

**Thomaston Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Thomaston Town Hall, Meeting Room One
January 12, 2009
7:00 p.m.**



Minutes

Present: Deborah April, Laurie Barrett, Joanne Gilland, Holly Herbert, Laura Rieley, Cheryl Roberts, Lucy Santopietro, and Beth Yaffe

Absent: Steve Catania

Also Present: Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Susan Laone; Board Clerk, Patricia George; High School Principal, James Wenker; Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson; Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio; Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer; and Student Board Representatives, Nick Guertin and Adam Scheppard

I. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

Chairperson, Laurie Barrett established a quorum and called to order the Regular Meeting of the Thomaston Board of Education at 7:16 p.m. She then led the pledge of allegiance.

II. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the agenda with the following amendment:

Under Section X, Subsection A, add an item #3: Proposed Pre- K Tuition Increase for 2009/2010 with a vote to accept/approve

Motion carried unanimously

III. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated Monday, December 8, 2008:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated December 8, 2008. Joanne Gilland abstains; motion carried unanimously.

Special Meeting (Budget Subcommittee) of the Board of Education dated Wednesday, December 10, 2008:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the minutes of the Budget Subcommittee Meeting of the Board of Education dated December 10, 2008. Laura Rieley, Joanne Gilland, Beth Yaffe, Cheryl Roberts and Holly Herbert abstain, motion carried unanimously.

IV. Student Presentation:

No Report

V. Public Participation:

Mr. David Colavecchio
52 Lynnrich West
Thomaston, CT

History:

A budget subcommittee meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. and concluded at 7:10 p.m.

The Board Chair asked for public participation comments during the regular meeting

which followed immediately and Mr. David Colavecchio commented.

Mr. Colavecchio stated that as far as he was concerned, there is nowhere to cut.

VI. Communications:

A-G:

On a motion made by Beth Yaffe and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept Communications A-G as presented; motion carried unanimously.

VII. School Principals and Pupil Services Director's Reports:

A. High School Principal, James Wenker

- In an effort to continually raise standards at the high school, Principal Wenker offered several changes that he would like to institute upon Board approval. These changes would occur in the honor roll system, athletic eligibility with regards to grades and curriculum. Mr. Wenker explained in detail the changes that would be made in each of these areas. The Board amended the agenda to include a vote to accept/approve the changes as presented. On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept Principal Wenker's changes as presented; motion carried unanimously.

B. Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer

- Ms. Schnyer reiterated information contained within her written report and publicly congratulated Ms. Kelly Dube for her involvement in the ECERS assessment and her work toward NAEYC accreditation.

C. Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson

- At last month's Board meeting, Paul Johnson distributed a report compiled by Pam Sangster from Education Connection. She had spent time in each of the schools talking with people who were associated with technology. Mr. Johnson asked to have the Board

review the report and that it be put on the February agenda for further discussion.

- Faculty member, Lynda Blethen received an \$800 field trip grant from Target which will allow the entire first grade to visit the Indian Museum in Bristol.
- A \$200 check was received from the International Bluegrass Music Association to help pay for the Phil Rosenthal concert which was held at the school in November.

D. Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio

Mr. Diorio noted the following:

- Casting has been completed for “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory”
- The electrical bid has been accepted
- The ventilation system is in the process of being hooked up at this time
- Doug Craig, the technology teacher, continues to meet monthly with teachers to update their computer skills
- Mr. Diorio meets with team leaders on a monthly basis

VIII. Superintendent’s Report:

- A. Employee of the Month/Ellen Chizinski: Superintendent Mitchell provided a few words regarding the employee of the month, Ellen Chizinski. Some of Ms. Chizinski’s attributes as noted by Ms. Mitchell included that she is an excellent teacher, gives 100%, has a positive demeanor, and is a great coordinator. She then deferred to Nancy Schnyer who also provided positive comments on Ms. Chizinski’s behalf.
- B. Student of the Month/Connor Hackert: Superintendent Mitchell remarked that Connor has an impressive resume and that his academic accomplishments are as high as you can get, noting that he is third in his class.

IX. Student Representatives’ Reports:

Nick Guertin:

Nick spoke regarding the recent food drive, mid-terms and the upcoming spirit week which includes a pep rally and senior class versus faculty basketball game. In addition, he noted that the senior class sponsored an alumni basketball game over Christmas break in which the proceeds of approximately \$1,000 were split between the Danny Abbott Memorial Fund and the class treasury.

Adam Scheppard:

Adam noted that a scheduled February field trip included visiting the homes of Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe with a May or June field trip scheduled for Six Flags. He noted that class standings are up over \$1500 mainly due to the money earned from class rings. He also added that the class is beginning to collect money from class dues in the amount of \$30 per student and that a school-wide open gym will be held in March. Additionally, a new service project/fundraiser, “Soles for Souls”, which takes donations to purchase shoes for those in need around the world has

been implemented. The company will return forty percent of the profits to the class. He concluded by stating that they are currently organizing a town-wide dinner where the proceeds will be contributed to the Children's Hospital of Connecticut.

X. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Budget:

1 & 2 On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the budget expenditures and monthly transfers as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Proposed Pre- K Tuition for 2009/2010

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the proposed Pre- K tuition increases as noted below:

2 ½ days per week per year \$1,152

3 ½ days per week per year \$1,456

5 ½ days per week per year \$1,770

Motion carried unanimously

B. Curriculum/Instruction:

1. Refer to Principal Wenker's report under Section VII., subsection A.

C. Maintenance/Facilities:

Shovel Ready Projects

Superintendent Mitchell met with First Selectman Maura Martin, Henry Osoweicki, and others in order for Ms. Martin to prepare Shovel Ready Projects as invited by the governor.

D. Technology:

No report

E. Personnel:

Superintendent's Evaluation

Evaluation forms were distributed to each Board member to use as a possible tool in completing the Superintendent's evaluation. An anticipated Executive Session has been scheduled for the February Board meeting to begin the evaluation process. At that time, Ms. Mitchell will provide the Board with a report concerning her goals and projects and areas that need work.

F. Transportation:

No report

G. Athletics:

No report

H. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee:

No report

I. Policy:

Recall/Rehire Policy (first Read)

Board Chair, Laurie Barrett, asked the Board members if they actually wanted

to have a policy in place for non-union members. The Board will review the policy and discuss at a future meeting.

J. Government Relations:

No report

K. Affiliations:

CABE: 2009 Legislative Priorities – as presented

XI. Old Business:

None

XII. New Business:

None

XIII. Items for Future Agendas:

None

XIV. Executive Session:

XV. Adjournment:

On a motion made by Beth Yaffe and seconded by Deborah April to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 8:25 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.