



REGULAR BOE MEETING MINUTES

June 5, 2017
Seymour Middle School
7:00 pm (Awards)
7:30 pm (Regular Meeting)

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 6/13/17
TIME: 9:30pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Yashu Putorti, Chairman
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling (left at 7:33 pm)
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Cassandra Quintiliano, Student Representative
Paulina Karwowski, Student Representative

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools	Mitsuko Washington
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent	James Queen
Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations	Taylor Queen
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk	John Izzo
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator	Joe Carrafiello
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services	Chris Cummings
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS	Gretchen Robinson
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS	Taylor Robinson
Tara Yusko, Assistant Principal, SHS	Sandra Kazo
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS	Serhiy Sokhan
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS	Fred Ames
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS	Gohar Khan
Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal, BS	Madelynn Orosz
David Olechna, Principal, CLS	Missy Orosz
Leslie Sojka	Monika Fryc
Meghan Goletz and Family	Gosia Fryc
Gurman Singh	Kelly Garofalo
Jen Karpovich	Jennifer Batterton
Janet Tropeano	Terri Ames
Wendy Sebas	Fred Ames
Adam Violano	Sally Denny
Don Violano	Joe Falzone
Ann Marie Violano	Umma Minhaz

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:02 p.m. Welcome to Awards Presentation. The Board members introduced themselves.

II. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. **Awards Recognitions**

1. 2017 Distinguished Alumnus of Seymour High School – Mr. Jim Freund

B. **Retiring Staff Members – Mrs. Christine Syriac**

1. Sally Denny
2. Kathy Heimann
3. Sandra Kazo
4. Christine Syriac

C. **25 Years of Service – Mrs. Christine Syriac**

1. Janet Tropeano

D. **David A. Brumer Excellence in Education Award – Mr. Fred Stanek**

1. Cynthia Dion

E. **John J. Gallagher Memorial Athletic Award – Mr. Ed Strumello**

1. Mr. Joseph Carrafiello

F. **Vincentena Kobasa Excellence in Teaching Award – Mr. Ed Strumello**

1. Christopher Cummings

G. **Thomas J. Petruny Memorial Education and Environment Award – Mr. Yashu Putorti**

1. Miss Madelynn Orosz

H. **Recognition of Board of Education Student Representative – Mr. Yashu Putorti**

1. Cassandra Quintiliano

I. **2017-2018 Paraprofessional of the Year – Mrs. Christine Syriac**

1. Karen Heslin

J. **2017-2018 Teacher of the Year – Mrs. Christine Syriac**

1. Meghan Goletz

K. **CABE Student Leadership Award – Ms. Bernadette Hamad, Mr. Jim Freund**

1. Mia Bronson – Seymour Middle School
2. Adam Violano – Seymour Middle School
3. Cassandra Quintiliano – Seymour High School
4. Gurman Singh – Seymour High School

L. **Top 10 Students – Class of 2017 – Mr. Jim Freund**

10. Taylor Queen
9. Taylor Robinson
8. Gosia Fryc
7. Philip Sullivan
6. Umman Minhaz
5. Cassandra Quintiliano
4. Gurman Singh
3. Fred Ames
2. Serhiy Sokhan
1. Gohar Khan

BREAK: 7:48 pm

RECONVENE: 8:04 pm

III. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. **Recognitions**

1. Congratulations to Seymour High School for the great showing at the HALO Awards on May 31, 2017. Three of our students were recognized and received awards: Ejona Gjata - Best Sound Design, Brittany Kelly and Abby Andrade - Student Directing. Both of the One Act Plays were recognized as the Best Play
2. Congratulations to the Seymour Middle School Band and Glee Club. The SMS Band received a rating of Excellent and Glee Club received a rating of Superior for their performance at Trills and Thrills Competition on May 26, 2017
3. Congratulations to the Seymour High School softball team as they advance to the quarter finals against Granby!
4. Congratulations to Nicole Karwowski, 7th grader at Seymour Middle School who organized a book drive for her Silver Award Project. She was able to donate 500 books to Waterbury Hospital along with custom made bookcases.

