

Minutes

Board of Education – Regular Meeting

March 1, 2021 07:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ctreg14-org.zoom.us/j/95200195555>

Meeting ID: 952 0019 5555

Phone: (646) 558-8656

* Board approved March 15th with amendment

Present:

George Bauer, Chairman
Carol Ann Brown
Michael Devine
Jonathan Kapstein
Tikva Rose
James Crocker

Absent:

N/A

Also Present:

Wayne McAllister, Acting Superintendent
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations
Patricia Paige, Board Clerk
Patrick DiSarro, Communications Specialist

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1. **Call to Order**
Board Chairman, George Bauer, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
 2. **Introductions**
Members of the board introduced themselves
 3. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. **Regular Meeting dated Tuesday, February 16, 2021**
A motion was made by Carol Ann Brown and seconded Jim Crocker to accept/approve the minutes as presented; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.
 - B. **Special Meeting dated Thursday, February 18, 2021**
A motion was made by Carol Ann Brown and seconded by Michael Devine to accept/approve the minutes as presented; all in favor; none opposed; Jonathan Kapstein abstained; motion carried.

4. **Acting Superintendent's Report**

Wayne McAllister was introduced as the Acting Superintendent

A. Covid 19 Update

Mr. McAllister provided the latest district Covid diagnoses and quarantine numbers. He publicly thanked Principal Pam Sordi and her staff, as well as Tina Tanguay, for a job well done with regards to their contact tracing efforts over the weekend.

The Pomperaug Health District has scheduled vaccination clinics for education staff on March 18th, 26th, and 27th. They will provide a link whereby individuals will be able to register on line; staff have been notified of their eligibility.

A change in athletic events was issued by the state this morning. Event capacity is now capped at 200 students, up from 100; Competitive Dancing Cheer is now allowed. Interstate competitions will begin on March 1st.

B. Region 14 Re-opening Plan

The reopening plan was reviewed during the Administrative Council meeting this past week. An overview of the plan was presented this evening by Wendy Nelson Kauffman.

The proposal calls for students returning to a full day and using a pre-pandemic schedule from last year with a slight modification on Wednesdays. Wednesdays will be a shortened day so that teachers can address remote learner needs. Remote learners currently make up 12% of the learning population across the district. Students will continue to receive grab-and-go lunches and breakfasts. Clubs and activities will continue afterschool.

Each building principal was invited to describe the all-in schedule for their specific building.

March 8th and 15th were considered as possible plan commencement dates, with the board making the final decision; the 8th was the most favorable option. The only caveat to the reopening plan is the discussion with the attorney and union, which is anticipated for Thursday.

George Bauer moved that the district transitions to the full opening plan as presented for March 8th subject to the acting superintendent's personnel review later this week; seconded by Jonathan Kapstein; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McAllister will coordinate an e-blast to parents; principals will be sending out information to their respective parents; the information will also be on the district's webpage.

5. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

The financial summary for the month was offered by Ms. Tina Tanguay. At this juncture, revenues collected are at 66.51% and expenditures at 59.31% of the budget. She continues to review and assess all student and teacher needs; the budget freeze remains in effect.

The high school renovation project is nearing completion and expected to close out by the end of April. Currently commissioning a few items; central office still needs to relocate back to the high school office space and hopes are to accomplish the move soon.

The school lunch program at the end of January indicated a loss; projections out to the end of the year still depict a loss of approximately \$248,000, albeit a bit better than previously discussed. Hoping to gain some of the loss back with the return of students.

Ed Belinsky, the Director of AgriScience, has been working hard to entice out-of-district students to attend the AgriScience Program at the NHS. Currently 79 students have been accepted and confirmed their place, lessening the initial concern for the program. A count of in-district students was not available.

The committee also worked on the budget season calendar, which will be forthcoming.

B. Public Relations

Carol Ann Brown reminded those who were interested in the cancer fundraising event that the deadline is March 10th at 7:00 p.m. She noted that the livestreaming of basketball games has been great and it was good to see parents in the stands masked and safely distanced.

There will be a FFA (Friends, Family and Alumni Association) virtual meeting tomorrow at 7:00 p.m.

She urged board members to scan through the digital backpack.

6. Board Chair's Comments.....Mr. George Bauer

A. Investigation Update

The school district's attorney, Mark Sommaruga, has apprised Mr. Bauer that *Carole Martin, has been secured as the independent consultant to perform the investigation as noted in the board's previous actions, with a goal to finish before 6 weeks, as also specified in the motion.

Attorney Mark Sommaruga will provide relative information to start the process. Mr. Kapstein requested an assignment description be provided to members. He also asked that board members be contacted, individually, and noted that 5 weeks has gone by since the initial board motion was made to secure an independent investigator.

Mr. Bauer detailed the procedure for, and purpose of, the special district meeting scheduled for Friday March 5th at 6:00 p.m. The legal notice and the meeting agenda are housed on the district website.

7. **Privilege of the floor**

E-mail Comment

Benjamin Lafferty

Prefers the 7:15 to 12:15 schedule, as well as do others; favored for those who have afterschool employment; concerned about school capacity and the spread of the virus

Raised Hand Option

John Chapman

Woodbury

Three points; Fantastic news regarding lunch schedule fix at the high school; Remote learners vs in person and what supports are in place for teachers to pull this off well; Lunch program and revenue opportunities; open up snacks to be purchased.

8. **Old Business**

A. Newsletter

The first newsletter was sent out and positive feedback has been received; the second edition will address the re-opening.

B. Updates by School/Functions Overview

Mr. Crocker indicated that this segment would be an opportunity for administrators to communicate what is happening in each of the schools; a chance to provide a timely update and celebrate noteworthy accomplishments.

It was also suggested to reinstate student representation on the board.

9. **New Business**

A. Healthy Food Certification

Mr. Bauer moved *that the Region 14 Board of Education, Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any*

fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups;

seconded by Jim Crocker; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bauer moved *that the Region 14 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met:*

- 1. the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;*
- 2. the sale is at the location of the event; and*
- 3. the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events, but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales;*

seconded by Michael Devine; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bauer moved *that the Region 14 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met:*

- 1. the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;*
- 2. the sale is at the location of the event; and*
- 3. the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the beverage sales;*

seconded by Jim Crocker; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.
(Carol Ann Brown was dropped from the Zoom meeting)

B. Horse Barn Project Landscaping

Mike Molzon, the Director of Grounds and Maintenance, indicated that the high school building project generated an immense amount of fill. The decision was made early on to keep the fill onsite to use for the approaching horse barn project. This would alleviate the need to haul it away, only to then later purchase it for new the

project; would have paid in both directions. The cost of repositioning the fill is roughly \$23,000 and would take 4-5 days.

George Bauer moved that the board accept the proposal from Paul Carlson Excavation dated 2/27/21 in the amount \$23,000; seconded by Jim Crocker; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

10. Other Business

11. Adjournment

A motion was made by Jonathan Kapstein and seconded by Jim Crocker to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



*Patricia Paige
Board Clerk*

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk