

Board of Education Regular Meeting
February 4, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:47 p.m. in the Central Office Conference Room.

Present: Board members Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, John Richter, Matt Service, Michael Sepko (arrived 5:51pm), Jamie Drzyzga, James Mol, and Debra Dudack

Executive Session

Sattan moved to go into executive session to hold a discussion concerning the possible appointment of a public officer to the Board of Education. Mol seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 7-0.

Board Chair Mercik Davis ended the executive session at 6:33 p.m.

Regular Session

The meeting resumed at 6:36 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium and began with the pledge of allegiance.

Present: Board members Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, John Richter, Matt Service, Michael Sepko, Jamie Drzyzga, James Mol, Debra Dudack; Interim Superintendent Mark Winzler, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, Business Manager Bill Hoff; and SHS Student Representatives Hannah Stack and Sarah Dubocq

Discussion/Action Item

- Possible appointment of a new Board of Education member to fill George Beiter's remaining term (2019)
MOTION #19-34: Dudack moved, Sattan seconded to appoint Brian Fry to the Board of Education to fill the vacancy. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.
Ms. Michelle Urch, Assistant Town Clerk, was present and swore Mr. Fry into office. Mr. Fry joined the Board of Education meeting.

Recognition

None

Suffield High School Student Representatives

Ms. Stack and Ms. Dubocq updated the Board on happenings at Suffield High School. Ms. Stack said the Volleyball Marathon will be in March and the senior selection wall, where seniors write where they are attending college, entering the military or workforce, is filling up. Ms. Stack is working on a senior project where she is raising money for Griffin Friends Children Cancer Fund for a boy who is battling lymphoma. Her goal is \$5000. Ms. Dubocq said freshman, sophomores and juniors are selecting their courses for next year. Ms. Dubocq is also working on an independent project to raise money for a children's hospital. Students can make a donation to wear pajamas to school next Monday.

Public Comment

Jen Bombard, 6 Whitfield Way, spoke about the decision to eliminate accelerated ELA in eighth grade while at the same time offering advanced placement (AP) classes to incoming freshman. She said these two decisions are at complete odds with one another. With the focus nation-wide on student stress, we are only adding to that by offering AP classes to freshmen. Accelerated classes provide the opportunity for students to develop the study and analytic skills needed to be successful in an AP class. She questioned the justification for adding a higher academic level to freshmen when it is being eliminated in the eighth grade.

Presentations

None

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report
 - Mr. Winzler said the majority of Central Office administration's time is focused on the budget. The administration is looking at other possibilities to increase efficiencies with the town. He is meeting regularly with the First Selectwoman
 - He said the MOU with the police department relative to access to school cameras is almost finalized.
 - Mr. Winzler stated the special education focus groups will be completed before February break. Information will then be compiled into a report by CREC.
 - He said the secondary special education supervisor's CT certification is just about finalized.
 - Attorney Jessica Ritter conducted a session on mandated reporter training for all administrators. All district staff has completed the online mandated reporter training.
- Board Chair's Report
 - Board Chair Mercik Davis said 35 senior Agriscience students presented their capstone projects on January 24.
 - She thanked Mr. McGrath for staying on through the end of the school year and welcomed Ms. Helen Donaher who will be sharing the interim director role with Mr. McGrath.
 - She encouraged Board members to attend this year's SFES gala on March 23, and noted since 2002 SFES has funded almost \$700,000 in grants to Suffield.
 - The Parks and Recreation Department is organizing a Suffield Night at the Hartford Yard Goats on July 13th. Tickets are available at the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Business Manager's Report
 - Mr. Hoff said transportation is now finalized to transport students to the youth center after school.

Consent Agenda

Dudack moved, Richter seconded to approve the following on the consent agenda:

1. January 7, 2019 regular meeting minutes
2. January 14, 2019 special meeting minutes
3. January 22, 2019 regular meeting minutes
4. January 28, 2019 special meeting minutes

All members voted in favor except Sepko, who abstained. The motion carried 8-0-1.

Discussion/Action Item

- Acceptance of a \$10,000 donation to McAlister Intermediate School and a \$10,000 donation to A. Ward Spaulding Elementary School from the estate of Laurence Mearkle
Mr. Winzler said that according to board policy, the Board must approve any donations over \$2500.

MOTION #19-35: Service moved, Sepko seconded to accept the \$10,000 donation to McAlister Intermediate School and a \$10,000 donation to A. Ward Spaulding Elementary School. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- Approval of the completion of the A. Ward Spaulding Roof Project
Mr. Hoff said the Spaulding roof project was a state project approved to be completed in two parts. In order for the town to receive payment from the State, the Board must accept the project as complete. Mr. Hoff stated the town DPW ran the projects and they are complete.
MOTION #19-36: Service moved, Sattan seconded to accept as complete the roof replacement project #139-0059 RR and roof replacement project #139-0060 RR at A. Ward Spaulding School. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- Approval of the 2019-2020 school calendar
Board Chair Mercik Davis said the Board reviewed the calendar at its January 22, 2019 Board meeting. Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi said the calendar was developed in collaboration with building administrators, cabinet members and the PDEC committee with the goal of increasing instructional time and reducing disruptions in the learning environment. This calendar also allows for consistent collaboration time by creating true half days.
MOTION #19-37: Sepko moved, Mol seconded to approve the 2019-2020 school calendar as proposed. The Board and administration discussed the state regulations for the number of school days and hours. There was discussion about forgiving of days for seniors at the end of the school year, placement of teacher work days on the calendar, and the elimination of scheduled half days for high school mid-term exams. Mid-term exams will still occur but half days are not needed to hold exams. The high school administration will ensure that students will not have too many exams scheduled on one day. All members voted in favor of the calendar. The motion carried 9-0. Ms. Zawawi suggested that if this calendar format is successful, the administration would like to present multiple year calendars for the Board's approval in the future.

- Capital Budget Approval
Mr. Hoff reviewed the 10-year capital budget plan, the 2019-2020 project priorities and descriptions of each project. He reviewed the projects requested for 2019-2020 in priority order. He stated the ACCE meeting is Thursday evening and encouraged board members to attend. Mr. Hoff answered Board member's questions relative to the capital budget plan approval process.
MOTION #19-38: Service moved, Drzyzga seconded to approve the capital budget plan as proposed. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Dudack left at 7:28; returned at 7:30pm

- December 2018 Financial Report

Mr. Hoff said the projected year end net surplus is \$774. At the same time last year, the projected year end net surplus was over \$200,000. He stated this is the tightest budget since he has been in the district.

Subcommittee Reports

January 30, 2019 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting - Subcommittee Chair Drzyzga said the subcommittee reviewed the school calendar, discussed the role of curriculum coaches and their impact in the classrooms, and reviewed policy changes for high school graduation requirements.

Adjournment

Service moved, Dudack seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of March 4, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack
Secretary