B. Correspondence

1. Letter to Commissioner of Education Dianna R. Wentzell from Mr. Yashu Putorti, Chairman of the Seymour Board of Education notifying her of the appointment of Michael Wilson as the Seymour Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2017

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – May 1, 2017
2. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – May 16, 2017
3. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – May 25, 2017

B. Financial Management Summary – Ending May 31, 2017

C. Nutrition Services Financial Report – April, 2017

D. Staff Hiring – Certified (2017-18 School Year)

1. Amanda Lombardozzi
Special Education Teacher
Middle School
Replacing Sally Denny
2. Emily Spear
Special Education Teacher
High School
Replacing Deborah Fitch

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Kubik) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

VI. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VII. INFORMATION

A. School Activities and Recognitions

1. Bungay School
2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
3. Seymour Middle School

B. Resignations – Non Certified

1. Kimberly Farmer
 - Monitor Paraprofessional
 - Bungay School
 - Effective June 14, 2017
2. Tyler Stevens
 - Part Time Custodian
 - Middle School
 - Effective June 2, 2017

VIII. REPORTS

A. HS Student Representative Report – Cassandra Quintiliano, Paulina Karwowski

Ms. Quintiliano and Ms. Karwowski reported the following:

5/6 - Prom and Post Prom

5/17 - NHS Hypnotist Show

5/18 - Band and Choir Spring Concert

5/25 - Senior Awards Night - nearly \$64,000 of scholarship and awards distributed to our seniors

6/1 - Drama Club was recognized at the HALO awards.

Best Sound Design - Ejona Gjata for This Is A Test/Selfie

Student Directing: Brittany Kelly, Abby Andrade Best Contemporary Play: This is a Test and Selfie

6/2 - Senior Class Picnic

Baseball Team - NVL runner up

Softball Team - NVL Champions - still in the state tournament

Boys Track Team - Class M State runner up

B. Committee Meetings

1. Awards Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – April 25, 2017
2. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – May 1, 2017
3. Curriculum & Technology Meeting Minutes – May 15, 2017
Mr. Strumello commented that he felt the textbook forms submitted to the committee were done very well; they were complete and effective.
4. Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2017
Mr. Hatfield had some questions regarding forms in the Family ID Program. Ms. Yusko confirmed that any required forms are added as they become available. He also said he felt we should revisit the policy on allowing only professional agencies to film football games as he feels this would be good for additional publicity. Mr. Strumello explained that the concern was for liability; the feeling was that many of the people requesting permission to film the games would not be able to get the necessary insurance. He assured Mr. Hatfield that the committee thought long and hard about this. He said the committee also had concerns regarding the available space in the press box.

C. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments
Mr. Putorti was happy to report that after a six-month long search Mr. Michael Wilson will be our new Superintendent effective July 1, 2017, he has received the letter from the state confirming this. He reminded Board members that graduation is next week and they will be wearing robes. He asked who would be marching. Mr. Kubik, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Hatfield, and Mr. Stanek plan on attending.
2. Board Member Comments
Mr. Hatfield asked for an update on the new Superintendent's transition plan.

D. Superintendent's Report

1. Final Report (this item was moved to end of meeting)

E. New Website Review – Vonda Tencza

Mrs. Tencza said they met with several website providers and chose Finalsite. She shared a mock up of what the new Finalsite website would look like and indicated that they worked hard to get this to her in time for this meeting. She stressed that now is the time for the Board to give their input and make decisions on the design of the website. Developing the website will be a process; Mr. Dyer and Mrs. Tencza will be building the pages. We need to consider what we want to keep from the old website. The goal is to keep it simple. Now is the time to make aesthetic changes. Mr. Strumello wanted to know if the calendar will be inclusive of all schools. Mrs. Tencza said it can show each school but a decision has not yet been made. Mr. Garofolo wanted to know if each school would have a link to connect specifically to them and he wanted to know if changes would cost once the site is up and running. Mrs. Tencza said content changes would not cost us but design changes would. Mr. Garofolo asked if down the line a position would be created to maintain the website. Mrs. Tencza said there would not be a specific position created and the maintenance would be done by existing staff. The target date for the new website is September 1.

