



Minutes
THOMASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting

Thomaston Town Hall - Meeting Room One
Date: Monday, September 13, 2010
7:00 p.m.

Members: Laurie Barrett, Chair; Beth Keutzer, Vice Chair; Lucy Santopietro, Secretary; Laura Rieley, Treasurer; Joanne Gilland, Holly Herbert, Roxy Fainer, George Counter and Steve Catania, Members

Minutes

Present: Laurie Barrett, George Counter, Beth Keutzer, Holly Herbert, Roxy Fainer, Laura Rieley, Steve Catania and *Joanne Gilland (*arrived 7:04 p.m.)

Absent: Lucy Santopietro

Also Present: Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Sue Laone; Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer; Black Rock School/Thomaston Center School Principal, Anne Uberti; High School Principal, John Perrucci; High School Assistant Principal, Jonathan Kozlak; and Board Clerk, Patricia George

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 7:03 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

Board Chair Laurie Barrett led the pledge of allegiance.

*(Board Member, Joanne Gilland arrived at 7:04 p.m.)

III. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Steve Catania and seconded by Beth Keutzer to approve/accept the agenda with the following amendments:

Under VI. Communications, Subsection A. New Hires, add an Item 2. Hillary Marcinko, Speech Pathologist

Under VII. Superintendent's Report, add an Item 6. Second Step Training K-6

Under X. Standing Committee Reports, Subsection F. Transportation, add an Item 2. Bayberry Drive Construction/Transportation

Under XII. Old Business, add an Item B. ECG Engineering

Under XIV. Items for Future Agendas, add Items B. Goals:

Superintendent/Administrators/Teachers, Item C. On-line Course Availability and Item D. Televised Board Meetings

No further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

On a motion made by Beth Keutzer and seconded by Joanne Gilland to approve/accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated August 9, 2010 with the following amendment:

Under X. Standing Committee Reports: Subsection E. Personnel, change the word “hire” to “higher”

No further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

V. Student Presentations: n/a

VI. Communications:

On a motion made by Beth Keutzer and seconded by George Counter to approve/accept all Communications as presented;

Further Discussion (Subsection B)/Exit Interviews:

At Board request, Superintendent Mitchell surveyed exiting personnel. Speech Pathologist, Sarah Sokoloski resigned to take a position in West Hartford, not only for monetary purposes, but it also gives her the opportunity to work specifically with Pre-k students.

Debra Daigle, a Paraprofessional at Center School, was offered an opportunity to go back to a profession that she had previously worked in.

Lindsay Krin, the music instructor at Black Rock School and Center School, took a position in another school district that she felt would give her an opportunity to grow.

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Superintendent’s Report:

A. Student of the Month: (will resume with next month’s report)

B. Evacuation Protocol

Principal Uberti of Center School was made aware of a situation that had occurred at the Post Office, which is in close proximity to the school. Upon Central Office notification, Ms. Laone and Ms. Mitchell went to Center School where they worked closely and in conjunction with the police department and Fire Marshal, Bob Norton. An evacuation of the school was made and students were moved to an adjacent field behind the school. The town hall was asked to evacuate as well. Thomaston Fire Department personnel along with Harwinton and Thomaston EMTs were present. All students were provided water and a lunch.

One concern that administrators had was contacting parents to relieve them of any anxiety that they may have had.

Ms. Mitchell then deferred to Business Manager Sue Laone for comments on the parent notification system.

- C. Red Alert
Ms. Loane stated that the new parent alert system, Code Ed, was going to be populated with contact information from the new PowerSchool software. Plans were to have the SASI to PowerSchool conversion completed for the start of the new school year. Unforeseen problems occurred within that software which subsequently delayed the Code Ed process.
- Plans are in place to discuss the evacuation protocol at upcoming administrative council meetings.
- D. Welcome Back Night for Parents
Superintendent Mitchell, as part of her community relation's initiative, suggested to the Board a "Welcome Back Night for Parents".
- E. Education Connection
Superintendent Mitchell provided updates on programs that the district is involved with through Education Connection.
- F. Second Step Training K-6
Sarah Morehouse, Rose McLaughlin along with the Superintendent will be providing two sessions of Second Step Training, an anti bully/violence program, to Black Rock School and Center School.

