Regional School District 12
Business Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
May 1, 2017

The Business Meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. on Monday, May 1, 2017, by Vice Chair Michelle Gorra. Present were Board members: Anthony Amato, Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, Rebecca Devine, Stephanie Kolnick, Jennifer Pote, Michael Sinatra and Peter Tagley. James Hirschfield and Lisa Roush were absent. Patricia E. Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present.

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Michael Sinatra, to add item to the agenda under Old Business 7.2 Tuition Request.

VOTE: unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: Education Meeting, April 17, 2017

Field Trip (FIO): Statute of Liberty, New York on May 7, 2017 (Grades 6-12)

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Vice Chair Gorra presented a gift to Board member Rebecca Devine who has resigned because she is moving out of Bridgewater. Vice Chair Gorra informed the Board that Chairman Hirschfield is unable to attend tonight's meeting as his daughter is graduating from college. Vice Chair Gorra also commented about the district newsletter that just went out in the mail.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Cosentino recognized and thanked teachers and nurses in honor of Teacher Appreciation and Nurse Appreciation week. Dr. Cosentino reported the appointment of Amanda Shrack as paraprofessional at WPS. She also reported reductions in force due to budget cuts. They included: Kylie Hefford, elementary teacher at WPS, Nicole Martone, English teacher at SVS and Adam Nanavaty, music teacher, district wide (all effective June 30, 2017).

Dr. Cosentino reported that Karen Fildes will hold an informational event for real estate agents at Shepaug on May 16. Invitations to attend and learn more about the schools and communities in a relaxed informal setting have been mailed. Students, administrators and selectmen of the three communities will be available to discuss qualities about the schools and give tours. Information handouts will be offered for agents to take to give out to their clients.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the newsletter that was recently published and mailed out to the communities as well as the postcard to remind everyone to vote.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about Maddie Gorra's senior project. Maddie shaved her head along with her father. Maddie's entire family along with Tara Flaherty, SVS teacher, cut their hair and raised nearly $25,000 for St. Baldrick's. The event was incredible.

Dr. Cosentino reminded everyone to vote tomorrow. Valerie Andersen spoke about the recent mailing that went out from candidates degrading the Board and praised the mailing from the district.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building – Mr. Cava reported that Kaestle Boos is through the final schematics phase and are on target with funds. Mrs. Gorra asked about the schematics and changes in the design. Mr. Cava spoke on the changes and that the next step is to see what happens with the legislature expected in June. Next meeting will be on Monday, May 8th.

Education/Curriculum – Mrs. Gorra reported that the next meeting will be on May 15 and will include Teresa DeBrito to present on STEM K-12 which will include Makerspace, and College and Career from the Guidance Department.

EdAdvance – Mrs. Gorra will attend the next meeting scheduled for this week.

Facilities – Mr. Cava reported that the committee did not meet last month.

Dr. Cosentino reminded everyone that the Education Meeting on the 15th will start at 6:30 p.m. to recognize volunteers.

Finance – Mrs. Andersen reported that the committee met earlier. They went over the March 31st financials. The encumbered legal auditing and professional services for $600,000 is in the negative because of the costs for the AgSTEM which may come back in the way of grants. They also began a discussion on the tuition charges as requested. They went over the science lab cash flow and funds expended on AgSTEM. They also spoke about reconfiguration for the Region as requested by Mr. Read, First Selectman in Bridgewater. Discussion followed.

Long Range Planning – Mr. Brown reported that the committee has not met since March 8 but they will meet on May 10.

Negotiations – Mr. Cava reported that they are about to commence negotiations with the nurses bargaining unit.

Policies & Bylaws – Mrs. Gorra reported that the committee will meet in two weeks. There is one policy on the agenda tonight. The policy about the treasurer was brought to Mr. Giesen and Valerie Andersen and will go back to the committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading – Policy 5141.25 Students with Special Dietary Needs: Mrs. Gorra reminded the Board that there were no changes at the first reading.

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Rebecca Devine, to approve Policy 5141.25 Students with Special Dietary Needs for a second reading.

VOTE: unanimous.

Tuition Change: Mrs. Andersen began the discussion by giving information on the different tuitions for the REACH program, the Town of Sherman, non-resident students and staff non-resident students. Discussion centered on the revenue each town receives for tuitions, the contract with the Town of Sherman, and other towns needing solutions.

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Michael Sinatra, to reduce tuition for K-5 only to $5000.

Discussion followed which included comments on fixed costs, students' tuitioning in for next year, waiting to make a decision on tuition change until the first selectman can weigh in, Sherman contract, taxpayers in the communities, etc.

Rebecca Devine left the meeting at 8:23 p.m. and returned at 8:26 p.m.

Some felt that the issue should wait and be put on a future agenda in two weeks.

MOTION WITHDRAWN: by Alan Brown, and Michael Sinatra.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ACTION ITEMS

No action items.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Anthony Amato, to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

VOTE: unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Debby Bliven