F. E-Rate Results Recap – Rick Belden

Mr. Belden explained that this report is for information only from a 3rd party provider who does a summary for the year.

IX. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Stratford Board of Education et al. v. City of Bridgeport et al. – Christine Syriac

Mrs. Syriac explained that the Board asked that she reach out to the Board attorney for direction on this matter and his opinion was distributed to Board members. Mr. Belden also checked with several local districts and found that they are not participating.

X. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Donation

Ms. Susan Cole would like to donate \$300 toward overdue lunches

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Sobieski) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the donation of \$300 from Ms. Susan Cole and direct that the Superintendent determine the placement of this donation

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

B. M-Core Credit Corporation/Eversource Energy Program Resolution

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to approve the resolution required by M-Core credit Corporation as part of the Eversource Energy Program project.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

C. Chromebooks and Computer Carts

MOTION: (Mr. Kubik/sec., Ms. Magri) to waive formal bidding for the purchase of Chromebooks and Chromebook Carts utilizing the State of Connecticut Department of Administrative Services Contract 13PSX0280 and the PEPPM 2014 consortium contract

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

D. Textbook Approval

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to adopt *Bien Dit!* textbook for grades 7-12 French and the *Realidades 2014* for grades 7-12 Spanish for the 2017-18 school year

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

E. Family ID Program

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Kubik) to approve the purchase of the "Family ID Program" for Seymour High School as recommended by the Athletic Committee

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

F. Intra District Waiver Requests – Students Currently Attending Waiver School

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Magri) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the 2017-2018 intra district transfer requests for students Juliana Alonza, Niko Alonza, Mary Mae Cust, Keira Davis, Eric DiStasi, Ayden Frey, Peyton Gallagher, Dylan Krajcik-Casey, Christian Lafayette, Alvin Li, Rocco Lia, Jordan Miller, Thomas Rodriguez-Davis, Eduardo Rodriguez, Julianna Rodriguez, Isiah Sand, Jaden Sand, Aubrey Shay-Hogan, Gracie Shay-Hogan, Jacey Sullivan, and Isabella Teal who currently attend school under an intra district waiver and therefore, have no impact to class size.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

G. Facilities Manager

Mr. Hatfield asked what the top step custodian wages were. Mr. Belden said it would be in the \$57,000 - \$58,000 range. Mr. Stanek asked how many people applied for the posting. Mrs. Syriac said 22 people applied, and 5 were interviewed after the prescreening process. The remaining applicants were not qualified for the position or declined an interview when contacted.

MOTION: to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Mr. Joseph Falzone as the Facilities Manager effective July 1, 2017

AMENDED MOTION: to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Mr. Joseph Falzone as the Facilities Manager effective July 1, 2017 and to approve the employment contract as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

H. Special Education Equipment

Mr. Garofolo wanted to know what the equipment was and Mr. Belden explained it was adaptive chairs and desks specially designed for the student who is now transferring to Shelton. He said no one in the district can use this equipment. Mr. Garofolo said there is no absolute that we won't have another student who will need this particular equipment. Mr. Belden said this was true. When asked, he said the student was at the high school level. Mr. Stanek suggested we stipulate the equipment be returned after the student graduates.

MOTION: to authorize the transfer of special education equipment to the Shelton Public Schools subject to their approval that the equipment be returned to the Seymour Public Schools when the student graduates

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

I. Board of Education Budget

Mrs. Syriac distributed the breakdown of the budget showing where the cuts were made. She explained it line by line.

