

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Monday, September 15, 2014 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Interim Superintendent Frank Sippy, Ph.D.; Board members George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, Charles Cosgriff, Michael Devine, Janet Morgan, and Pamela Zmek; Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister; Director of Instruction Sue Domanico; Principals Alice Jones, MaryLou Torre and Susan Ruddock; Student Representative Stephanie Lewis; Technology Director Paul Ciotti; Board Clerk Deb Carlton; and approximately 10 community members and guests. Incoming Superintendent, Anna Cutaia-Leonard was also in the audience.

Absent: John Chapman and Maryanne Van Aken

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm. and led the Pledge of Allegiance

**II. Review of the Minutes**

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 18, 2014*. Entered by Mr. Cosgriff, and seconded by Mr. Devine, the **motion carried 6-0**.

**III. Presentation(s)/Reports to the Board**

Dr. Sippy noted that, for the first month of the school year, principals each chose a community volunteer to honor as Region 14's Finest. He called each to the podium in turn.

Ms. Ruddock honored Christine Cuccia, whose certificate read, "For your service as President of the BES PTO for two years running. For your collaborative work with parents and staff and your flexibility and openness to new ideas and ventures. Above all, thank you for your dedication, compassion, and your calm and professional approach to volunteerism."

Ms. Torre honored Ruth Fitzgerald, whose certificate read, "For your tireless work in revitalizing the MES Garden Club, including fencing in the garden and maintaining it throughout the summer. By working with families of the MES Garden Club, you were able to distribute the "fruits of the garden" all summer long. Thank you for your passion and for your kind and generous support."

Ms. Jones honored Monica Gati, whose certificate read, ""For your service as President of WMS Parents in the Middle for the past three years. Through your efforts, WMS students were able to participate in many activities, such as "One School, One Book," End of Year Celebrations, Either Grade Dances and Breakfasts, Sixth Grade Orientation, and fund raisers. We are grateful for all you have given to our school community."

Nonnewaug High School's honoree was not available to be present; however, Dr. Sippy spoke of Christine Paige who was "Recognized for your dedication as the driving force behind our Gradnite program. Thank you for the countless hours you have given for Nonnewaug High School; your volunteerism epitomizes selfless service. The energy and enthusiasm you bring are truly noteworthy, and our school is a better place because of your efforts."

**IV. Strategic Plan Status and Update**

Dr. Sippy recommended coming back to the Board closer to December with a ½ year progress report on the strategic plan and showing where the district is on each item in the action plan. Instead of a short summary here, he would like the opportunity to wait until the team can offer something more substantial.

Mr. Bauer noted that communication is part of the plan, and so invited Ms. Brown to update the Board on her work with the Public/Community Relations Committee. She spoke about efforts to provide more pictures and footage on NEAT TV, and reprinting the informational R14 brochure for distribution in the community.

**V. Privilege of the Floor**

Bill Geddes, Woodbury, began by thanking Ms. Jones for her cordiality in availing the use of her school this summer for the music program. He will have a formal statement to send to the schools directly, but wanted to announce a juried event open to students in grades 8-11, to compete for a Woodbury Music Foundation scholarship named for Ruth Ann Weaver in the amount of \$1500. He wants to alert students so they can begin working toward this. The scholarship will be for the cost of

music instruction; afterward, the winner will be asked to perform at a concert. Also, he noted that March marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Music Foundation, and there will be a celebration at Woodhall School. It is hoped that a big name performer will be part of the celebration.

Stephanie updated the Board on school activities at the start of the school year, including spirit days, book fairs and hot dog roasts at the elementary schools, field trips at the middle school, and senior day, blood drive, and a sports update for the high school.

**VI. Facilities, Finance and Operations Update**

None.

Mr. Bauer read a summary of comments from the Board's legal counsel regarding the status of ongoing litigation around the building referendum. He reviewed that the district prevailed in Waterbury Court, as it had in Litchfield, and both decisions were very clear and definitive. Even so, the plaintiffs, Tom Arras, Gary Suslavich, Sean Murphy, Karen Miller and Peter Miller, have filed an appeal of the decision with the Appellate Court. The basis for their appeal is not clear, other than their pronouncements that the court erred in its evidentiary, factual and legal rulings. The district, he said, will vigorously defend its interests, although it regrets having to spend scarce resources to defend against this latest appeal. Counsel will do whatever it takes to conclude this litigation swiftly and decisively and without undue further expense. In the meantime, the Building Committee will resume its work, and continue to take prudent measures in preparation for the project. There is no order in place preventing work on the project, and the Committee will take all measures with regard to the project as may be allowed by district and bond counsel.

**VII. Safety Update**

None.

**VIII. Other Business**

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve an out-of-state/country overnight field trip to WMS students to Quebec City, Canada, for approx. 45 students and 5 chaperones, November 8-10, 2014, via coach bus and financed by students' families.* Entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Mr. Devine, the motion carried 6-0.

The Board proposed 2 possible dates for its retreat: October 16, 2014 beginning at 6 pm, and October 27, 2014 as a backup. Mr. Bauer will contact Ms. Van Aken and Mr. Chapman to confirm their availability.

Mr. Baer requested a *motion for the Board of Education's attestation of compliance with meal pattern requirements for the 2014-2015 school year*, which was entered by Mr. Devine and seconded by Ms. Zmek.

Mr. McAllister explained that this attestation earns the district \$0.06 per meal and about \$7,000 in revenue. Our meal plans meet the requirements and the district is in compliance; therefore, he said, we might as well also receive the revenue. The **motion carried 6-0.**

**IX. Adjournment**

Ms. Morgan entered a *motion to adjourn.*

Seconded by Mr. Devine, the **motion carried 6-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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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, 9/19/14