



Minutes
THOMASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting

Thomaston Town Hall – Lena Morton Gallery
Date: Monday, November 14, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Members: Laurie Barrett, Chair; Beth Keutzer, Vice Chair; Lucy Santopietro, Secretary; Laura Fitch, Treasurer; Joanne Gilland, Holly Herbert, Roxy Fainer, and George Counter Members (and a position vacated by Steve Catania effective July 15, 2011)

Minutes

Present: Laurie Barrett, George Counter, Roxy Fainer, Lucy Santopietro, Beth Keutzer, Joanne Gilland, Holly Herbert, and Laura Fitch

Absent: N/A

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

I. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

Board Chair, Laurie Barrett established a quorum and called to order the Regular Meeting of the Thomaston Board of Education at 7:02 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

No flag present

III. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Roxy Fainer and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the agenda with the following amendments:

- Under VI., Guests, add an item E., Mr. Jeff Dunn
- Under VIII., Superintendent's Report, replace item C. Implementation Dates for the Student Success Plan with 2011/2012 School Calendar Adjustment Letter (due to storm Alfred);

No further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated Monday, October 17, 2011:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Beth Keutzer to approve/accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated October 17, 2011; no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

V. Student Representative Reports:

The Board inquired as to the status of student representation on the Board. Principal Perrucci indicated that he had the interest of one student, who had not completed the necessary paperwork to date. He also stated that he was still looking for a second student.

VI. Guests:

A. Michael Burr

B. Sal Santa Maria

Superintendent Mitchell explained she spoke to Mr. Burr who had planned to update the Board on the track. Unfortunately, with his work schedule, he was not able to be present. Ms. Mitchell indicated that she would remove the names from future agendas until they are able to provide a firm date.

C. Departing Board Members (recognition)

Superintendent Mitchell recognized the departing Board members individually and provided each with a parting gift of a clock. The members addressed the audience and gave a few words with what they had hoped would be the future of the Board.

Departing members included: Steve Catania (not present), Laurie Barrett, George Counter, Laura Fitch and Beth Keutzer.

D. Vocational Award Recipient

Chair Laurie Barrett, along with Business Manager, Sue Laone, recently attended a rotary luncheon where Superintendent Mitchell was the recipient of the 2011 Vocational Award. Ms. Barrett wished to publicly acknowledge this award and then provided a few words from a speech that Business Manager Sue Laone had generated on Ms. Mitchell's behalf.

E. Jeff Dunn

Mr. Dunn, a representative of Rotary, wished to update the Board on a new committee that had been formed to address the needs of the field at the high school. Members of the committee include Jeff Dunn; Marty Egan of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Bill Ryan, Athletic Director; Jack Pasquella of the Booster Club; and Michael Madow.

The immediate issue is to repair the baseball field. The Booster Club was able to provide \$4,800 toward the cost of the project.

The committee's budget is broken down into three categories, immediate needs, short-term needs and long-term needs. Mr. Dunn explained that the committee had planned to solicit donations from private parties and organizations.

VII. Communications:

- A. New Hires: n/a
- B. Resignations/Retirements/Exit Interviews:
On a motion made by Roxy Fainer and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the resignations as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.
- C. Athletics: n/a
- D. Transfers: n/a
- E. Leaves of Absence: n/a
- F. Field Trips:
On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Holly Herbert to approve/accept the field trips as presented; no further discussion; Roxy Fainer opposed; motion carried (7-1)
- G. Correspondence:
On a motion made by Beth Keutzer and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the correspondence as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.
- H. Meeting Dates for 2012:
On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Roxy Fainer to approve the 2012 regular meeting dates for the Board of Education;

Further Discussion

The Columbus Day and Veterans' Day Holidays each fall on the second Monday of the month in 2012, the normal meeting dates for the Board of Education. It was the consensus of the Board to hold the meetings on the third Monday of those months.

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Superintendent's Report:

- A. Student of the Month for November: Timothy Zebrowski

Student Timothy Zebrowski was November's Student-of-the-Month. Ms. Mitchell indicated that Tim is "an excellent student, ranked 13 out of 85 in his class" and has a Marine career focus. She also noted that he provided the Rotary with a very nice presentation.

B. **LCSA Student Recognition Award Banquet Honorees**
Several students were going to be recognized at the annual Litchfield County Superintendent's Award Banquet on Wednesday, November 16th at the Cornucopia in Torrington. Those students being recognized were Justin Gallo, Sarah Hafele, Alexa Milius, and Timothy Zembrowski.

C. **2011/2012 Calendar Adjustment Letter (Due to Storm Alfred)**
With the recent storm and subsequent power outages, the teachers and students lost a full week of school. In order to compensate for the five days when the district was closed, the following changes to the existing calendar (2011-2012) will include:

- School will be in session half-day on Wednesday, November 23rd;
- School will be in session on February 17th and February 21st (no winter break) President's Day will be observed by the district on Monday February 20th;

These days will replace three of the five days lost during storm Alfred.

November 18th will remain a professional development day as our professional development is connected to grant funding.

