

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, December 17, 2012 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Superintendent Jody Ian Goeler; Board members Sophiezane Bartlett, George Bauer, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, Gary Suslavich, John Swendsen, Maryanne Van Aken and Pamela Zmek; NHS student representatives Jake Dominello and Vincent Pistrutto; and Board Clerk Debra Carlton

Audience members included: Administrators Alice Jones, Andrew O'Brien, Kimberly Culkin, MaryLou Torre, Eric Bergeron and Carol Tomkalski; Region 14 faculty/staff members, including Bill Davenport, Katie Yocis, John Dominello, Joy Geraci, Joyce Brazauskas, Jean McDevitt, and Alice Pistrutto; community leaders Ed Roden, Jerry Stomski, Len Assard, Mike Devine, Bill Butterly, and Charles Bartlett; law enforcement officers Joe Roden and Cono D'elia; and board clerk Debra Carlton

I. Call to Order

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Bauer led a moment of silence for all the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. He then requested a *motion to add to the agenda a presentation and status report from Mr. Stomski and members of law enforcement*. Entered by Mr. Cosgriff and seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 8-0**.

Mr. Stomski and Officers Roden and D'elia assured the board that there would be continued police presence at all schools this week; will look as use of cameras, technology, training and cost factors, with input from the community; will look actively for grants; and is committed to working together for the long haul.

II. Presentation – Ad hoc Agriscience Committee

Mr. Bauer expressed appreciation to Mr. Goeler for his work with the committee, and introduced those members present, including Mr. Assard, Mr. Devine, Mr. Butterly, Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Davenport.

Mr. Goeler presented a power point summary of the committee's work: the charge, determining per pupil expenditure, ECS, special education, transportation, and establishing a formula transferable to past and future budgets. He presented audited figures showing the costs to local taxpayers of out-of-district agriscience students, and he looks forward to the town of Woodbury's auditor's report which should also verify the committee's findings.

Members of the committee commented in turn about their work on the committee and questions from the board and audience were taken.

III. Review of the Minutes

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of December 3, 2012, entered by Mr. Suslavich and seconded by Ms. Van Aken*. Mr. Bauer pointed out an incorrect vote tally on page 3, under New Business. The vote read 6-0-1 but should read 6-1-0.

As amended, the **motion to accept the minutes carried 7-0-1** with Ms. Zmek abstaining, not having been in attendance.

IV. Correspondence

None.

V. Report from the Chairman

Mr. Bauer pledged immediate, purposeful response to safety issues. He urged anyone struggling to ask for help as resources are available to offer help to fellow community members. He also reported on the 12/8 board retreat, at which Gary Brochu helped the board with goals and planning. He also noted an enjoyable holiday concert at NHS.

VI. Report from the Superintendent

Mr. Goeler expressed his appreciation to Mr. Stomski and Mr. Roden; both towns, he said, have been outstanding in their support of the district. He provided a timeline of events/actions from Friday to today and explained the reason for modified days on Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

VII. Privilege of the Floor (agenda specific)

John Dominello, Woodbury, is satisfied with the report from the ad hoc committee, which included town officials and was not a stacked deck. To the suggestion that numbers were backed in, that would mean that our own elected officials were doing that.

David Hartman, Woodbury, is glad to see the BoE looking at safety issues; felt Southbury showed more caution, and felt most of the surrounding towns locked down on Friday.

Taylor D'Alexander, Woodbury, similarly was appalled that more was not done in our district; other towns had much greater communication to parents; felt erring on the side of caution would have been wise; did not receive any communication from the superintendent's office until this morning.

Eileen Budrewicz, Woodbury, found the lack of communication inexcusable particularly in this age of modern technology; even to just give everyone a heads up/we have your back; asked what the short term needs are to which the superintendent referred and asked if all doors in all schools can be locked; asked what types of cameras are used, who buzzes people in if secretaries are not at their desks; asked if her children are safer today than they were on Friday; had she known WPD would be on site today, she could have prepared her children for that prior to seeing them as they arrived at school. She stressed the need for communication.

Duncan McDougal, Woodbury, felt a more appropriate response would have been, "we can always do better," not, "my principals and teachers are working on it." He seeks commitment from the superintendent.

