

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

(\*Attachments are available upon request from the Superintendent's Office.)

**Regular Meeting**

**February 26, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Groton Board of Education was held on February 26, 2018, in CR 1 of the Town Hall Annex.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Kim Watson, Board Chairperson, at 6:04 p.m.

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag by Mike Whitney.

**PRESENT**

**ABSENT**

Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson  
Dr. Andrea Ackerman  
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald  
Mrs. Jane Giulini  
Mrs. Gretchen Newsome  
Mrs. Rosemary Robertson  
Mrs. Rita Volkmann  
Mrs. Lee White  
Mr. Jay Weitlauf

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Samuel Kilpatrick, Director of Buildings and Grounds  
Mr. Ken Knight, Business Manager  
Mrs. Laurie LePine, Director of Human Resources  
Miss Cindy Fan, Student Representative  
Mr. Daniel Gaiewski, Student Representative

**B. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION AND DELEGATIONS**

NONE

**C. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

1. Mr. Mike Whitney, 112 Deerfield Ridge Drive, noted that he had e-mailed the Board and he shared his concerns regarding the budget:
  - a. Will the number of teachers and aides be the same for next year?
  - b. NEA class sizes have grown and he hoped they will not increase next year.
  - c. The Alliance grant has been approved by the State for this year and he hoped it will be approved for next year.

## II. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

1. Mrs. Watson stated that she loved the idea of Task Forces; the \$600,000 from the Alliance grant is for this year and there are no guarantees for next year; she will ask the Superintendent to get together with the administrators of NEA regarding class sizes for next year.
2. Dr. Graner noted that the number of teachers and aides are scheduled to be the same for next year.

## III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

The Student Representatives reported:

- The Fitch Jazz Band placed third at the Berklee Jazz Festival in Boston on Saturday, February 10, 2018.
- Last week students had the opportunity to write a message on a heart to show their support to all the students and faculty members at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The hearts were mailed and will be hung in the school for the students and faculty members to read.
- Seniors Fundraisers:
  - Applebee's Fundraiser on Wednesday, February 28, 2018, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (open to close)
  - The Irons Restaurant Fundraiser on Thursday, March 8, 2018, from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. (close)
  - Applebee's Fundraiser on Friday, March 16, 2018, all day long from 12:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.
  - Bake Sale and Drawstring Bag Sale on Thursday, March 22, 2018, during Parent/Teacher Conferences at Fitch High School, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Fitch's annual *Mr. Falcon Pageant* will be held on Friday, March 16, 2018, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., in the Fitch High School Auditorium. Pre-sale tickets will be \$8.00. At the door tickers will be \$10.00.
- A Mental Health Summit will be held on Thursday, March 1, 2018, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Fitch High School and is open to the public.
- Spring Sports Night will be held on Monday, March 12, 2018, at 6:30 p.m., in the Fitch High School Auditorium. Any student wishing to participate in a spring sport should attend and be accompanied by a parent or guardian. All students who wish to try out or participate in a sport must sign up on Family ID.
- Starting the week of March 19<sup>th</sup> and concluding the week of April 9<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Hodge, Ms. Reising, Mr. Higgins, and Mr. Crump will be holding after school study sessions for students who are taking a Social Studies AP exam.
- Starting on Wednesday, February 28, 2018, Falcon Academy will be having SAT study sessions in the library every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
- SAT Day is on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 during school. Ninth and tenth graders will be taking the PSAT, eleventh graders will be taking the SAT, and seniors will be working on their college application process.

**III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – cont.**

- Parent/Teacher Conferences are on Thursday, March 22, 2018, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Fitch High School. Parents will be able to meet with their child's teachers to discuss concerns, course placement, performance, and any other topics they wish to discuss.

**IV. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

**1. Alliance District Update [ATTACHMENT #1]**

Dr. Graner gave an overview of the Next Generation Accountability Report for 2015-2016/2016-2017.

**2. Public Hearing re: Merritt Property Conversion**

Dr. Graner noted that the Town Council would be holding a Public Hearing on February 28, 2018 regarding the Merritt Property conversion with the Boulder Run property.

**A. REPORTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE STAFF**

**1. Assistant Superintendent Report**

- Ms. Austin gave an overview of the work of the Curriculum and Instruction Council. She noted that the different Task Forces have been meeting on a regular bases and they presented their priorities for curriculum work to the Curriculum and Instruction Council. The Curriculum work is supported by the Alliance Grant which ends at the end of June.

**2. Business Office Report [ATTACHMENT #2, 3]**

➤ **Object Code Summary**

Mr. Knight gave an overview of the Object Code Summary of the FY 18 Budget Summary dated February 9, 2018 that shows an unexpended balance of \$203,323.

➤ **Health Insurance Report**

Mr. Knight noted reviewed the Health Insurance Report dated January 31, 2018.

**3. Director of Buildings and Grounds Report**

- **Groton 2020:** Mr. Kilpatrick noted that the committee continues to meet with SLAM, the architect, and the district continues to provide them with data. The PBSC met and determined the heating system for the school and that PBSC also visited the Clinton Public Schools and was conducted on a tour by Mr. Wes Greenleaf.

**A. REPORTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE STAFF cont.**

- School Security Update: Mr. Kilpatrick noted that Groton's School Security Plan has been delivered to the State with annual changes in the plan. The School Security Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, February 28, 2018; there are concerns with safety for the new school; and there are specific State guidelines that are being followed.

**IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Finance/Facilities Committee:  
There was no report.
2. Policy Committee:  
There was no report.
3. Curriculum Committee:  
There was no report.
4. Negotiations Committee:  
There was no report.
5. LEARN:  
Mrs. Volkmann noted that the LEARN Board held several meetings. The new Superintendent of Ledyard, Jason Hartling, who talked about the implementation of a response to intervention program at the elementary level. She also noted that there are changes in the fingerprinting process and the cost. These changes were implemented by the State.
6. Town & City Councils/RTM/Board Liaison Committee:  
There was no report.
7. GEA/AGSA/BOE Liaison Committee:  
There was no report.
8. Groton Scholarship:  
There was no report.
9. CABA  
There was no report.
10. Trails Liaison:  
There was no report.
11. Ad Hoc Middle School Program Review:  
There was no report.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING BOARD MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the special meeting minutes of January 22, 23, 29, 30, and February 5 2018, are hereby accepted and approved.

2. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING GIFTS

- Groton Elks has made a donation in the amount of \$600.00 to the Food Services Department.
- Bethany Traverso has made a donation of \$150.00 for the Fitch High School Fencing Team.

**MOTION:** Robertson, White: To approve the Consent Calendar.

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

B. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action regarding approval as a second reading of policy P 2151 Recruitment and Selection of Certified and Non-Certified Employees. [ATTACHMENT #4]

**MOTION:** Weitlauf, White: To approve as a second reading of policy P 2151 Recruitment and Selection of Certified and Non-Certified Employees.

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Volkmann, Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Fitzgerald**

**NO - Newsome**

**PASSED**

2. Discussion and possible action regarding approval as a second reading of policy P 4111 Recruitment and Selection. [ATTACHMENT #5]

**MOTION:** Robertson, White: To approve as a second reading of policy P 4111 Recruitment and Selection.

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Volkmann, Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Fitzgerald**

**NO - Newsome**

**PASSED**

**B. OLD BUSINESS – cont.**

3. Discussion and possible action regarding approval as a second reading of policy P 4112.51 Employment Verification and Offer. **[ATTACHMENT #6]**

MOTION: White, Robertson: To approve as a second reading of policy P 4112.51 Employment Verification and Officer.

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Volkmann, Watson, Newsome, Giulini, Fitzgerald**

**NO - Ackerman**

**PASSED**

4. Discussion and possible action regarding approval as a second reading of policy P 5114 Suspension/Expulsion Due Process **[ATTACHMENT #7]**

MOTION: Volkmann, White: To approve as a second reading of policy P 5114 Suspension/Expulsion Due Process.

