

Minutes
THOMASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting

Thomaston Town Hall – Lena Morton Gallery

Date: Monday, May 13, 2013

7:00 p.m.



Members: Lucy Santopietro, Chair; Roxy Fainer, Vice Chair; Kathleen Freimuth, Secretary; Holly Herbert, Treasurer; Rebecca Guay, Member; Alexander Lee, Member; Anne Petrucci, Member; Joanne Gilland, Member; Debra Schriver, Member

Minutes

Present:

Lucy Santopietro, Roxy Fainer, Kathleen Freimuth, Holly Herbert, Becky Guay, Debra Schriver, Joanne Gilland, Alexander Lee and Anne Petrucci

Absent:

Black Rock School Administrator, Alisha DiCorpo

Also Present:

Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Nancy O'Dea-Wyrick; High School Administrators, John Perrucci and Jonathan Kozlak; Center School Administrator, Anne Uberti; Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer; Student Board Representatives, Phil Sechow and Sarah Guay; Board Clerk, Patricia George

I. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

Board Chair Lucy Santopietro established a quorum and called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

No flag present

III. Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve the agenda with the following amendments:

Under VII: Communications, Subsection A, New Hires – add an item 1., Terry Franzi, Long-term substitute for Michael Herschenfeld, effective April 9, 2013;

Under VIII: Superintendent's Report – add an item E., Office Changes, Thomaston Center School – Safety/Security;

Under VIII: Superintendent's Report – add an item F., Psychology/Social Worker – Support Staff

No further discussion, Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve the minutes of the Board of Education dated April 8, 2013 with the following amendment:

Under XII: Public Participation, Trish Brody's comments, a typo was made, please change from "bulking" to "balking".

No further discussion; Joanne Gilland abstained; motion carried unanimously.

V. Student Representative Reports:

Phil Sechow reported on Advanced Placement testing coming to a close, a sophomore class field trip to Newport and a future English field trip to view "The Great Gatsby". He also reported that the National Honor Society has elected its officials and invitations have been mailed out for Honors Night.

Sarah Guay provided information on the prom, which was held on May 4th at the Aqua Turf in Southington. She also reported on athletic events that included the following: the baseball team is number two in the league behind Northwest; the softball team is number two behind Terryville; and the girl's basketball team coffee is now available at Tony's in Thomaston. Each of the girls had a coffee specifically named by them.

VI. Incredible Classroom/Student Presentations/Recognitions:

A. CAFE Student Leadership Awards

The CAFE Student Leadership Award is presented annually to two grade eight students and two senior students. This year's recipients were Joseph Fainer, Alexandra Martin, Robert Perugini, and Marisa Santopietro. Board Chair Lucy Santopietro presented each student with a certificate of recognition.

B. "A Surprise Performance"

Under the direction of Kate Boyles, the music teacher between Center School and Black Rock, grade six students demonstrated their guitar skills by performing a number of selections. Ms.

Boyles noted that the guitar unit of study begins in grade five for approximately ten weeks and continues in grade six for the same period of time. She was happy to report that the program was made possible by a grant from the Education Enrichment Fund of Thomaston. The funds allowed the district to purchase guitars and equipment for an entire class.

VII. Communications:

1. New Hires/Rehires/Replacements
2. Resignations/Retirees/Exit Interviews

A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve the new hires and retiree as presented;

Further Discussion

It was the consensus of the Board that Ms. Van Hoose's retirement represents a tremendous loss to the district. She has earned the respect of so many parents and students.

Motion carried unanimously.

1. Athletics: n/a

1. Transfers: n/a

1. Leaves of Absence:

A motion was made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve the leave of absence as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

1. Field Trips: n/a

1. Correspondence:

Informational, as presented.

VIII. Superintendent's Report:

1. Student-of-the-month: Dominic Richards

Dominic Richards' resume noted that he is a member of National Honor Society, is currently a paid intern in the Finance department at the Thomaston Savings Bank, participated in six Advanced Placement Courses, is a tutor and a member of interact, and a participant in athletics, as well.

1. Teacher Evaluation and Support System

Included in the board packet was a copy of the district's teacher evaluation form. At a prior meeting of the Board, it was decided that the district would utilize the state teacher evaluation model with some modification.

Superintendent Mitchell asked that the Board defer to Anne Uberti to answer any questions they may pose. Board member Roxy Fainer asked how the parent portion of the survey would be implemented. Principal Uberti explained that this year it would be implemented electronically through the state vendor via e-mail. They will then gather the results and the data will come back to each school. She said they are doing this now to establish a baseline to make the goal for the parent portion in the fall. Ms. Uberti explained that the results that are received this year would be used by each administrator to tie into their own plan. The measure will be spring to spring.