MOTION: to approve the budget adjustment of \$133,030 to the 2017-18 Board of Education Budget for a total of \$32,974,308

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (moved from Section VII D)

Mrs. Syriac wanted to share a reflection with the BOE. She spoke of how deeply appreciative she was to have served as Superintendent in Seymour which a beautiful community of students, parents, educators, and colleagues. She spoke of her transition from a New Jersey girl to a Valley girl by taking jobs in Naugatuck, Beacon Falls, and then to Seymour. She mentioned closing school 34 times due to inclement weather. She spoke of some of the district accomplishments such as adopting the Connecticut Core Standards and transitioning to new curriculum supporting those standards, Seymour High School was not placed on warning in the NEASC report for curriculum (for the first time in 30 years), the graduation rate has increased, SAT scores increased, we began using MAP to measure individual student growth, developed a district data team that then expanded to building and grade level data teams, set measurable district goals for the first time and worked to have the schools align their goals with the district. In addition, the district moved from a student assistance team (SAT) model to an SRBI model. We now have two teachers at each elementary school to assist in providing supports to our students in math and reading, something we did not have in the past and the number of tutors increased in each elementary school. Smarter Balanced scores improved from year 1 to year 2. Chatfield and LoPresti merged to become one school and it is now the highest performing school in the district. The district transitioned to a new teacher/administrator evaluation and professional learning system and began a professional learning plan with the administrative team that aligned with work of the administrative team across the district. Mrs. Syriac met with district department heads on a weekly basis which allowed for increased communication across the district. She stressed the importance of parental involvement by providing incentives for teachers to invite parents into their classrooms to share what was happening in instruction; hundreds of parents participated. To meet the challenge put forth by the Board of Education when she started, Mrs. Syriac focused on improved communication by creating the Citizens Academy which invited community members to come and learn about what our schools offer and how we operate. The district has begun to merge shared services with the town which Mrs. Syriac believes is a fiscally sound decision. The Director of Technology position merged successfully, now there is the new position of a Facilities Manager, and she hopes the district continues to have future shared services. Mrs. Syriac talked about the budget process and how she worked extremely hard to present responsible budgets that continued the advancement of student learning and while still being responsible to taxpayers. She worked hard to shift things around within the district rather than present million dollar budget increases. She was proud to note that the last two budgets passed on the first referendum. No teacher lost their job because she was able to find them positions within the district when a reduction in force was necessary. Mrs. Syriac worked hard to improve her relationships with all employees in the district. Because of these improved relationships, she was able to avoid having any grievances during her tenure. Because of her willingness to work with the unions, she was able to realize a reduction in legal fees of about \$250,000 over five years. She thanked the Board for working with her as Superintendent and said she felt genuinely blessed to have all of them serve on the BOE during her tenure. She did however mention two occasions where she did not feel supported by the Board of Education. Once was in January of 2016 in reference to her salary negotiations, no details were provided since she shared her feelings with the Board at that time. She said she has always focused on not the money but the continued success of the district and on valuing and promoting integrity in our district. She believes "the students are watching" and our actions are watched by them. She expects people come to work every day and work hard so she modeled that by working hard and rarely missing work. She expects people to be nice to each other and therefore modeled kindness. She sent hundreds of personal notes to people thanking them for what they do for our children. The other time she felt unsupported by the BOE was when she learned the district will compensate the new superintendent at a higher rate than her current salary although he has never been a superintendent. She wanted them to know she does not begrudge him the salary but it is more an issue of feeling appreciated. She talked about the time when her first contract was negotiated and was told she was not experienced so her salary was less than the outgoing superintendent's. She spoke of the conscious or unconscious discrimination against women, saying she worked hard to ensure equal education for all of our students – regardless of gender, saying again that the students are watching. She said she is proud of the accomplishments in the district but spoke of the work that is still to be done including increasing the academic rigor at our middle school, look at the loss of instructional learning due to miscellaneous activities at all levels, revisit the position of a curriculum person, an assistant director of Special Education, and restructure and redistribute the current administrative work without needing to add an administrative position. She said she believes that Michael and Vonda working together will be able to make great strides. She spoke of the pain of leaving when the work is not complete and how she has loved her life in Seymour, how she loves and cares about each and every one of our students, the staff and the Board of Education members and how thankful she is for the opportunity to serve. In honor of her tradition of having a song to fit the occasion, she will have "I Will Always Love You" by Dolly Parton playing on the car radio as she drives home from this meeting.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk