

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
November 18, 2015

BOARD PRESENT: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mrs. Osuba, Mr. French, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Flores-Alvarez

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia; Deputy Superintendent Dr. Gasper; Assistant Superintendent Dr. Williams; Directors Ms. Markey and Mr. Johnson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

OTHERS PRESENT: general public; staff; administrators; news media

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mrs. Lambert called the November 18, 2015, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:04 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Quamme led the Board and the public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was taken for the people in Paris.

Dr. Garcia served as the moderator for the election of the Board of Education Chair.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chair of the Windham Board of Education

Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that Mrs. Osuba be nominated as Chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Motion by Mr. Quamme, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that Mrs. Lambert be nominated as Chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Mr. Quamme spoke on behalf of Mrs. Lambert's nomination for Chair, and said that the students, the faculty, the staff, the parents and the community are Mrs. Lambert's full-time job as the Chair of the Board of Education, and she is always available to assist in any way that she can. He asked that Board members vote for dedication and not for political affiliation.

Motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that nominations for Chair be closed. Unanimous
On the motion nominating Mrs. Osuba for Chair:

Aye: Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez, Mrs. Osuba
Mrs. Osuba is the Chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Chair Mrs. Osuba continued the election process for the Vice-Chair and the Secretary.

Vice-Chair of the Windham Board of Education

Motion by Mr. Flores-Alvarez, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that Dr. Sewall be nominated as Vice-Chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that Mr. French be nominated as Vice-Chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Mrs. Lambert spoke on behalf of Mr. French's nomination for Vice-Chair, and said that he has been a dedicated member of the Board of Finance and the Board of Education and worked tirelessly on the Board of Education's budget last year which passed on the first vote.

Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that nominations for Vice-Chair be closed. Unanimous
On the motion nominating Dr. Sewall for Vice-Chair:

Aye: Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez, Dr. Sewall

Dr. Sewall is the Vice-chair of the Windham Board of Education.

Secretary

Motion by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. French, that Mr. Montalvo be nominated as Secretary of the Windham Board of Education.

Motion by Mr. Flores-Alvarez, seconded by Kalajian, that Dr. Gomez be nominated as Secretary of the Windham Board of Education.

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian that nominations be closed. Unanimous

On the motion nominating Mr. Montalvo for Secretary:

Aye: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. French

On the motion nominating Dr. Gomez for Secretary:

Aye: Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Gomez, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez

Dr. Gomez is the Secretary of the Windham Board of Education.

Chair Mrs. Osuba called for a five-minute recess at 7:15 PM.

Chair Mrs. Osuba reconvened the meeting at 7:22 PM.

Dr. Garcia welcomed Mr. Flores-Alvarez to the Board of Education and congratulated Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Sewall and Dr. Gomez on their election to serve as officers of the Board. She thanked Mrs. Lambert and Mr. Montalvo, as well as Mr. Desaulniers, for their service as officers of the Board.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

October 14, 2015, Minutes (Ref. 1)

October 28, 2015 Minutes (Ref. 1A)

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Dr. Sewall, that the Board of Education approve the October 14, 2015, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1) and the October 28, 2015 (Ref. 1A) workshop meeting minutes.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Superintendent's Report

Student and Staff Recognitions

Sweeney School Physical Education teacher, Mrs. Kimberly Switchenko, was recognized for receiving the national "Open Door Award" from the American Heart Association for organizing and running the Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser for the past twenty-eight years which has raised a total of \$66, 220. Mrs. Switchenko was congratulated by the Board and the Superintendent.

Ms. Abby Djan's class at Windham High School was recognized for offering Spanish classes to staff as a way to improve communication between students and teachers. Two of the students, Jessica Martinez and Ariana Valdespino, spoke about the importance of this project which is their senior capstone project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Flores, Willimantic, said that a moment of silence should be taken for people all around the world who have lost their lives, not just those in Paris. He said that the campaign to elect a diverse Board began years ago and people like Dr. Catina Caban- Owen and Ms. Yolanda Negrón should be thanked for their work. Mr. Flores said that a lot of people who work for the school system did not vote and he asked the Board to address this issue. He recommended that the Board organize a workshop to encourage people to participate in elections.

Dawn Niles, Windham, congratulated everyone who ran for office. She spoke about the Willimantic Festival of Lights Holiday Santa Parade that will take place on Main Street in Willimantic on Friday, November 27th. She said that Windham High School students will help at the event. She also spoke about the Stuff A Fire Truck event on December 12th which is taking place at Wal-Mart and at BJ's. Books and toys will be collected and then given to children at the Kramer gym on December 19th. She asked for adult volunteers to work with high school students who will be collecting the books and toys on December 12th.