1. Presenters for Grade 8 Awards Night and High School Graduation

The Board was surveyed for their availability as presenters for end-of-year activities - Grade 8 Awards night and High School Graduation.

1. Joseph F. Bartosiewicz Sr. Persistence & Determination Scholarship and the Gloria Bartosiewicz Comeback Kid Scholarship

Superintendent Mitchell enthusiastically announced that Mr. Bartosiewicz has made a generous donation of \$200,000 in scholarship monies to the graduating classes of Thomaston High School commencing with the 2013/2014 school year. The scholarship money will be made available to graduating classes over the next ten years.

A motion was made Kathleen Freimuth and seconded by Anne Petrucci to accept/approve the \$200,000 scholarship donation to the Thomaston Board of Education; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

1. Office Changes – Thomaston Center School – Safety/Security

With safety and security issues at the forefront, plans are to switch offices at Center School. Pupil Services and the Main office will flip flop locations. Anne Uberti, Principal at Center School and Superintendent Mitchell thought it was a very good idea. The changes are scheduled for the last week in June so that everything would be in place for the start of school.

1. Psychology/Social Worker Support Staff

Superintendent Mitchell and administrators met earlier in the day to review the responsibilities and day-to-day tasks of the district's psychologists and social worker. Is there a different way to schedule people with their responsibilities with testing and meeting with students?

Superintendent Mitchell said that discussions are in the preliminary stages and the Board will be kept apprised as they move through the process.

IX. Business Manager's Report:

A. Consolidation Consultant Recommendation

Business Manager Nancy O'Dea-Wyrick told the Board that there were four "Request for Proposals" that were sent to entities and that only one proposal was returned and that was from Arum & Associates. After meeting with Ms. Mitchell and Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick, Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick felt the Board would be pleased with what Arum & Associates would bring to the table, specifically working with the Board and their community outreach initiative. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick said that they will be "a fresh set of eyes and a different perspective".

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve Arum & Associates, LLC as the district's consolidation consultant;

Further Discussion

Board member Roxy Fainer asked if the Board of Finance was paying the fee, or splitting it.

Nancy O'Dea-Wyrick said it would be the position of the BoE and the direction that they wish to take. Board Chair Lucy Santopietro said that the Board will pursue it with the Board of Finance.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Earthlink – Diversified Telecom Group

The purpose of the company is to provide fiber for all of the district's facilities in a fashion that would provide redundancy.

Board member Joanne Gilland asked if it was compatible with alarms, phone lines, and the like so the district would not have to retrofit. Deb Sanford, the district's Senior Support Tech was on hand and answered, "Yes".

On a motion made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to accept/approve the Earthlink Telecom Group service agreement for fiberoptics, phone and internet as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

C. T.T.I. – Turnkey Technology

Three proposals came forward in range from \$144,000 to \$84,000. Realizing that the district did not have \$84,000, TTI was willing to perform the work "in chunks" as the district could afford to secure the wireless access points. Board member Joanne Gilland asked if they could be moved should the decision be made to consolidate. Deb Sanford confirmed.

On a motion made by Kathleen Freimuth and seconded by Anne Petrucci to accept/approve TTI's wireless access points installation agreement as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

D. Igniting Creative Energy Student Awards

This program was brought to the district by Johnson Controls. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick indicated that there were a total of fourteen participants, all of which received a certificate for their submission. The six judges looked for wise energy choices, environmental stewardship, original and creative work that was age appropriate and a complete written explanation. Points were awarded for theme, originality and creativity, and their written explanation. Three winning projects were presented and shared at the evening's Board meeting.

Caleb Zenobia composed a song, Erin Fainer submitted a poem, and a video was created by Zachary Stevenson entitled "Conservation Man". Each winner received a \$500 gift certificate to Apple and will be eligible for the finals.

E. Year-end Projections

Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick solicited the Board members for any questions regarding her report on year-end projections. None were asked.

X. Administrators' Reports:

- A. Black Rock School, Alisha DiCorpo/Thomaston Center School, Anne Uberti
Written, as presented.

- B. Thomaston High School, John Perrucci
Written, as presented.

Board Member Kathleen Freimuth acknowledged that the stairwell Principal Perrucci had expressed concerns about was being scheduled for repair.

Board Member Alexander Lee indicated that he received several phone calls regarding room 102, a computer lab which is currently closed and causing an inconvenience for students.

