

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Approved Minutes of January 14, 2021
Remote/Electronic

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairman
William Oros, Vice-Chairman
Eugene Marchand, Secretary
Mary Kortmann
Barbara Paré (arrived 7:10 p.m.)
Christina Williams
Robert Williams

Also Present:

Emma Murphy, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Others Present: GHR Student, Isabel Diaz and her mother; Patrick Cox, Athletic Director; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Beth Giller, Pupil and Staff Support Services Director; William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology; Ronda Carrie, CGS Principal; Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; and Joseph Blake, CHS Principal.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

There were none.

IV. Report of Superintendent

Dr. Petrone began by thanking the Board and the administrators for their support through this trying time. He also thanked our talented teachers.

B. Paré arrived 7:10 p.m.

Dr. Petrone reported on the passing of student Olivia Cyr and previous student Jacob Provost.

Dr. Petrone reviewed information regarding other happenings taking place in the district.

A. Recognition: GHR Student Isabel Diaz - Holiday Food Drive

Dr. Petrone introduced Isabel and Ms. DeRagon who spoke about the work Isabel did on the holiday food drive for the homeless.

Isabel talked about her experience donating the food.

J. Beausoleil said how outstanding her generous spirit is.

B. Athletics Update

Mr. Cox shared an update on the winter sports season.

E. Marchand said it seems like DPH and CIAC are working more closely. He asked about parents attending games. Mr. Cox said the CIAC said their official recommendation is no spectators, so the final decision is up to the districts. Mr. Cox said it was different in the fall when sports were outside. He added that we were able to livestream all of the volleyball games, which are also available taped after via YouTube. Mr. Cox said we will probably keep the same model for the winter season.

E. Marchand said a parent he spoke to was very supportive of how Coventry handled it.

E. Marchand asked about a spring football season. Mr. Cox said any high risk sports are done [football/wrestling].

E. Marchand asked if basketball players would play in masks. Mr. Cox said yes, along with hockey, and indoor track.

B. Paré asked if there will be health screening. Mr. Cox said yes, a screening form and a temperature check will be completed each day for practice or games.

R. Williams talked about basketball players and if a player tests positive. Dr. Petrone said we would handle it like any other situation; contact tracing would need to be done and the team could have to quarantine.

J. Beausoleil asked if the schools go full remote what happens to athletics at that point. Mr. Cox said that is to be determined.

C. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Miss Murphy reported to the Board on current happenings at Coventry High School. She noted the passing of student Oliva Cyr. Emma continued saying that the second semester is about to begin.

E. Marchand asked how the students are doing at the mid-year point, with the preventative measures during the pandemic. Miss Murphy said it has become more natural. She said the students are in a routine.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

A. Accept Retirement of Patti Wilson, CNH Teacher

MOTION: Accept the retirement of Patti Wilson

By: C. Williams

Seconded: E. Marchand

Discussion: J. Beausoleil said Patti has been a long standing member of our community and a leader in our schools. She wanted to thank her for everything she has done and wishes her well in her retirement.

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VI. Report of Chairman

J. Beausoleil said it is encouraging that the crosswalk light project by the high school is progressing.

J. Beausoleil noted the tragedy of losing one of our students. She thanked Mr. Blake and the high school staff for the support they provided.

J. Beausoleil said budget season is underway and the proposed budget will be reviewed over the next few meetings.

VII. Communications

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of December 10, 2020

MOTION: To approve the minutes of December 10, 2020

By: C. Williams

Seconded: W. Oros

Result: Motion passes unanimously

IX. Old Business

A. Information: COVID-19 Update

Dr. Petrone reviewed various items related to the pandemic. He noted that the students are happy to be in school. He reviewed the numbers of remote learners since the break. He said we will keep in-person learning going as long as we can.

Dr. Petrone continued and touched on several topics, such as collaborative contact tracing, no longer formally informing parents of full- remote learners who test positive, the rollout of vaccine phases, and standardized (SBAC) testing.

