

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Board members George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, Michael Devine, Janet Morgan, Maryanne Van Aken and Pamela Zmek; Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister; Director of Instruction Sue Domanico; Principal MaryLou Torre; Board counsel Mark Sommaruga, Esq. and Attorney Doug Gillette; Board Clerk Deb Carlton; and, following R14's Finest, 2 member of the community.

1. **Call to Order**

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Bauer led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. **Student Representative**

No report.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Bauer requested a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 3, 2014. Entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the motion carried 8-0.

5. **Presentation – Region 14's Finest**

Ms. Torre was introduced and asked to present the recipients of Region 14's Finest awards from Mitchell Elementary School for this month. She called Paige Brandt, Student Council President, Emma Jacobi, Vice President, Collin Bootsma, Secretary, and Ian Fernandes, Treasurer, to the podium and spoke about their well-run campaigns for office and projects they have already been involved with to better their school.

6. **Information and Proposals**

A. Committee Reports

For Facilities/Enrollment/Transportation, Ms. Morgan reported having met last week, hearing a 5 year capital plan from Mike Molzon, and receiving updates on enrollment and transportation.

For Finance, Mr. Devine reported having also met on 11/10 and reviewing improvements to the bottom line for the school lunch program, and reviewing budget priorities. The committee is interested in hearing a presentation on team teaching at WMS.

For Public/Community Relations, Ms. Brown reported on an enjoyable CABA convention and ideas for districtwide promotion by her committee.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard devoted her report to a discussion of budget priorities. Last week, the leadership team discussed needs and resources needed to support programming and generated a large list which she will use to inform this year's budget discussions, as well as to create a multi-year budget plan. Administrators were asked to cast one vote for top priorities for the 2015-16 budget; the top 4-5 will be used in district wide planning. To coincide with this, she asked the Board for their priorities for the 2015-16 budget.

Mr. Bauer identified technology, professional development/learning, and the continuation of the strings program at NHS as his priorities, expanding on the importance of each in his comments.

Mr. Chapman stressed the need for initiatives to support classroom instruction, and using data, such as MAP testing data, to inform instruction.

Ms. Van Aken agreed with the importance of continuing to fund technology improvements and professional learning. She is interested in the relationship between curriculum development and what we are doing with all the student data we collect. She also wants to see progress with security continue, and agreed it is important to see the strings program expand to the high school.

Mr. Cosgriff agreed with the importance of educational technology; the importance of using data we collect to inform curriculum; the continuation of security enhancements; and the importance of publicizing what the students accomplish (test scores) and more PR on the topic of student achievement as a way to justify the budget.

Ms. Brown stressed commitment to the CCSS and what that means; the importance of educating the “whole child;” and the need for foreign languages in our global society.

Mr. Devine stressed the need for technology – as well as the use of it. He advocated for following the recommendations we have received based on assessments of our programs. He endorsed analyzing data and reflecting on it, informing instruction and curriculum with it. He recommends more delivery of instruction through technology, electronically. He endorsed an evaluation program which will drive the district’s ability to have the right people in place. He believes there is more to be done in the area of safety, but also in areas of bullying and substance abuse. He is also concerned about the maintenance and upkeep of our facilities, urging we stop kicking cans down the road. He also stressed making up for lost time on the building project, as the community deserves this.

Ms. Zmek stressed safety and security, too. She expressed concern over the condition of our facilities, including MES. Professional development/learning is key, she said, as is technology for our students and moving away from printed paper.

Ms. Morgan stressed that budget requests be “needs” and not just “wants.” Whatever is requested must be in the best interest of students, and there must be able to grow and not become quickly outdated. She is also concerned about facility maintenance and addressing issues while they are small, and the importance of upkeep. She urged not continuously cutting Mr. Molzon’s budget items.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard thanked the Board for its valuable input. From this feedback she will cobble the pieces together for the perfect puzzle. She stressed, again, her desire for a multi-year plan and said decisions need to be made with a multi-year approach. It’s a process, she said, and this year the Board will take on the 2015-16 budget; but, will then start to look multi-year, 3-5 years out, and marrying these plans with a capital improvement plan.

C. Board Members’ Comments

Mr. Bauer and Ms. Brown commented on a great CABA convention.

7. Privilege of the Floor

Jim Crocker, Woodbury, offered congratulations to MES for moving up in rank from 205 in 2012 up 36 slots in 2013. This, he felt, should be recognized. He congratulated the district on the acquisition of Dr. Cutaia-Leonard, who he finds refreshing with great ideas. He agrees with the idea of a 5 year plan, and was pleased she not once referred to the CCSS – a homerun. He believes the most important asset we have is our teachers, and asked the Board to consider how much time they spend not teaching but rather doing data entry, filling out forms, and so on. If it is too much time, he suggests the Board resolve to automate, eliminate, or delegate these responsibilities so teachers can teach.

8. New Business requiring Board action

Mr. Devine entered the following: *Moved that the Board of Education accept as complete Vo-Ag Grant #214-0090VA/A* Second by Ms. Van Aken. **Motion carried 8-0.**

Mr. Devine entered the following: *Moved that the Board of Education accept as complete Vo-Ag Grant #214-0091 VE* Second by Mr. Cosgriff. **Motion carried 8-0.**

Mr. Devine entered the following: *Moved that the Board of Education accept as complete Vo-Ag Grant #214-0092 VE* Second by Ms. Van Aken. **Motion carried 8-0.**

9. Future Meetings

Mr. Bauer reviewed upcoming meetings:

Monday, December 1, 2014, BoE Meeting, NHS LMC, 7:30 pm

Monday, December 15, 2014, BoE Meeting, NHS LMC, 7:30 pm

10. Executive Session

Ms. Van Aken entered the following: Move that the Board of Education enter Executive Session to discuss status strategy options regarding ongoing NHS renovation litigation; and, to consider written opinion from district counsel regarding the high school project. Seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 8-0**. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard, Mr. McAllister, and Attorneys Sommaruga and Gillette were invited to join. The Board moved to executive session at 8:19 pm.

11. Adjournment

The Board returned from executive session at 9:18 pm, taking no additional action.

Ms. Zmek entered a *motion to adjourn*.

Seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 8-0**.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Ann Brown, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 11/25/2014