MOTION: Watson, White: To amend the motion to reinstate the deleted section regarding the Impartial Hearing Board.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Volkmann, Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Fitzgerald**

**NO - Newsome**

**PASSED**

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Volkmann, Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Fitzgerald**

**NO - Newsome**

**PASSED**

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the eighth grade Field Trip to Costa Rica, April 13 to 21, 2019. **[ATTACHMENT #8]**

MOTION: Fitzgerald, Ackerman: To approve the eighth grade Field Trip to Costa Rica, April 13 to 21, 2019.

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.**

2. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of a Fitch trip to Spain and France, April 12 to 20, 2019. **[ATTACHMENT #9]**

**MOTION:** Giulini, Volkmann: To approve a Fitch trip to Spain and France, April 12 to 20, 2019.

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

3. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the Healthy Food Certification statement for 2018-2019.

**MOTION:** Newsome, Robertson: To approve the Healthy Food Certification Statement for 2018-2019 and a vote yes to allow food exemptions.

**MOTION:** Watson, Robertson: To amend the motion to approve the Healthy Food Certification Statement for 2018-2019 and the approval to allow food exemptions.

**VOTE OF AMENDMENT:**

**PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY**

**VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:**

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

4. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the FY 19 budget

**MOTION:** Watson, Robertson: To approve the FY 19 budget in the amount of \$77,984,554 (1.98% increase).

**MOTION:** Weitlauf, White: To approve the FY 19 budget in the amount of \$78,317,747 (2.42% increase).

**YES – Weitlauf, Robertson, White, Ackerman, Giulini,  
Newsome, Fitzgerald**

**NO – Volkmann, Watson**

**PASSED**

5. Discussion and possible action regarding the schedule of COW meetings.

This item was tabled.

**C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.**

6. Discussion and possible action regarding the transportation contract extension (anticipating to be in Executive Session).

**VI. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS**

**A. LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMENTS**

1. Mr. Weitlauf noted that he received an e-mail from a parent with concerns with the function of Powerschool.
2. Mrs. Robertson noted her attendance at a GASP meeting and that she will attend the Sensible Gun Legislation tomorrow.
3. Mrs. White noted that she attended the Fitch Play, *The Boy with the Striped Pajamas*, and the NEA Arts Festival.
4. Mrs. Volkmann noted the NEA Arts Festival and the Arts Show March 1 through 31, 2018 at the Mystic Seaport.
5. Mrs. Fitzgerald noted the same e-mails that other Board members received.
6. Mrs. Newsome noted that some NEA teachers had shared that they could not complain publicly.
7. Mrs. Giulini noted the NEA Arts Festival where her grandchildren attend.
8. Dr. Ackerman noted that she attended the PBSC meeting and that she received an e-mail regarding someone wanting a yearbook from 1987.
9. Mrs. Robertson noted that she has set up with her gym the bottle recycling at CB and that she is expanding the fundraiser for the trip.
10. Mr. Weitlauf noted that he attended the GASP meeting today and a question came up regarding advertising. He also noted his attendance at the NEA Celebration of the Arts.
11. Mrs. Watson noted e-mails regarding transportation and bus stops; e-mail from Mike Whitney and RTM re: land use; she attended the Teachers' College activity at MM; and that she has been asked to participate in Read Across America on Friday.

**VII. ADVANCE PLANNING**

**A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items**

As noted in the agenda.

**B. Suggested Agenda Items**

NONE



**VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Watson, Volkmann: To go into Executive Session at 8:35 p.m. for the purpose of discussing of Adult Education registration and to invite Dr. Graner to attend.

**PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY**

An Adult Education registration was discussed. No action was taken.

**MOTION:** Ackerman, Robertson: To return to Open Session at 8:40 p.m.

**PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY**

**MOTION:** Watson, Volkmann: To approve a sixteen (16) year-old student to attend Adult Education.

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Ackerman, Weitlauf: To adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**