Denis Dmitriyev, Woodbury, asked if there will be security meetings at the schools with parents; he asked about short and long term plans; he has spoken with experts in a number of countries about how they handle school security; he does not believe parents feel safe and urged meeting with them.

Jean McDevitt, Woodbury, has been employed by the district since 1995 and her children graduated from NHS. At that time, there were resource officers and parking lot monitors, who made her children feel safe.

Student rep, Jake Dominello, Woodbury, said the police were at NHS by about 10:45 am on Friday; he sensed that students felt uneasy today and he feels too many doors at NHS are unlocked and need to be locked consistently. He felt there should be an emergency fund for times like this when money is needed because nothing is more important than student safety.

Jeanne Ross, Woodbury, has 2 children at WMS and feels our children are at risk and, by middle school, they know it. She was upset to learn that all the administrators were in one building that day; communication is lacking; she didn't know what her daughter would have been told by the time she got home Friday; believes WMS and NHS are not safe buildings.

Ms. Budrewicz is disappointed that there has been no outward expressions of concern to our sister town; besides flags at half-mast, what are we doing, she asked.

Student rep Vincent Pristritto informed everyone of student efforts such as Newtown's Little Angels going on at NHS, and that \$675 has been raised in one day.

Alice Pistritto, Woodbury, told of how administrators and staff learned of what was happening on Friday, and how students were comforted at NHS as they found out, too. The staff goes above and beyond, she said, and though not everything is done right, many things are. She urged Mr. Goeler, in addition to speaking with his administrators, to also speak with his staff.

Pat DiSarro, Woodbury, directed everyone to Newtown's Little Angels on Facebook and agreed that there are people who are doing things.

Pam Gengenbach, Woodbury, told of a beautiful vigil on the Bethlehem green on Saturday to honor Dawn Hochsprung and Rachel Davino.

VIII. Report from the Director of Finance and Operations
None.

IX. Committee Reports

Policy: will meet soon

Facilities: met last week (no quorum); gas project is moving along; WMS roof issue is being looked at

Planning: met tonight and heard from a special ed consulting group; also heard from Mr. O'Brien about course offerings and graduation requirements.

Negotiations: paraprofessional mediation is scheduled for early January; teachers' contract to be acted on tonight

Building: summary given of 12/4 meeting; working on combined building/budget referendum; next meeting 1/8/13

X. Old Business
None.

XI. New Business

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to approve the following out-of-state field trips:*

- 1. NHS Cheerleaders to competition in Myrtle Beach, SC, March 14-18, 2013 for 22 students, 2 coaches, 17 parents, via coach bus transportation, funded through fund raising*
- 2. NHS Agriscience students to Ag Production Exchange trip to various locations in Texas, April 13-20, 2013 (during spring break), for 15 students and 3 chaperones (1 faculty, 2 parents), via air and then ground transportation, funded by students' families*

Mr. Cosgriff seconded the motion. Ms. Zmek expressed concern over vetting chaperones. The **motion carried 8-0**. The additional items in this category were briefly tabled.

XII. Board Announcements

Ms. Zmek mentioned that Region 14's Student Success Plan model is featured on the CSDE and RESC websites, for which she commended those involved. The district, she noted, is known statewide for excellence in implementing SSPs.

Mr. Chapman suggested a "lessons learned" opportunity come out of the Newtown tragedy. The pressing need is for security, but also communication with the community should be looked at soon, involving the community, and learning from what we experienced. Ms. Zmek and Ms. Van Aken agreed, calling for acknowledgement of what was done right and what we can improve on, and considering a town hall event to talk about these issues.

XIII. Privilege of the Floor
None.

XIV. Executive Session

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to go into executive session to discuss and possible act on the teachers' contract, and to invite Mr. Goeler to join*. Seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 7-0-1**, with Mr. Chapman recusing himself from the proceedings, as his wife is a R14 faculty member.

The board went into executive session at 10:20 pm and returned at 10:45 pm.
Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to accept the mediated agreement between the RSD#14 Board of Education and the Nonnewaug Teachers' Association for July 1, 2013-June 30, 2016*. Mr. Suslavich seconded the motion and the **motion carried 7-0**.

The third agenda item under New Business was postponed, no action taken.

XV. Adjournment

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Mr. Suslavich. **Motion carried 7-0**. The meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 10:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sophiezone Bartlett, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 12/20/12