

East Haddam Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Cafeteria
January 9, 2007
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pamela Gourlie, Tracey Gionta, Everett Herden, Alan Hyla, Nick Iacovelli, Robert Mather, Manny Misenti, Mary-Beth Mordecai

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Miatt

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Anne Durfee

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT: Kevin Staehly

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Durham and approximately 70 people including staff were present.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Mrs. Gourlie.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR

A. Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce Meeting

The Board of Education and Superintendent will host the next Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce meeting on January 18th at 8:00 a.m. in the cafeteria at the high school. All Board members are welcome to attend.

B. Report from Student Council Representatives

Ms. Durfee reported that midterms will start next week. The National Honor Society will host "Study with a Buddy" for midterm preparation. The drama department will perform Grease during the 2nd week of March. An FFA dance is scheduled in February. Seniors who have been accepted to college are listed on the white board near the entrance into the school. With regards to safety in the school, Ms. Durfee stated that the survey determining if student's felt safe was underway and would be reported at the next meeting.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR (continued)

C. Update on Superintendent Search Process

A list of the Advisory Committee members and interview dates was included in the Board's packets. Thursday, January 25, 2007, will be used as a back up date.

IV. ACTION ON THE MINUTES

MOTION: Mather, Iacovelli; to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 12, 2006 as presented.

FAVOR (7): Gionta, Herden, Mather, Mordecai, Misenti, Hyla, Iacovelli
OPPOSED (0): None
ABSTENTIONS (0): None
ABSENT (1): Miett
MOTION PASSED

MOTION: Gionta, Mather; to approve the minutes of a Special Meeting of December 21, 2006 as presented.

FAVOR (7): Gionta, Herden, Mather, Mordecai, Misenti, Hyla, Iacovelli
OPPOSED (0): None
ABSTENTIONS (0): None
ABSENT (1): Miett
MOTION PASSED

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES

A. 4-8 Middle School

Mrs. Mordecai informed the Board that the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance had met and that the project would proceed to a town meeting on January 16, 2007 at 8:00 p.m. at the high school auditorium. The additional funding for the project will go to referendum on Thursday, January 25, 2007. A post card will be sent to all residents in town indicating the dates of the town meeting and town referendum.

Due to legal technicalities, the brochure with Board of Education input was not mailed. Mrs. Mordecai informed the Board that the SOS PAC would be distributing it. Mrs. Mordecai requested consideration for publishing the Board of Education's portion of the flyer in the Regional Standard's editorial section.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (continued)B. Middle and Elementary Schools' Capital Improvements

Mr. Mather reported they had not met.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLSA. Middle School Art Presentation

The following documents were distributed:

- Thematic Lesson on Heritage Treasured Visual Memories of Your Family Altered Artist Book Project;
- Heritage Altered Artist Books Curriculum Connections; and
- Survey on Heritage Altered Artist Books.

Mrs. Deleeuw introduced Claudia Mazzotta, middle school art teacher. Ms. Mazzotta briefly reviewed the Heritage Art Book project. Eighth grade art students demonstrated and explained examples of their work from the Heritage Art Book project. The Board thanked Ms. Mazzotta and the students for their presentation.

Ms. Durfee excused herself from the meeting.

B. Facilities Update

Bob Carroll updated the Board on the status of several facilities' issues. The high school roof repair project near the locker rooms has been completed. The high school chimney repair is being reviewed by the Board of Finance. Repair to the middle school roof has been delayed until spring. The middle school water system has posed no further problems. New carpeting was installed in the middle school's 6th and 7th grade hallways.

C. Textbook Adoption

A new business textbook entitled Personal Finance was recommended by the Business Education Curriculum Committee to support the new Personal Finance course which the Board approved last year. The book was made available for Board review. Approval of the book will be added to the February agenda.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)D. 2005-06 Audit Report

Mr. Carroll briefly reviewed the 2005-06 audit report completed by Scully and Wolf, Certified Public Accountants of Glastonbury, Connecticut. Board members were requested to return their copies of the audit report to Bob Carroll if they did not wish to retain their copies. The Board of Finance determines who performs the audit and it goes out to bid every three years. Dr. Durham stated that the Board only had unanticipated expenditures once, in 1999, for a lighting problem. These funds were returned to the Board of Finance. Mrs. Gourlie questioned the rating system of Moody and Standard & Poors, to which Mr. Carroll replied he did not know. Dr. Durham stated that the healthier the town's reserve, the better the bonding interest rate.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTSA. Long Range Planning

Long Range Planning met January 4, 2007. Mr. Iacovelli briefly reviewed discussions as documented in the meeting minutes. Mr. Iacovelli reviewed two 2007-08 school calendar options - starting before Labor Day and starting after Labor Day. Both options were briefly reviewed. The Long Range Planning Committee has recommended the 2007-08 school calendar which starts school before Labor Day.

