

1. Call to Order

Dr. Seitsinger; Pro Tem, called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Members present: Cindy Luty, Cindy Dupointe, Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Megan Gallant, Sean Nugent and Dan Harris. Tom Turner was excused. Also present: Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

Dr. Seitsinger welcomed Cindy Dupointe and Megan Gallant as the newest members of the Board.

Dr. Seitsinger then requested nominations for the position of Board Chair.

Cindy Luty nominated Sean Nugent as Board Chair. Megan Gallant seconded the motion.

Dr. Nugent stated that change is healthy and encouraged anyone with an interest in serving as chair to speak up. No further nominations were made.

Moved, to appoint Sean Nugent to the position of BOE Chair. Luty/ Burke-Grabarek. Harris, Gallant, Dupointe also in favor. Nugent abstained. Motion Carries.

Dr. Nugent requested nominations for the position of Board Vice- Chair.

Dan Harris nominated Cindy Dupointe as Board Vice- Chair. Sean Nugent seconded the motion.

Sean Nugent nominated Cindy Luty as Board Vice- Chair. Megan Gallant seconded the motion.

Moved, to appoint Cindy Dupointe to the position of BOE Vice- Chair. Harris/Dupointe. Nugent, Burke-Grabarek, Luty opposed. Motion does not carry.

Moved, to appoint Cindy Luty to the position of BOE Vice- Chair. Nugent/Gallant. Burke-Grabarek, Luty also in favor. Harris and Dupointe opposed. Motion Carries.

Dr. Nugent requested nominations for the position of Board Secretary.

Cindy Luty nominated Deborah Burke-Grabarek. Sean Nugent seconded the motion.

No other nominations were made.

Moved, to appoint Deborah Burke-Grabarek to the position of Board Secretary. Luty/Nugent. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

BOE Committee Appointments:

Transportation Committee will be sunsetted.

Curriculum Committee: Cindy Luty and Deborah Burke-Grabarek

Finance Committee: Tom Turner, Sean Nugent, and Cindy Dupointe

Negotiation Committee: Situational

Policy Committee: Tom Turner and Megan Gallant

LEARN Representative: Cindy Luty

CABE Representative: Sean Nugent

Equity/Social Emotional Work Group: Cindy Luty, Cindy Dupointe and Superintendent Seitsinger

2. Public Comment
None

3. Consent Agenda
Accepted as submitted.

4. Superintendent's Reports/Updates

- a. Local Events Update

-Dr. Seitsinger recognized the multiple states that were hit by the recent tornados. The Board joins him in sending best wishes to all families and children.

-There have been 28 shootings in schools during 2021. The latest of which was in Oxford, Michigan. Our District routinely practices safety drills and both of our resident troopers are fully engaged.

-We all send positive thoughts to NFA and all other high schools forced into lockdown over security events. NFA recently dealt with two situations. Two boys were reported talking about airsoft guns. It turned out to be an innocent conversation about a weekend event with family, but was duly reported and investigated. The second NFA incident was more serious. A student brought a starter gun on campus. More info can be expected from the Head of School. Dan Harris asked if Dr. Seitsinger could connect with Norwich and Ledyard Police for an understanding of protocol etc. Dr. Seitsinger affirmed that he would.

-The CT State Board of Education has adopted temporary emergency certification endorsements for the current school year. As long as a teacher holds a valid certification they can be moved from one position to another.

-Remote Learning is not an option in CT this year by action of the state legislature. We are trying to keep more kids in school with Screen and Stay.

-Dr. Seitsinger welcomed the Town's new Fire Chief – Keith Wucik - to his post. He is a long time Preston resident and brings a great deal of experience to the position.

-Preston is hosting a COVID Vaccination event for children on Dec 14th. It is sponsored by the Uncas Health District. More than 20 families are currently signed up.

