

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MINUTES**  
**(EDUCATION SESSION)**  
**June 25, 2019**

*A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on June 25, 2019 in the Board Room at Central Office. Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Gerry Matthews, Eileen Blewett, Peter Sonski, Sue Williams, Joel D'Angelo, Maura Wallin, Eric Couture, Suzanne Sack, and Joanne Nesti*

**Members Absent:** *Brenda Buzzi & Kathleen Zandi*

**Also Present:** *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Director of Finance, Martha Vaughn, Director of IT for RSD17, John Mercier, and Board Clerk, Jamie Sciascia*

**Visitors:** *Approximately 6*

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:** *Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

*Superintendent Thiery, on behalf of the Board of Education and RSD17, gave his sincerest condolences to the Proto Family for the passing of their son, Nick Proto, which happened over the weekend. Superintendent Thiery asked for a moment of silence for Nick Proto and his family. He stated how we will continue to support the Community, Proto Family and all the families that have been impacted by his passing.*

**Public Comment:**

*Arthur Collins of Higgamum addressed the Board. He spoke on the Budget that passed; and Town buying HES. Further, he inquired about the Haddam-Killingworth students doing Community Service hours, and spoke briefly about the transfer of the HES property and the steps to move forward in doing same.*

*Alisha McNamara of Killingworth and Samantha Harvey of Killingworth addressed the Board. They spoke about how they are on the KES Playground Committee which was formed due to the need to rebuild the playground and buy new equipment. The women spoke on the history of the playground, why it's in need of a rebuild, and the Committees ideas to replace it, while keeping in mind the costs around completing such a project. They would try as much as they could to hold raise monies as far as holding fundraisers and even hopes to try to get a Community build filled with licensed Volunteers that are working in this type of profession within the District to keep the cost down. They came to the Board to ask for help in the KES Playground Project.*

*Superintendent Thiery stated that the KES playground gets inspected every year but unfortunately it reached a point of no repair. Therefore, it is coming in front of the Board tonight for consideration. Superintendent Thiery will reach out to Principal Dennis Reed regarding this project.*

*Board Vice Chair, Suzanne Sack asked that a formal presentation be made to the Facilities Subcommittee and then the Committee come back with an update to the Board.*

Katie Packtor of Haddam addressed the Board. She spoke about a Petition that was circulated around the Town and brought forward by Niralee Patel-Lyn. This was regarding a Vote of No Confidence of Superintendent Thiery and signed by the residents of RSD17. She briefly spoke about the performance of School District Leaderships throughout the State of Connecticut and the new bills being brought to the State level regarding same. She further discussed how she feels that the Teachers within the HK Community were asked to be kept quiet regarding the restructuring, and they had fear of the backlash if they didn't listen. She feels that there is no respect for parents, students and community members and closing a school, restructuring the District without reliable data and studies is not good for the Community. At this time, Katie stated there are approximately 81 handwritten signatures and 565 elect signatures on the Petition.

**A. High School Building Project Update**

**a. Report from Public Building Committee**

Board Chair, Nesti, updated the Board. She briefly spoke about the invoice from Shea Electric.

The Board had discussions about the Change Order that was approved for time and materials being a part of the invoice amount. A question on retainage was raised and discussed by the Board. They are getting clarification next week from MJ Daly regarding same.

Board Chair Nesti, spoke briefly about the footlights.

Superintendent Thiery stated that most of the invoice is materials from Mercury and spoke briefly about how the Drama club would like to have the lighting property installed.

The Board had further discussion about what the specifications were for the Lighting Project.

**1) Approval of Invoices**

Peter Sonski **MOVED** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to approve the invoice from Shea Electric in the amount of \$129,754.32 as presented.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>	Joel D'Angelo	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>
Peter Sonski	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>	Eileen Blewett	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>
Maura Wallin	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>	Brenda Buzzi	Absent		
Eric Couture	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>	Gerry Matthews	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>
Sue Williams	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>	Kathleen Zandi	Absent		
				Joanne Nesti	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u>   </u>	A <u>   </u>

Eric Couture **MOVED** and Sue Williams **SECONDED** a motion to approve the invoice from MJ Daly as presented.

**MOTION WITHDRAWN** by Eric Couture.

**2) Proposed Change Order/Auditorium Lighting**

Suzanne Sack **MOVED** and Maura Wallin **SECONDED** a motion to approve the appropriation of \$14,420.78 to restore the foot lighting on the stage contingent that the new system can't perform the same function to the satisfaction of the Head of Technology and Drama Department.

Motion passed 6-3-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Maura Wallin	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	Absent		
Eric Couture	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Gerry Matthews	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Williams	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Zandi	Absent		
				Joanne Nesti	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>

## B. Personnel Matter: Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract\*

Eric Couture **MOVED** and Maura Wallin **SECONDED** a motion to move down in the Agenda, Item 3B, Personnel Matter: Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract set forth under Old Business.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:

Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Maura Wallin	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	Absent		
Eric Couture	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Williams	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Zandi	Absent		
				Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>

## New Business:

### A. Year-End Financial Report and Close Out

Martha Vaughn updated the Board. She passed out the summary of Financial Budget by Object and spoke briefly on that which included Health Insurance, Certified and Support Salaries and positions open/positions that weren't filled from retirees or resignations. Board Vice Chair, Suzanne Sack, spoke on ending the year at 1% and going from a self-insured policy plan to a fully insured policy plan.

