that the Attorney's performance was superior. He stated that the policy is too detailed allowing no latitude. Dr. Durham stated that an existing bus was rerouted to pick up this student and that if a new bus were required it would cost approximately \$35,000. Board members agreed that policy needed to be restructured to be more generic. Mr. Mather stated that as Chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee,

IX. OLD BUSINESS (Cont'd)

E. Curry Transportation Case

when the policy is reviewed the child's safety is of the utmost importance. Dr. Durham informed Board members that he would be sending them a copy of the arbitrator's decision.

X. NEW BUSINESS

MOTION: Ziobron, no second; to add an Item C onto the Agenda under New Business to discuss the New Middle School Team Placement Assignment.

MOTION FAILED

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mather; Iacovelli; to remove item 2.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

- 1) Warrant
 - a) To approve the warrant for the 2004-05 in the amount of \$1,026,614.08.
- 3) To accept the resignation of Mrs. Jessica Duers, 5th grade social studies teacher at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School, effective the end of the 2005-06 school year.

To accept the resignation of Mrs. Mary Beth Havens, Assistant Principal at East Haddam Elementary School, effective the end of the 2005 -06 school year.

To accept the resignation of Mr. Adam Hill, 1st grade teacher at East Haddam Elementary School, effective the end of the 2005-06 school year.
- 4) To terminate the employment of Brett Franklin effective with the expiration of the current school year, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to advise such person in writing of this action.

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda (Cont'd)

5) To accept the following school construction projects as complete:

- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Window Replacement (041-0030EC);
- East Haddam Elementary School Asbestos Abatement (041-0031CV);
- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Asbestos Abatement (041-0032CV);
- East Haddam Elementary School Roof Replacement (041-0033RR);
- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Roof Replacement (041-0034RR);
- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Asbestos Abatement (041-0035CV);
- Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School Asbestos Abatement (041-0037CV).

MOTION: Miett, Herden; to approve Items 1,3,4, and 5 of the Consent Agenda.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: Miett, Herden; to approve Item 2 of the Consent Agenda.

**FAVOR: Iacovelli, Lyman, Misenti, Mather, Miett, Herden
OPPOSED: Ziobron
ABSENT: Quinn
MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Ziobron expressed disappointment that Board members were unwilling to second her motion, stating she is unable to have a discussion about the merits of the topic. Mr. Misenti apologized as he did not understand it was to be a topic of discussion. Mrs. Gourlie informed her that Board members can request to have items placed on the agenda prior to the meeting which she was welcome to do at the next meeting. Mrs. Ziobron agreed to place the topic on the agenda for the next meeting.

MOTION: Ziobron, Mather; to adjourn at 9:18 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Dora Lyman
Board Secretary