B. Finance

Mr. Mather reported this Committee had not met. The next scheduled meeting will be January 11, 2007.

C. Policy

Policy met January 4, 2007. Mrs. Gionta briefly reviewed discussions as documented in the meeting minutes. Policy 5131.11 (Hazing) and Policy 5131.913 (Cyberbullying) was presented as a first reading.

D. Transportation

Mr. Mather reported this Committee had not met.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

E. Personnel and Negotiations

Mr. Misenti reported that this Committee had not met. Mr. Misenti suggested the Board go into Executive Session at the end of the meeting for discussions related to Personnel and Negotiations.

F. Ray Board Liaison

Mr. Iacovelli stated that Ray Board had not met.

G. LEARN

Mrs. Gourlie reported she had a conflict with her schedule and could not attend next week's meeting. She invited Board members to attend. The key speaker at last month's meeting was Westbrook's Superintendent who discussed bullying.

H. Curriculum Council Liaison

Mr. Herden informed the Board that the Curriculum Council had not met. Curriculum Council is scheduled to meet on January 18, 2007.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

There were no communications and audience of citizens at the time it was offered.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Strategic Plan

There was nothing new to add.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda

1) Warrant

- a. To approve the warrant for 2006-07 in the amount of \$1,378,193.36.

X. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda (continued)

- 2) To accept the resignation of Mrs. Carole Duffy, special education teacher at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School, effective the end of the 2006-07 school year.
- 3) To approve Policy 5131.911 (Hazing) as a first reading.
- 4) To approved Policy 5131.913 (Cyberbullying) as a first reading.

MOTION: Iacovelli, Herden; to approve items 1 through 4 of the Consent Agenda.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

B. Approval of 2007-08 School Calendar

MOTION: Herden, Iacovelli; to approve the proposed 2007-08 school calendar as recommended by the Long Range Planning Committee.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

C. "Ready by Five, Fine by Nine"

Item C appeared on the agenda at Mr. Misenti's request. This publication was previously sent to all Board members for review.

Mr. Misenti questioned how many Board members had reviewed the "Ready by Five, Fine by Nine" document to which six members replied affirmatively. Mr. Misenti requested feedback on the document. Mrs. Mordecai replied that the Board was committed to the current building project. Mrs. Mordecai stated there were great ideas contained in the document but that the town had voted down this type of school. Mr. Iacovelli agreed with Mrs. Mordecai. Mr. Herden stated he had strong feelings for a PreK-2 school, but that the town had not approved one when given the chance.

Mrs. Gionta questioned how many students currently attended pre-school to which Dr. Durham replied 65-70% which is slightly below the State average. Currently the town's preschool is offered to special needs children. A component of the preschool is a lottery system (of main stream children) which allows a peer group to also attend. The number of

X. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

C. “Ready by Five, Fine by Nine” (continued)

special needs preschoolers has increased, decreasing the number of peer group students.

When the new school is built, it will free up space for additional preschool students.

Dr. Durham briefly reviewed the East Haddam Public Schools Readiness Assessment Pre-school Services stating it was similar to the standards proposed in the report.

Responsive to a question, Mr. Scata replied that three and four year old screenings are offered monthly. These screenings are advertised in the local newspaper, town newsletter, and local preschools. Mrs. Gourlie stated that doctors who identify children with potential readiness problems advise their parents to bring their children to these screenings.

Mr. Misenti’s comments as to the role of the Board in helping parents prepare their children for kindergarten was read and is filed at the Board of Education Office.

MOTION: Herden, Gionta; to enter Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Personnel & Negotiations.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

The Board returned to Regular Session at 8:42 p.m.

MOTION: Mather, Iacovelli; to adjourn at 8:43 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

Respectfully submitted;

Nick Iacovelli
Secretary