Superintendent Thiery briefly spoke about Support Salaries, Certified Salaries, Interim Positions, Custodian positions and vacancies that weren't filled. Board Vice Chair, Suzanne Sack, thanked Martha Vaughn and team for managing the expenses and all her hard work.

Further, Superintendent Thiery spoke about the Board approving money from the Capital Account for things like Oven replacement, Volleyball net replacement, and the HKIS Playground. He spoke briefly about Beautification projects around the District. Board Member, Peter Sonski, asked about getting a list together with anticipated costs for things to work on in the summer.

Superintendent Thiery thanked the Board and Finance Committee for all their hard work throughout the year.

The Assessment invoice for the upcoming Year was circulated to the Board.

Peter Sonski **MOVED** and Joel D'Angelo **SECONDED** a motion that Superintendent Thiery evaluate and move all items that can be transferred from the 19/20 Capital Expenses to the 18/19 Operating Budget not to exceed \$250,000.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack YES √ NO     A      
 Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
 Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A      
 Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
 Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
 Eileen Blewett YES √ NO     A      
 Brenda Buzzi Absent  
 Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
 Kathleen Zandi Absent  
 Joanne Nesti YES √ NO     A    

Suzanne Sack **MOVED** and Eric Couture **SECONDED** a motion to approve the Assessment Invoice for the Towns of Haddam and Killingworth 19/20 as presented.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack YES √ NO     A      
 Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
 Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A      
 Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
 Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
 Eileen Blewett YES √ NO     A      
 Brenda Buzzi Absent  
 Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
 Kathleen Zandi Absent  
 Joanne Nesti YES √ NO     A    

Sue Williams **MOVED** and Gerry Matthews **SECONDED** a motion to move up Item 4E, District Copier RFP and Proposals on the Agenda set forth under New Business.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:

Suzanne Sack YES √ NO     A      
 Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
 Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A      
 Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
 Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
 Eileen Blewett YES √ NO     A      
 Brenda Buzzi Absent  
 Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
 Kathleen Zandi Absent  
 Joanne Nesti YES √ NO     A    

### E. District Copier RFP and Proposals

John Mercier updated the Board. He spoke about how the RFP went out and four companies bid on it. One of those contracts did not meet the requirements because it only offered a service contract. He spoke on the different companies that put forward their bids, prices, equipment and replacement. Our current contract ends in mid-August and his recommendation is to go with Prism. The Board raised questions on how long the company has been up and running, and the quality of the copiers. The copier supplies and materials are included in Prism's contract.

Suzanne Sack **MOVED** and Gerry Matthew **SECONDED** a motion to accept the Prism bid contract for RSD17 copiers and the sale and removal of the existing copiers to them in the amount of \$4,500.

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following votes:

Suzanne Sack YES √ NO     A      
 Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
 Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
 Eileen Blewett YES √ NO     A      
 Brenda Buzzi Absent

Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
Kathleen Zandi Absent  
Joanne Nesti YES √ NO     A    

### B. Enrollment Update and Staffing Considerations

*Superintendent Thiery spoke briefly about the Kindergarten enrollment numbers were increasing at Burr. He stated that there are 92 enrolled, with 4 sections, exceeding our standards. He recommended to the Board to add a 5<sup>th</sup> section. The Board had discussions about staffing it now and adding a section.*

*Further, the Board had conversations about using a portable at Burr and the opposition in the Community of using same. Superintendent Thiery confirmed that portables will be used as classrooms, they are larger than a regular classroom, air conditioned and the structure is attached to the building.*

*Joel D'Angelo **MOVED** and Sue Williams **SECONDED** a motion to add a Kindergarten section at Burr and staff it immediately.*

*Motion passed unanimously 6-2-1 by the following votes:*

Suzanne Sack YES     NO     A √  
Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A      
Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
Eileen Blewett YES     NO √ A      
Brenda Buzzi Absent  
Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
Kathleen Zandi Absent  
Joanne Nesti YES     NO √ A    

### C. School Calendar 2019-2020: April Break

*Superintendent Thiery updated the Board. Superintendent Thiery spoke briefly about April vacation was in line with some Districts but not in line with our neighboring Districts. He stated that some of the Districts are taking April breaks after Easter.*

### D. July Board Meeting Schedule

*Board Chair, Nesti, updated the Board. The Board had discussion about the Board meetings that are coming up in July.*

**Public Comment:** None.

*Gerry Matthews **MOVED** and Eileen Blewett **SECONDED** a motion to enter into Executive Session regarding a Personnel Matter: Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract.*

*Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:*

Suzanne Sack YES √ NO     A      
Peter Sonski YES √ NO     A      
Maura Wallin YES √ NO     A      
Eric Couture YES √ NO     A      
Sue Williams YES √ NO     A    

Joel D'Angelo YES √ NO     A      
Eileen Blewett YES √ NO     A      
Brenda Buzzi Absent  
Gerry Matthews YES √ NO     A      
Kathleen Zandi Absent  
Joanne Nesti YES √ NO     A

**B. Personnel Matter: Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract\***

**Executive Session started at 8:40 p.m.**

**Executive Session:**

*Superintendent Thiery updated the Board on his Annual Review. He presented reflection on the school year. The Board discussed Superintendent Thiery's Review and Evaluation.*

**Executive Session ended at 10:07 p.m.**

**Adjournment:**

*Board Chair, Joanne Nesti, called for the meeting to adjourn at approximately 10:07 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,*



*Jamie Sciascia  
Board Clerk*

Approval:   
*Eileen Blewett, Secretary*

Date: 8/6/19