Bill Powers, Windham, welcomed the Board members to their new positions of leadership. He said that Dr. Garcia has her ear to what parents and educators need in the district, and he hopes that the Board will listen to her when she requests the necessary funding to build capacity. He said that budget proposals in the past haven't been enough and it is the job of the Board of Education to propose a budget that is actually needed by the district.

Henry Crane, Willimantic, said that he is happy to see more Latinos on the Board of Education. He said that he hopes that the Board gets the data that is needed to share with State so a decision can be made about students being tested. If this is done, he said that he believes that the test load for students might be lightened.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Reports Continued

School Governance Council (SGC) Training

Dr. Garcia thanked Mr. Stover and Ms. Markey for their work to coordinate a district-wide School Governance Council training for Windham's SGCs. The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) conducted the free training on November 9, 2015, which covered a variety of topics related to the responsibilities and operating procedures of the SGCs.

Superintendent Community Relations and Outreach Update

Dr. Garcia reported that she has been meeting with teachers, parents and community members and has obtained valuable feedback. She provided a list of additional dates for upcoming forums.

Windham Early College Opportunity (ECO) Mentor Kick Off Event and Celebration

Dr. Garcia reported that students in the Windham-ECO program will participate in a celebratory event on November 19th at which time mentors will be introduced to mentees. The program will also include New London-ECO students, Quinebaug Valley Community College, Three Rivers Community College, Electric Boat, Eastern Workforce Investment Board and the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance.

Curriculum Update

Dr. Garcia provided an update on several curricula initiatives taking place in the district which include curriculum maps, benchmark/unit maps post assessment, teacher coaching and data teams.

Kelly Services and Substitute Teacher Rate of Pay

The total cost spent on Kelly Services was provided, and Dr. Garcia explained that the Board will have to take action in the future regarding the substitute teacher rate of pay in order to be in compliance with the impending wage increase for 2016.

NEASC Accreditation

Dr. Garcia reported that Windham High School will be evaluated by the NEASC visiting committee from December 6 to December 9, 2015. The Board of Education, the Superintendent and the community will be asked to meet with the committee during the visit. Dr. Garcia said that the High School's steering committee has been working very hard in preparation for this visit.

First Reading of Revised Magnet Schools/Enrollment Outside of Attendance Districts' Policy

Dr. Garcia reported that this is the first reading of the revised Magnet Schools/Enrollment Out of Attendance Districts' policy which has been reviewed by the Policy Committee and will be brought back to the Board for approval at its December 9, 2015, meeting.

First Reading of Bylaws of the Board, Office of the Vice-Chairperson Policy and Board Committees Policy

Dr. Garcia reported that revisions to Bylaws of the Board policies #9122 Office of the Vice-Chairperson and #9130 Board Committees were reviewed by the Policy Committee and will be brought back to the Board for approval at its December 9, 2015, meeting.

First Reading of 2016 Board of Education Meeting Dates Including Committee Meetings

Dr. Garcia presented the first reading of the proposed 2016 meeting dates for the Board of Education, including committee meetings. These will be brought back to the Board for approval at its December 9, 2015, meeting and then forwarded to the Town Clerk as required.

Additional Informational Items

Dr. Garcia provided the Board with requested information regarding class sizes and special master funds. The Board requested that information regarding the proposed consolidation of the Town and Board of Education finance departments be provided during executive session.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Audit Committee

Mr. French reported that the committee has not met but is looking at combining the Board and Town finance departments.

School Planning and Design Committee

Mr. Kalajian reported that the committee is beginning to bring information together to determine the education specifications and actual use of the High School building which is in preparation for the referendum next November.

Mr. Kalajian also reported that there have been some issues with treatments for the wells which are being addressed.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Osuba reported that the committee has met and reviewed the policies on tonight's agenda as first readings.

Executive Committee

Mrs. Lambert said that the committee has not met.

ACTION ITEMS

Windham Public Schools' Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 (Ref. 2)

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education approve the Windham Public Schools' Strategic Plan for 2015-2020. There was some discussion and Dr. Garcia answered questions regarding changes that have been made to the plan.

Motion is unanimously approved.

District Federal Consolidated Grant Application for ESEA Federal Grants, Title I and Title II (Ref. 3)

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board of Education approve submission of the District Federal Consolidated grant application for ESEA Federal Grants, Title I and Title II for FY 2015-2017. There was no discussion.

Motion is unanimously approved.

