

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, May 7, 2012 in the Nonnewaug High School Library, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Superintendent Jody Ian Goeler; Board members George Bauer, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, Gary Suslavich, John Swendsen, and Maryanne Van Aken; Director of Finance/Operations James Reese; and Board Clerk Debra Carlton

Absent: Board members Sophiezane Bartlett and Pamela Zmek

Audience members included: WMS Principal Alice Jones and Assistant Principal Eric Bergeron, Director of Special Services Kimberly Culkin, Data Administrator Jeff Turner, NHS School Nurse and Leo Advisor Bonnie Westerberg, WMS World Language Teacher and Leo Advisor Kate Peterson, Woodbury Lions Club members Ken Deschino, Chet Gage and Gary Greenstein; and about 5 additional members of the community.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Cosgriff called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Presentation – Region 14’s Finest – Woodbury Middle School

Mr. Cosgriff called upon Mr. Swendsen to present a Region 14’s Finest community volunteer certificate to Leo Club liaison Mr. Deschino, in recognition of his 15 years of service and commitment to the Leo Clubs of Woodbury Middle School and Nonnewaug High School.

Mr. Deschino gave the board a brief account of the activities in which club members participate, including the Haunted Hayride in the fall, lighting luminaries on Main Street on Christmas Eve, Antique Car show in the spring; as well as sponsoring children in foreign countries, food and supply drives locally and for the troops, and serving at a Waterbury soup kitchen several times each year. He stressed that the clubs are all about the kids and they decide what service projects they will do and where their funds will go. He said that a goal of the club is to show the kids, early on, the value of giving back to their community, as opposed to padding their resumes as high school juniors/seniors because they need some community service. He acknowledged faculty/staff advisors both past and present, including Ms. Peterson, Ms. Westerberg, Ms. Carlton, and Mr. Bergeron.

Ms. Jones commented on how appreciative the middle school is when people “come back for more” of that age group. Mr. Deschino, she said, returns year after year to work with the Leos, always smiling, always upbeat and she is grateful for him and the work he does. She values the connection with the community and the emphasis on service and that it really is all about the kids.

III. Review of the Minutes

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of April 23, 2012 as written*. Seconded by Mr. Bauer, the **motion carried 4-0-2** with Mr. Cosgriff and Mr. Swendsen abstaining.

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting of April 30, 2012 as written*. Seconded by Mr. Swendsen, the **motion carried 4-0-2** with Mr. Suslavich and Mr. Chapman abstaining.

IV. Correspondence

None.

V. Report from the Chairman

None.

VI. Report from the Superintendent

Mr. Goeler noted Teacher Appreciation Week, and School Nurses' Day tomorrow. He thanked the board and community for their efforts in arranging the series of budget coffees which had concluded on Friday. He also reviewed the frequently asked questions, and answers to them, which were prepared as the coffees progressed.

VII. Privilege of the Floor

Tom Arras, Woodbury, feels the vo-ag per student shortfall for out-of-district students is higher than what was printed in the frequently asked questions. He also believes the district would not have to pay the state back for vo-ag facilities if it were to discontinue the program, and that if the district was a sending town, it would cost less than being an accepting town. He asked for the current per pupil expenditure.

Duncan McDougal, Woodbury, is disappointed in the board, believes the budget will fail, and thinks they should give Mr. Goeler another year to see what's going on instead of trying to solve all the problems in one year. Both towns asked for a 0% increase and the board did not listen, and should know better. As for the vo-ag shortfall, he would like to see the 200+ out of district students "disappear." He would like our teachers to spend the time with "our kids."

Pam Gengenbach, Woodbury, thanked the board for "coming clean" on the vo-ag issue, finally admitting there is a problem. The first step, she said, is being honest and so she is willing to give the board time to work through this. She urged keeping parents informed and aware, and said the district should have emailed or otherwise noticed them about tomorrow's vote. Honesty with the people should continue, she said.

VIII. Report from the Director of Finance/Operations

Mr. Reese reported on the possibility of installing a solar field for energy savings. He has met with representatives of the company offering these, and CL&P may assist with funding on this device, which would pay for itself in short order. The board encouraged Mr. Reese to begin preliminary talks with Land Use, Zoning, and Inland/Wetlands commissions about this idea.

IX. Committee Reports

None. Mr. Cosgriff commended Ms. Zmek for her efforts on the budget coffees. Facilities and Finance will meet on 5/14, Bylaws on 5/15, and Planning after 6/1. Negotiations had a first meeting with secretaries today, and will meet with paraprofessionals later in the week.

X. Old Business

Mr. Turner was available for questions from the board prior to approving the 3 year technology plan, which is a statutory requirement of the State. The district's plan, which has been reviewed by Jonathan Costa from Education Connection, includes goals that are region driven with general guidelines, Mr. Turner stated. The district must look at wireless capability, 21st Century Skills, and whether to use district owned devices or let students use their own. When asked whether the support technician position referenced in the plan is an existing one, Mr. Ciotti responded that this position existed previously, was eliminated, and is again requested for a future budget. Asked what the district's plan is for making staff more comfortable with technology, Mr. Turner indicated that he is in one of the schools each day and that, from his experience, he finds that the teachers are not only comfortable, but often asking for more. Asked how utilization is gaged, since it is important not only to have access but also to use what there is access to, it was acknowledged that some teachers are more apt to use technology than others and that it's important to encourage use by all. Classroom portals were discussed, as well as various parent features. Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the Three Year Technology Plan as presented*. Seconded by Mr. Bauer, the **motion carried 6-0**.

XI. New Business

Mr. Reese reviewed that the State requires annual action on the food served to students. Past practice is to not participate in the healthy foods program as this would disallow most vending machine items, concessions, etc. Mr. Turner commented that the district currently hits most all of the standards in our food service program, with the possible exception of some cookies sold in the high school cafeteria. The State, he said, is becoming more reasonable about the conditions necessary to participate, and he hopes that in years to come the district will be able to conform to the program's requirements. Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to not participate in the CT Healthy Food Program for the 2012-2013 school year*. Seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 6-0**.

XII. Board Announcements

None.

XIII. Privilege of the Floor

None.

XIV. Executive Session

Issues related to the wording of the agenda item led to the withdrawing of a motion to enter into executive session and cancellation of the session.

XV. Adjournment

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Mr. Bauer. The **motion carried 6-0**. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

John Chapman, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 5/8/12