VIII. Business Manager's Report: n/a

IX. Administrators' Reports:

- A. Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer
For her September report, Ms. Schnyer outlined the responsibilities of her office. Additionally, she noted some of the positive changes that have occurred during her tenure in the district.
- B. High School Principal, John Perrucci
Principal Perrucci highlighted several topics of his written report including RtI/SRBI progress, Homework and Assessment and Civic senior community service project.
- Principal Perrucci was also asked by the Board to comment on the gym roof.
- C. Two Schools Principal (BRS and TCS), Anne Uberti
Most of Ms. Uberti's report was a continuation from the prior month. Her initiatives include streamlining, developing consistency and common practice within the grades.
- The fatal errors occurring within the school's phone systems were also discussed.
- D. "Challenge Day" – Assistant Principal, Jonathan Kozlak
Assistant Principal Kozlak discussed an initiative, "Challenge Day", a nationally recognized program designed to improve school climate.

Monies received from ESPN, who utilized the high school for a commercial shoot, will help defray some of the cost associated with the program.

Additional information regarding the program can be found on the website www.challengeday.com

X. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Budget:

1. Budget Expenditures
2. Monthly Transfers

On a motion made by Beth Keutzer and seconded by George Counter to approve/accept the Budget Expenditures and Monthly Transfers as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

B. Curriculum and Instruction:

1. CMT Presentation: Anne Uberti
2. CAPT Presentation: John Perrucci

Presentations were provided by Principals Anne Uberti and John Perrucci on CMT and CAPT test results.

C. Maintenance/Facilities: n/a

D. Technology: n/a

E. Personnel: n/a

F. Transportation:

1. Magnet Transportation
Magnet school bus pick up locations, specifically Rotella and Maloney, were moved to the high school this year. Concerns with initial traffic patterns were brought forward and have since been addressed.
2. Bayberry Drive Construction/Transportation
Business Manager Laone and Superintendent Mitchell visited the Bayberry Drive bus route to address construction issues. It was established that it was too hazardous to send a bus down into the construction site. Parents were notified of the change. The route will be reassessed once gravel is in place.

Business Manager Sue Laone reported that overall bus issues were minimal.

G. Athletics: n/a

H. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee:

1. Thomaston Center School Auditorium
Superintendent Mitchell had an opportunity to view the auditorium renovations at the Center School. It was reported that the seating is in place and window treatments are expected to arrive in the near future.

- I. Policy: n/a
- J. Government Relations: n/a
- K. Affiliations: n/a
- L. Legislation: n/a

XI. Public Participation: n/a

XII. Old Business:

- A. Homework Policy
Board member Steve Catania indicated that he had received a number of complaints on the newly implemented homework policy and its part in grading. He said that not all students do well on tests.

Principal Perrucci defended the policy by stating that students need to meet certain standards. He said that there are two options, sit back and shake the hands of graduating students who cannot read or write, or expose their deficits and remediate.

- B. ECG Engineering
The purpose of including ECG on the agenda was to establish a consensus of the board on whether or not to utilize them as a way to save money in the district. The firm presented their program at a board meeting earlier in the year. Some board members were not comfortable with the program and remained undecided and others indicated no.

A suggestion was made by Board member Roxy Fainer to establish a volunteer subcommittee to establish whether or not it would be viable.

Board Chair Laurie Barrett wanted to see what direction the town was going to proceed in.

XIII. New Business: n/a

XIV. Items for Future Agendas:

Superintendent Mitchell asked that the following items be placed on future agendas for more in-depth discussion.

- A. Board Self-Evaluation
- B. Goals: Superintendent/Administrators/Teachers
- C. On-Line Course Availability
- D. Televised Board Meetings

XV. Executive Session: n/a

XVI. Adjournment:

On a motion made by George Counter and seconded by Beth Keutzer to dismiss the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 9:56 p.m.; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.