

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
(held in place of May 23, 2012, Regular Board of Education Workshop meeting)
May 23, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Adamo, Mr. French, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Desaulniers

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Barker-Jones, Directors Mrs. Banks and Mr. Nelson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

OTHERS PRESENT: Special Master Dr. Adamowski; general public; staff; administrators; news media

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Sewall called the May 23, 2012, Board of Education Special Business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Lambert led the Board and the public in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATIONS

CABE Student Leadership Awards

This year's CABE Student Leadership Awards were presented to Windham High School students, Sacha Gomez and Michael McMorrow. They were congratulated for receiving this special recognition for their outstanding leadership qualities.

2012 Student Philosopher

There was no presentation at this time.

Ms. Ortiz recognized Mr. Jim Hutson for his acceptance in the Engineering Challenge for the 21st Century Teachers' Workshop, a summer week-long residential program designed to assist teachers in developing student skills to become qualified and productive engineers and technicians in the 21st century. She also recognized Mr. Bill Stover for receiving Eastern Connecticut University's 2012 Latin American Distinguished Service Award for his work with the Latino community. Both staff members were congratulated for their professional achievements.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following minutes were approved as submitted:

- Board of Education April 11, 2012, regular meeting minutes (Ref. 1)
- Board of Education April 18 2012, special workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 2)
- Board of Education April 25, 2012, workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 3)
- Board of Education May 9, 2012, special workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 4)

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Mary Gallucci, Willimantic, said that Natchaug School will have a different composition and she has questions regarding the SIG grant. She said that she doesn't understand how a federal grant written for a K-4 school can be ethically used in the third and final year of the grant when students in two additional grades are added to the school. She also said that one of the specifications of the grant is that the funds be used to supplement the budget and not supplant the budget but she doesn't see these funds in the budget. She feels that there will be a dilution of money that was geared for a specific student population. She also asked how additional teachers who have not received the same embedded professional development as Natchaug teachers can be evaluated based on student test scores and data. Ms. Ortiz replied that the State Department of Education has been notified of all of the changes that are taking place. She also indicated that teacher evaluations will be based on student performance; and as part of the process, there is a memorandum of understanding written with the teachers' union. Dr. Adamowski said the school receives its money based on a per student amount and the SIG grant funding is a pure supplement to those funds. Ms. Gallucci said that in the past teachers couldn't be hired early because budgets didn't pass and asked if hiring is occurring and positions being advertised now that there is a budget for next year? Ms. Ortiz and Dr. Adamowski said that there are TFA applicants and the district is also in the process of posting all positions which will be open to all applicants. Ms. Gallucci said that having a large job pool is very important.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Strategic Operating Plan (Ref. 5)

Ms. Ortiz reviewed the three-year Strategic Operating Plan, which is comprised of six goals, thirty-four strategies and 197 plus implementation steps. The Board of Education will be asked to approve the plan at the next Board meeting and Dr. Adamowski will present it to the State Board of Education for approval, as well. Dr. Adamowski said that many people spent a lot of time working on the development of the plan. He indicated that it may be necessary to revise certain implementation steps when data is reviewed during the Board of Education's summer retreat; however, this is part of the process.

Committee Reports

Finance and Audit Committee

Committee chair Ms. Tinker reported that the Board of Finance will hold a public forum regarding the funding for a new reading program for the district. Following that, the Board of Finance will vote to send the request to the Town Council. Ms. Tinker said that it is important for parents to attend and show their support. She also reported that the Finance Committee met last night and information regarding the audit and software for the Town and Board of Education to share will be brought to a future Board meeting.

School Planning and Design Committee

Committee chair Mrs. Lambert said that Friar Associates have begun their work regarding the master facilities plan study. She said that Gale Associates will share its findings of the Natchaug Roof at a meeting of the committee next Wednesday at 7 PM.

Mrs. Lambert also reported that an ad hoc FFE magnet school committee is looking at furniture, fixtures and equipment to fit the needs of the school.

Ad hoc Transportation Policy Committee

Committee chair Mr. French reported that the committee met and reviewed transportation policies used in Norwich, New London, Putnam and Windham. He reported that he has been in contact with St. Mary-St. Joseph School regarding transportation for those students. Mrs. DeVivo is donating Windham/Willimantic maps to be used by the committee. Mr. French will contact EASTCONN and schedule a committee meeting within the next week or two.

Ms. Ortiz publicly thanked Mr. Beebe and his staff at M&J Bus for the wonderful job they did getting the buses up and running following the bus vandalism. Due to their hard work, school was able to be in session the next day.

Districtwide PTO

Ms. Ortiz reported that members met last night and she informed them about the Board of Finance's public forum next Tuesday. Dr. Switchenko reported to the Board about the Third Thursday activity he and Mrs. Switchenko participated in which focused on physical fitness and nutrition. Mrs. Switchenko had fourth grade Sweeney students assist in the activity, as well. He said that a great job was done by all and many people stopped by. Ms. Ortiz said that the following Third Thursday activities are planned: reading with Mrs. Packer in June; summer school and after school programs with Mr. Stover and food services with Mr. Koschmieder in July; and fill the bus with school supplies in August. Family Day in conjunction with the Rec Department is planned for June 9 this year at Jillson Square. Schools will participate with activities and food booths. Ms. Ortiz will again march in the July 4th Boom Box parade and she asked people to join her. During roundtable, schools reported on the many activities taking place.

Ms. Lambert commented on the success of the Nature's Classroom trip taken during the April vacation and thanked the teachers who volunteered their time to attend for three days during the spring vacation.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Appointment

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education appoint George Smalley to the position of Director of Guidance at Windham High School effective July 1, 2012; new position.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Health Benefit Fund Account (Ref. 6)

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve the creation of a Health Benefit Fund account for the purpose of self-insuring health insurance.

There was discussion regarding the recommendation of the ad hoc committee on health insurance to create an account so that it is in place. Dr. Sewall, Mr. French and Mr. Nelson provided information. There were questions and some Board members said they weren't ready to vote on this until all of the facts and final numbers were known. It was suggested by Dr. Sewall to delay voting on this motion until the next Board meeting.

Motion withdrawn by Mrs. Lambert; second withdrawn by Mr. French.

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Desaulniers, that the Board of Education authorize the Finance and Audit Sub-committee and the Superintendent and her designees to proceed with the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Town of Windham and the Windham Public Schools for the management of the health benefit fund.

The MOU will be developed with input from the Board of Education and the Town and reviewed by the Finance and Audit sub-committee prior to being brought to the full Board for approval. There was discussion about development of the MOU. Board members had many questions and it was suggested that Lockton make a presentation to the Board at its next meeting.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Windham High School's graduation will take place on June 13, and there was discussion about changing the date of the June 13, 2012, Board meeting to June 14, 2012.

The following motion was added to the agenda:

Motion by Mr. Desaulniers, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education add the following action item to tonight's agenda: change the date for the June 13, 2012, Board of Education meeting to June 14, 2012. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education approve changing the date of the June 13, 2012, Board of Education meeting to June 14, 2012 at 7 P.M.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Special Master's Report

Dr. Adamowski said that his report will be given in executive session when personnel items are discussed.

Motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board enter executive session for the discussion of exempt documents relating to ongoing searches for senior central office staff and the middle school principal at 8:43 P.M.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Adamo, Mr. French, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Desaulniers

ADMINISTRATION/OTHERS

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Barker-Jones, Directors Mrs. Banks and Mr. Nelson, Special Master Dr. Adamowski

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Chair Dr. Sewall reconvened regular session at 9:35 P.M. There were no motions.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 9:35 P.M.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Luz Osuba, Secretary