

Call to Order

Board Chair, Robert Eccles, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Suffield High School Media Center. Present: Board members Robert Eccles, Sue Porcello, Mary Lou Sanborn, Mary Roy, Lori D'Ostuni, Scott Schneider, George Beiter, Michelle Zawawi and Jeanne Gee; Superintendent of Schools, Karen Baldwin; Assistant Superintendent, Jim Collin, Interim Business Manager, Phil Russell and observers.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

None

Communications

None

Staff Member and Community Recognition

Spaulding Principal, Scott Dunn, reported on beautification projects at the school during the last three months. Artist Sherrie Fitzpatrick has created murals in the two cafeterias as well as some welcoming art to the school foyer, the entrance of the music room and other areas in the hallways. A \$1500 donation for the PTO made this project possible. Also, the atrium between the cafeteria and the grade 2 wing was made into a patio/lunch area with stone pavers and plantings. Mr. Dunn recognized the donation of \$1500 of materials and labor from Matt Durgin of Perleoni and Sons Landscaping along with assistance from Spaulding teachers, Lauren Perleoni and Kris Pryce. PTO Co-President, Melissa Finnigan, stated that Northern Nurseries provided a dogwood tree as part of the beautification effort. The plantings in front of Spaulding have been pruned and the garden beds weeded. New plantings have been placed around the flagpole.

Teacher Kris Pryce reported that, in honor of retirees Angie Roman and Susie Doran, a tree and bench will be placed in the newly renovated atrium. A birdbath will be put in place in memory of former student, J.P. Daley.

Change to Agenda

**MOTION# 13-59:** Sanborn moved, Gee seconded **to move items VIII.E and VIII.F to next on the agenda.** The motion passed unanimously.

Acceptance of Donations

**MOTION #13-60:** D'Ostuni moved, Porcello seconded **to accept the donation of landscaping materials and labor (\$1500) from Perleoni and Sons Landscaping to A. Ward Spaulding School and to accept the donation of \$1500 from the PTO for cafeteria murals.** The motion passed unanimously.

### Approval of Minutes

Roy moved, Sanborn seconded to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2013 Board of Education meeting as amended to add “sponsored by the American Legion” to the high school student representative report by Ben Gee. The motion passed unanimously.

### Consent Agenda

None

### Discussion Action Items

- Update on Three Roof Projects and Large Animal Facility
  - Ed Arum, Business Consultant, reported that paperwork for the three roof projects (McAlister and SMS) has been submitted to the state. A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow with John Cloonen, Director of Public Works. The project will then go to the Permanent Building Commission. The Board will give final approval at the October 15 Board of Education meeting.
  - Haines Construction did some work on the Large Animal Facility punch list today. They are expected to return tomorrow. Ed Arum has met with Agriscience Director, Laura LaFlamme, on equipment purchasing for this project. A company has been hired to check the building roof on Thursday. We will know Thursday if the RFP for the pump house project has been revised and send out to bid.
  - A project audit for the original Suffield High School project must be completed in order to receive the final monies from the State reimbursement. Ed Arum stated that the Board could hire a private accounting firm to perform this audit instead of waiting for the state, which has a backlog of projects. Cost to hire a firm would be in the \$15,000-\$20,000 range. This cost would be refunded by [state construction grant dollars](#). Chair Eccles will inform the Board of Finance and the First Selectman so a decision can be made. The Superintendent will meet with Mr. Arum and create a memo explaining the audit/ close out process.
- Request for Authorized Leave of Absence

A request was received from John Warrington, Principal of Suffield Middle School, asking for an unpaid leave of absence for the 2014/15 school year. Mr. Warrington will pursue his life-long dream of hiking the Appalachian Trail. **MOTION #13-61:** Gee moved, Roy seconded **to approve the request from John Warrington for an unpaid leave of absence for the 2014/15 school year.** Board member Beiter asked about any costs associated with this leave. Mr. Warrington will pay his portion of health insurance monthly. Board member Gee asked if students could incorporate the trip into their learning by way of tracking the hiking process. Mr. Warrington will be blogging, using a satellite locator and have web access with which students can follow his progress. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Warrington thanked the Board for their support.
- Legislative Updates and Policy Work of the Board

The Superintendent reported that the Policy Subcommittee had met prior to this evening’s Board of Education meeting. She provided a summary of legislation enacted during the 2013 regular session of the General Assembly and how they are relevant to our improvement effort in Suffield. The Policy Subcommittee will be revising our policies

where needed to incorporate these changes. PA 13-247 incorporated the development of uniform school calendars in each RESC. This will require a committee of area Board of Education representatives. Board member D'Ostuni volunteered to represent Suffield.