- b. Update School Calendar

-The Friday before Memorial Day will no longer be a day off from school. Preston was forced to cancel school last month due to a fire incident that caused a major power outage. The calendar will be revised and re-submitted.

c. Mind Up
-This is a new methodology and program we will be using that develops an awareness of emotions. Students will learn how to self-regulate, cope, and settle and control their own emotions. It is based on random acts of kindness towards one another. It will help children see how others see them. A lengthy discussion followed. Megan Gallant asked if she could see some of the information on Mind Up. Dr. Davis-Tomczuk said she would be happy to share it. Cindy Dupointe believes the new program can be very helpful if parents understand the connection to home. The administrative team confirmed that as the program rolls out the connection to family will occur.

d. Blue Water RV Park
-The plan is to develop the property across the street from Preston Plains Middle School to house 304 seasonal RV's from March to November. If students are on the premises during school time, Preston may need to enroll and educate them. Dr. Seitsinger wrote a letter expressing his concerns about this and encouraged the town to consider the impact to the district. There is an Inland Wetlands meeting on 12/21 and a Planning and Zoning meeting on 12/28 regarding this topic.

e. BOE Meeting Date Calendar
-Moved to approve the BOE Meeting Date Calendar as presented. Luty/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Dr. Seitsinger mentioned that First Selectwoman Sandra Allyn Gauthier is concerned about having the BOE Finance Committee meetings the same night as the BOS meetings. Dr. Nugent stated that he does not see that it will be a problem. The Director of Finance can always leave the 6pm BOE Finance meetings early on days that he/she must attend BOS meetings.

f. Re-Opening Plan Review
The current Re-open Plan was provided to the BOE.
The updated re-opening plan will be on the January BOE agenda. The community can have input as well beforehand.

5. Principal and Special Education Director Reports
Dr. Seitsinger read Ann Perzan's Special Education Director's Report. The team has reviewed birth to 3 needs. She is clarifying the General Education role in reporting and PPTs, and also the role of support staff. She is also working on transition planning for students who are 14-22 years old. The state is devising a new way to write IEPs.

Dr. Ivy Davis-Tomczuk stated that there has been a definite uptick in positive covid cases among students. Teachers are teaching to students who are present in the classroom while providing alternate work for students at home. Google classroom is being used by students with computers. Packets are being sent home to students without computers. Parent Teacher Conferences were held virtually in early December. Finding substitutes is a day to day problem. Teachers are giving up plan times, etc. to make things work. Cindy Luty expressed her appreciation to all teachers for helping to make it work each and every day.

Ray Bernier stated that one para is leaving for a different job opportunity. Other faculty are on FMLA. Adequate staffing is a difficult problem. Virtual parent teacher conferences were well attended. The school collected just under 1000.00 for CCMC on PJ Day. Tomorrow the district will observe a moment of silence for the 9th Anniversary of the tragedy at Sandy

Hook School. Screen and Stay is helping to keep students in school. Due to covid, PVMS has not been holding PBIS assemblies. Instead, they played school wide bingo. Mr. Bernier called the symbols out over the intercom, and they all played for prizes.

6. Policy Review
None

7. Expenditure/Projection Reports

Roy introduced the interim Finance Team – Bill Merrill and Vicki Schwery.

Bill reviewed the expenses and stated that we are right on track. Through November 30th we have spent 36% of our budget. Supply accounts are a bit of an issue. This is in part due to late new hires. There were a couple of unexpected building repairs, and 2 union negotiations explain the extra expenses in the legal line item.

Dr. Nugent asked that the reports come directly from Infinite Visions in the future. He does not want them to be uploaded to an excel format.

Dr. Seitsinger, Bill Merrill, and Mike House have been updating the Capital Projects report. Bill enclosed a summary in the Board packet. It is time to think about repairs or new buildings. Dr. Seitsinger and First Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier have discussed the need for a building committee to be formed. Dr. Seitsinger was directed to send a letter to the town about initiating a building/construction planning team. Dr. Seitsinger confirmed he would do so.

Moved, to direct Dr. Seitsinger and the First Selectwoman to move forward with the creation of a building committee. Nugent/Luty. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Dr. Nugent asked for a final revision of the Capital Plan at the next Board meeting. He also asked that a draft of the FY23 budget calendar be brought forward at that time.

Dr. Nugent wished everyone a happy, safe and restful holiday. Thank you to Board and staff and for Town Support.

8. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:32PM. Luty/Dupointe. Unanimous. Motion Carries.