C. Williams said Dr. Petrone is doing a great job and wants students in school as long as possible.

R. Williams asked about HEEC. Dr. Petrone said there have not been any positive cases at HEEC and they are at 80% enrollment.

E. Marchand asked about the percentages of remote learners mentioned. Dr. Petrone said those numbers are all inclusive of all students learning remotely.

Dr. Petrone reviewed the guidelines regarding quarantine timelines. He said the district is sticking with the 14 day timeframe. J. Beausoleil agreed stating that many companies are doing the same.

E. Marchand asked about percentages of staff out. Dr. Petrone said we have shifted our approach, due to the increase in cases, if teachers can teach remotely we are allowing that; this keeps the quality up to speed.

M. Kortmann talked about teacher vaccinations and holding the clinic in the school. Dr. Petrone said discussions have happened about using our buildings, but not the nurses.

X. New Business

A. Information: Facilities Project Update

Mr. Trudelle provided an update on facilities projects including, fire doors, wall scans, oil tank close out, security grant close out, roof project, HVAC project, new snow equipment, LED lighting, heating units at CNH gym, field irrigation, ongoing ventilation maintenance, COVID-19 supplies on hand, and disinfecting updates.

R. Williams asked about tracking through the QR codes. Mr. Trudelle said we are using them; monitored by the head custodians and himself.

R. Williams asked about the projects timing. Mr. Trudelle said most projects are happening second shift.

R. Williams asked about the second shift work. Mr. Trudelle said the contractors work closely with the head custodian.

M. Kortmann talked about the new utility vehicle and the staffing level. Mr. Trudelle said there was a reduction in several staff needed.

There was a further review of the process of the roofing project.

B. Paré said it is great that the snow removal is happening faster.

B. Information: FY22 Budget Presentation

Dr. Petrone shared the presentation of the FY22 budget proposal with the Board. [This presentation and the full budget is available on the district's website.]

J. Beausoleil asked for questions.

C. Williams asked if we are preparing to maintain a one-to-one device program and some remote learning into the next year. Dr. Petrone said yes to the one-to-one. He said he is optimistic the next year will look different, but not sure how much and we need to be prepared without over-preparing. He believes there will still be some required remote learning options

M. Kortmann said she believes it is prudent to prepare this way, especially because the vaccine for younger children will be delayed.

M. Kortmann said, based on the data she has read, she agrees with the math support addition at CGS.

B. Paré thanked Dr. Petrone for his presentation. She said she is looking for what projects are included in the budget and how they will serve our students moving forward. She said she looks forward to working with everyone on the budget.

W. Oros talked about the pension and the insurance which we don't have much control over. Dr. Petrone said, this will be an item for the Board to decide. He said the administration decided to come in at 10% for insurance.

Dr. Petrone continued and talked about the pension. Mr. Carroll said there was a new breakdown where the Board side was sorted out. He said negotiations are underway. M. Kortmann said this is calculated on a July 1 date, which can be affected as employees come and go.

E. Marchand commented that he believes this budget gives us a chance to minimize the slippage in regards to the pandemic. He said, at a quick glance, it makes a lot of sense.

J. Beausoleil said these discussions will continue.

XI. Report of Board Members

A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report - Joint Meeting with Town Finance on January 11 and Regular Fiscal Meeting of January 14, 2021

W. Oros reviewed the joint meeting with the Town. He reported that the audit was very favorable. He continued the impact of the pandemic was reviewed. He said the Microgrid was discussed. He continued and reviewed other items that were covered during the joint meeting.

E. Marchand asked about COVID-19 relief funds for the Board. J. Beausoleil said it has not been used and those rules have not been provided by the government.

The Board discussed the joint meeting in general.

W. Oros reviewed the Fiscal Committee meeting.

E. Marchand asked for information regarding the M&J payments. W. Oros said we are asking for documentation regarding this issue.

XII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: January 28, 2021