- Update on Teacher Class Pages and Website Communication

Becky Osleger updated the Board on the status of implementing teacher class pages and our new website. Becky highlighted the differences between the PowerSchool Parent Portal and the new Learning Management System. We are in Phase I of launching the Learning Management System. Board members were shown the view of this system when logged in as a teacher, a parent and a student. Board member Gee stated that she was unable to find the InfoSnap link to update her children's information. She asked that a better indicator be put on the site to assist parents. The Chair asked if a pilot group of parents be created before opening accessibility to all families. This has already been done. Board member D'Ostuni asked what percentage of families did not have access to the Parent Portal at this point. Becky will get that information.

Becky outlined the differences between the new Final Site website and the old eChalk website. The new website is still being revised and information in some areas still needs to be updated. Board member Gee suggested sending a letter to parents stating that the website was still under construction and asking for their patience. The Chair stated that each school need to take ownership of their pages to be sure all the information was current. Board member Scheider suggested notifying parents as to who has ownership of the data management system and the website.

As we enter Phase 2 of the implementation of the Learning Management System, a survey will be sent to parents for feedback. Another update will be presented at a Board meeting in November.

## Reports to the Board

### Superintendent's Report

- The Superintendent reported that problems still persist with M&J Bus, Inc. Another letter will be sent to Mike Beebe, President of M&J. The Superintendent feels that we are entering the non-performance clause of the existing contract and penalties can be implemented. She will be meeting with Mr. Beebe on October 2.
- Jeff Ziplow, BlumShapiro, has met with all Business Office with the exception of the Payroll Clerk and the Technology Director. Board member Eccles suggested the Steering Committee meet to encourage BlumShapiro to share preliminary observations. The Steering Committee had set a goal of the end of October to wrap up this portion of the study.
- The Superintendent introduced Steve Moccio, who will be working with her as an intern through UConn. Steve is currently a principal in the Ellington Public Schools.

### Chair's Report

None

### Subcommittee Reports

- Policy – Mary Lou Sanborn stated that the Subcommittee had met prior to the Board of Education meeting. Discussion centered around the policy of homeschooled students and extracurricular activities. Based on feedback from the Board’s attorney and Traveler’s Insurance Company, this policy will move forward to the Board on October 15 with the recommendation not to allow students not enrolled in the district to participate in extracurricular activities. Discussion followed. Board member Gee asked about the possibility of providing a waiver for non-enrolled students whose families pay taxes in town. She also asked if there other districts that use waivers. The Chair asked how many other school districts represented by Shipman & Goodwin allow non-enrolled students to participate in extracurricular activities. The Superintendent will look into this and report back to the Board.

### Future Business

- Common Core State Standards – Implementation of Smarter Balanced Assessment
- Large Animal Facility
- Substitute Service Budget Study Beginning August 2013
- School Climate Survey – Sept-Nov. 2013
- National Honor Society – November/December 2013
- Food Service Update Budget Study beginning August 2013
- Update on Learning Management System – Teacher Class Pages
- 10 Year Capital Improvement Plan – October 2013
- Standards Based Report Cards – November 2013
- SAT/ACT/AP/PLAN Scores – November 2013
- Gender Gap Writing/SRBI
- PALS Program – 2013/13 student data and parent survey results – June 2014
- CL&P/ Power Point Update
- Academic Integrity

### Public Comment

PTO Co-President, Melissa Finnigan, asked how the Superintendent would know that bus non-compliant issues are resolved. She stated that there are parents who are now driving the students to or from school and that parents had given up on the transportation. She suggested tracking how many students are riding the busses now as compared to the beginning of the school year.

### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori D’Ostuni  
Secretary

LD/ajk