The last day of school is currently June 12th. Adding in the two remaining days needed to cover school closures from the storm, moves us to June 14th. This leaves the district with no remaining non-school days allotted for the remainder of the school year. After much consideration, the last day of school will move to June 22, 2012. The six days (June 15, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22) provided in this calendar scenario will offer coverage for non-school days, if needed. Unexpected closures beyond June 22nd will be taken from the April vacation (April 16 – 20) beginning with Friday, April 20th.

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Holly Herbert to accept/approve the 2011/2012 calendar revision; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

IX. Business Manager's Report: n/a

X. Administrators' Reports:

A. Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer

No written report submitted.

Ms. Schnyer's verbal report covered a "Disproportionality Summary" provided by the State. The report indicates that "each state must collect and examine data to determine if significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity is occurring in the state and the districts with respect to" several criteria. Ms. Schnyer stated that "many, many towns in the state were cited, but Thomaston was lucky not to be one of them this round."

- B. High School Principal, John Perrucci
Principal Perrucci wanted to draw the Board's attention to the air conditioning unit at the high school which has leaks in the seals and needs to be replaced. Mr. Perrucci said that the building was designed to be air conditioned. When it is not running, the humidity of the building cannot be controlled, which may lead to mold issues. Mr. Perrucci said the air conditioner is essential to the health of the building.

He highlighted a few more items from his written report including the activity and advisory periods.

1. Bullying Presentation: Jon Kozlak
Assistant Principal Kozlak submitted a draft of a new "bullying" policy. He indicated that it mirrored very closely, the CABA sample that he received.

The Board will need to review the policy and will be placed on the agenda for December.

- C. BRS/TCS: "Two Schools...One Mission", Anne Uberti
Principal Uberti indicated that she and Assistant Principal DiCorpo have had the opportunity to attend several different workshops revolving around issues that are changing at the state level and that are going to need to be implemented at the schools. She indicated that these changes are huge and include addressing bullying and common core standards. She said, "There is no way to avoid it or minimize their impact."

XI. Standing Committee Reports:

- A. Budget
On a motion made by Laura Fitch and seconded by Holly Herbert to approve/accept the Summary by Budget y-t-d expenditures in the amount of \$4,062,849.13 and transfers for October as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.
- B. Curriculum/Instruction: n/a
- C. Maintenance/Facilities: n/a

D. Technology:

1. Establishing a “Plan” – 2011/2012

Superintendent Mitchell reported that the incumbent Technology Coordinator for the district, Tim Polowy, had submitted his letter of resignation.

Subsequently a meeting was called in which Jonathan Costa, a consultant from Education Connection, was invited to attend. Before the district hired a replacement for Tim and for the recommended position suggested by the Board at October’s meeting, Ms. Mitchell felt it made good sense to assess where the district currently is with regards to the technology department. At her request, Tim provided Superintendent Mitchell with an overview of the entire infrastructure and a prioritized list of work. His report also included a suggested division of responsibilities within the department.

Board member Holly Herbert suggested that the district may want to look at outsourcing some of the responsibilities. In response, Business Manager Sue Laone indicated that there were both pros and cons to the suggestion and gave examples of each.

E. Personnel: n/a

F. Transportation:

1. Worhunsy Bus Company – “Working the Storm”

During the aftermath of Storm Alfred, Superintendent Mitchell attended the town’s emergency planning sessions on both Saturday and Sunday where she received information on blocked roads that would not have school bus access. Railroad, Railroad Annex and Jackson were among these streets. Superintendent Mitchell also worked closely with Lori from Worhunsy Bus Company and Business Manager Sue Laone to determine how would they establish alternate routes and how this information would be communicated to the parents.

Using information from Code Ed, parents were notified via phone calls, e-mail and the police to call Lori Foley at the bus company early in the morning on Monday.

G. Athletics: n/a

H. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee: n/a

I. Policy: n/a

J. Government Relations: n/a

K. Affiliations:

1. CABE: New Board Training Session

A new Board member training session is being scheduled for January 7th with an inclement weather date scheduled for January 28th. Nick Caruso, from CABE, will provide the training. The training is open to existing members of the Board as a refresher should they wish to attend.

L. Legislation: n/a

XII. Public Participation:

Tim Scatena
67 Patricia Lane
Thomaston, CT 06787

- Mr. Scatena thanked the departing Board members for their service to the town.

Mr. David Collavecchio

- Mr. Collavecchio praised Ms. Krin indicating that she was a very good teacher. He is hoping that the hiring process will provide for continuity in the classroom.
- He, too, thanked the departing Board members for their work

XIII. Old Business:

XIV. New Business:

XV. Items for Future Agendas:

- A. Member George Counter asked that the new Board review the “No School, No Game” policy that is currently in effect. He hopes this will allow the Superintendent to have some flexibility in canceling/allowing athletic activities.
- B. Bullying/Safe School Climate Plan (for approval)

XVI. Executive Session:

XVII. Adjournment:

On a motion made by Roxy Fainer and seconded by George Counter to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 8:35 p.m.; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.