Principal Perrucci explained that the room is not being taken care of, nor monitored by staff. He said that Deb Sanford spends too much time repairing computers for nonsense repairs such as removed drives and keys that are switched around on the keyboards. He said there is a lack of supervision and the budget does not support the constant repairs.

Assistant Principal Jon Kozlak indicated that there are several computer labs, 6 in total, that are made available to students and that room 102 is the only lab where these types of problems are occurring.

Principal Perrucci indicated that the lab will be re-opened once a protocol is put in place.

- C. Pupil Services, Nancy Schnyer
Written, as presented.

XI. Standing Committee Reports:

- 1. Budget
 - i. Summary-by-Budget-Line Y-T-D expenditures in the amount of \$12,078,272.61
A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Anne Petrucci to accept/approve the y-t-d budget line expenditures as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Transfers for the month of May 2013 in the amount of \$50,340.68
A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Anne Petrucci to accept/approve the transfers for the Month of May as presented;

Further discussion;

Board Member Alexander Lee addressed the \$30,000 that was moved to legal fees and inquired if the amount was solely for the month of May. Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick said that the \$30,000 should take the district through the remainder of the year. She said the line is over and has been running over and creeping up over budget.

1. 2014/Budget Update

Ms. O'Dea-Wyrick said that she is scheduled to meet with the Board of Finance tomorrow but was not certain if they would take action on setting a budget. Discussions were had previously regarding cutting the BoE budget by \$75,000 but no action had taken place to date, merely discussions. Subsequently, conversations were held in house with administrators, who were asked what additional cuts the BoE could expect out of their respective building budgets. She wanted to be prepared should the Board of Finance take action and make cuts to the 2014 budget. She presented a chart with several scenarios at varying cuts and what exactly would be eliminated at each level. The Board asked that the chart be e-mailed to them.

1. Curriculum/Instruction: no report

C. Maintenance/Facilities: no report

D. Technology: no report

E. Personnel: no report

F. Transportation: no report

G. Athletics: no report

1. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee: no report

I. Policy:

1. Policy 3323, First Read, Business/Non-Instructional Operations

The town changed their bid tolerance from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The figure was noted in more than one policy. The only change would be the \$ noted in the policy

2. District Wide Medical Forms

High School Nurse Beth Carangelo was invited to talk about the district-wide medical form changes that will be occurring with the start of the new school year. The district nurses met and created a district-wide form so that all the schools would be on the same page. The problem with the forms that are generated from Powerschool is that they don't allow for signatures, which the nurses require for releases.

She also said that Dr. Broomhead advised the district to longer allow standing orders at the schools. The practice is considered to be obsolete. The change will be noted in correspondence delivered to parents for the start of the new school year.

Discussions were also had regarding the lack of substitute nurses.

J. Government Relations: no report

1. Affiliations:

1. Legislation: no report

XII. Public Participation:

Caleb Zenobia
118 Williams Street

Caleb wondered why the district is interested in acquiring tablets

Principal Perrucci answered that the high school spends over \$1500 to \$3000 replacing books each year and the book is available to one student at a time where as if 5 to 10 tablets were utilized, (mini i-pads or a generic tablet) the school can order an infinite number of copies and distribute to a number of students. Increase volume of texts in the library without the cost of replacing them.

Phil Sechow
78 Reynolds Bridge Road

Phil's inquiry pertained to the \$200,000 scholarship and who the donation was provided by.

Board Member Kathleen Freimuth indicated that the donor was a prior graduate of Thomaston High School

XIII. Old Business:

1. Internet Safety/Cyber Bullying Presentation – Detective P. Morgan –
Update from Board Member Debra Schriver

The individual was to have contacted Superintendent Mitchell, who has not heard anything to date.

1. Superintendent Search Update – Lucy Santopietro

Ms. Santpietro indicated that she had a conversation with the Superintendent Search Consultant, James Connelly earlier in the day. Mr. Connelly indicated that he had approx 26 people interested in the position, 18 completed applications as of this morning.

He also shared that 44 questionnaires were sent back to him. He was impressed because the answers were fully written, detailed, and people really expressed themselves.

XIV. New Business:

XV. Items for Future Agendas:

1. Board meeting structure
2. Start time for 2014 BoE Meetings
3. Field Trip to Greece, Spring 2014

XVI. Executive Session:

XVII. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Holly Herbert and seconded by Kathleen Freimuth to adjourn the Regular meeting of the Board of Education at 8:30 p.m.; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.