One-to-One Laptop/Tablet Program New Policy and Regulations (Ref. 4)

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education approve the new One-to-One Laptop/Tablet Program policy. Regulations were also developed and included with the policy. There was no discussion.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Donation to the Windham High School Performing Arts Department (Ref. 5)

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education accept, with deep gratitude, the donation of professional audio items from Dr. Tony Gasper to the Windham High School Performing Arts Department valued at an estimated amount of \$2013. Dr. Gasper was thanked for his generous donation.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Personnel (Ref. 6)

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education approve the following appointments and accept the following resignations as recommended:

Appointments

- Katemilly Alvarado, to the position of Special Education Paraprofessional at C.H.Barrows STEM Academy effective October 30, 2015, salary \$12.29 per hour. Replacement.
- Maureen Montalvo to the position of Parent Educator at Natchaug School effective October 19, 2015, salary \$15.00 per hour. Replacement.
- Lourdes Mercado to the position of 1:1 LPN at Windham High School effective October 23, 2015, salary \$24.00 per hour. New Position.
- John Pytko to the position of Assistant Head Custodian at C.H.Barrows STEM Academy effective November 9, 2015, salary \$19.50 per hour. New Position.
- Laurie Petersen to the position of Security Guard Assistant at Windham Middle School effective November 9, 2015, salary \$18.57 per hour. Replacement.

- Teri Hebert to the position of Reading Tutor at C.H.Barrows STEM Academy effective November 16, 2015, salary \$16.78 per hour. Replacement.
- Joanne Bell to the position of Reading Teacher at Windham Middle School effective date TBD, salary \$77,066. Replacement.
- Margie Farrell to the position of Secretary II at Windham High School effective October 27, 2015, salary \$15.50 per hour. Replacement.
- Caridad Bonafe to the position of Secretary II at Windham Middle School effective October 27, 2015, salary \$15.50 per hour. Replacement

Resignations

- Regina Ballentine, Math Teacher at Windham High School effective November 6, 2015.
- Margarita Carrillo Rincon, Science Teacher at Windham High School effective November 13, 2015.
- Mary Lou Smith, Science Teacher at C.H.Barrows STEM Academy effective November 27, 2015.
- Makaila McKinley, Pre-K Teacher at WECC Prospect Street effective December 23, 2015.

Mrs. Lambert said that the resignation of Barrows' science teacher, Ms. Mary Lou Smith, was disappointing and a tremendous loss for Barrows.

Motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Lambert thanked Mr. Quamme for his touching comments earlier in the meeting and said that she always tried to give her best. She said that it was disappointing that the Board had changed from a non-partisan Board to a partisan Board but she hoped that the current Executive Board would work with the other members of the Board of Education. She said that she was concerned about items that had to be added to tonight's agenda that had been previously requested. Mrs. Lambert thanked Dr. Gasper for his service and said his leaving is a great loss for the district. She said that the Soup Bowl fundraiser this evening at Windham High School raised over \$900 for the Covenant Soup Kitchen and she thanked Mr. Kalajian and Dr. Sewall for their support, as well, of tonight's fundraiser. Windham High School students designed bowls in art class and students in the culinary class made the soup that was served.

Mr. Quamme said that he would like the Board to again address the suggestion of having two public comment times during Board meetings. He asked Board members to look at having one at the beginning of the meeting and one at the end of the meeting so that people could comment on issues that came up during the meeting.

Mr. Kalajian thanked Dr. Gasper for his service and wished him good luck in his new position as a superintendent. Mr. Kalajian also commented that this is a political process and it has been his intention to work together apolitically with the entire Board. He said that he believes the Board will move forward without any problems.

Mrs. Osuba said that she is looking forward to working together with the entire Board and everyone is here to represent the district and all of the students which she will do to the best of her ability. She said that she takes her position very seriously and it has her full commitment.

Dr. Gomez said that when he was elected two years ago, it was a political process and he thinks that talking about being partisan is not appropriate.

Mrs. Osuba named Mr. Kalajian to continue in his role as the Chair for the School Planning and Design Committee.

Mrs. Osuba named Dr. Sewall as the Chair for the Finance and Audit Committee.

Mrs. Osuba has not yet named someone to Chair the Policy Committee.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 8:15 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to personnel matters and the proposed consolidation of the Town and Board finance departments.

The motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mrs. Osuba, Vice-chair Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. French, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Flores-Alvarez

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Chair Mrs. Osuba reconvened regular session at 9:20 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

**Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 9:21 P.M.
Motion is unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jaime Gomez, Secretary