

ROMULUS CENTRAL SCHOOL
ROMULUS, NY 14541
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024
5:30 PM BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING BOE CONFERENCE ROOM
6:30 PM-AUDITORIUM

PRESENT: Rachelle Bateman-President, Tenneille Brewer-Vice President, Beth Bulkley, Erik Karlsen, Alicia Rath, Thomas Wilson and Kimberly Wolverton

OTHERS PRESENT: Suzanne Nicholson-District Clerk, Marty Rotz-Superintendent, Edward Ninestine-School District Treasurer, 30+ RFA members, 45+ Community Members, BOCES Superintendent and Staff, Legal Counsel Attorneys Stacy Tamburrino Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES) and Alison Marley (Ferrara Law Firm), FingerLakes1 video streamed the meeting.

1. OPENING AND MINUTES

1.1 Call to Order

1.1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1.1.2 Public Comment- President Bateman read a statement regarding the public comment section outlining the guidelines adhere to the Code of Conduct. All comments will be limited to 5 minutes. There were 5 community members who made public comments to the BOE. Ms. Jennifer Salone was the first to address the BOE reiterating her advocacy to be the voice of concern for members of the community and staff who continue to have fears of retaliation. She read a letter from an anonymous staff member listing concerns and highlighted being afraid to come forward to pursue complaints due to the consequences either being retaliated against or removed from current duties. The staff person was very appreciative of Ms. Salone taking a stance to bring the concerns to the BOE. Ms. Salone was unable to read the entire letter due to the 5-minute time restraint. President Bateman denied any additional time and the additional comments could be email through the District Clerk who would then distribute the email to the BOE. Next to speak was Mr. Joe Sapio- he was very upset that the Board didn't allow Ms. Salone to finish reading her letter which only solidified his strong feeling that the board doesn't want to hear the problems or concerns. Mr. Sapio read the final paragraphs of the letter which talked about how the survey taken by faculty and staff and concluded the negative opinions were ignored and were not validated. He voiced his concerns of the previous investigation and there needs to be better transparency on the Board. The community members have not attended a normal BOE meeting in a long time. There is a problem within the district and this board needs to fix it.

Mr. Chris Ryan was next to address the Board. He is very upset, shocked and saddened regarding this toxic environment the district has now where employees and even students are scared and must remain anonymous. The same concerns are being noted time and

time again with no questions being asked by the Board. Something needs to be done to investigate the concerns being raised. In his opinion, it is the right thing to do.

Mrs. Cindy Lorenzetti was the next to address the Board. She also voiced the same concerns and was upset to see that a member of the community can't make a full comment and was shut down. She requested that the Board call for a motion to vote for a full investigation so the public can see who is really interested in getting to the core of the issues within the district. She was also asked to forward her final comments to the Board clerk her time limit was met.

Lastly, Linda Mastellar addressed the Board. She acknowledged her previous involvement with the district over the years in volunteering in PTCC, Music Boosters, Sports Boosters, currently a Trustee on the RFEO. She believes in the staff and people who work at the district and although personal opinions and decisions may not always be favorable, they all try to do what is in the best interest of the children and community. The Board should focus on the oversight and let the administration do their jobs as well as the teaching staff to do theirs. Staff should utilize their union representatives to elevate any concerns that need to be addresses. She thanked the staff and non-instructional staff for their hard work and dedication to our students.

President Bateman thanked the community for their comments. Any issues or concerns need to have specific details and should be submitted following the Compliant Policy.

1.1.3 Board of Education Members

1.2 Resolution to Approve Minutes

1.2.1 Approved the Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting of January 9, 2024

Moved: Mr. Karlsen Seconded: Mrs. Brewer

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

1.3 Resolutions, Other

1.3.1 Acted upon the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following:

1.3.1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Moved: Mr. Karlsen Seconded: Mrs. Bulkley

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

1.3.1.2 Executive Session will be held at the end of the meeting- (For the Discussion of (one of the following categories): Matters that will imperil the public safety if disclosed, matters that may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer, matters about proposed, pending or current litigation, collective negotiations, particular personnel items, examination items or real property transactions as permissible under the Open Meetings Law)

1.4 Announcements and Reports

1.4.1 The next regular meeting of the Board of Education on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 6:30pm in the Board of Education Conference Room (This is the only meeting for February)

1.5 Other Items

2. **INTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

2.1 Romulus Student Forum

2.2 Resolutions

POLICY #6121-A WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION DRAFT REVISIONS ADOPTED

2.2.1 Adopted draft policy of the district policy revisions to Workplace Violence Prevention Policy #6121-A (In compliance with NYS Labor Law 27b and 12 NYCRR 800.6)

2.2.2 1st read of the revised Non-Resident Students Policy #7132

Moved: Mrs. Brewer Seconded: Mrs. Wolverton

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

2.3 Announcement and Reports

2.4 Other Items

3. REPORTS TO THE BOARD

3.1 Resolutions

3.2 Announcements and Reports

3.2.1 President's Report- President Bateman reviewed the Superintendent Search timeline for the new Superintendent. Tentative start date of July 1, 2024. The stakeholder groups to provide insight and develop a profile will include Teachers, Staff, and Community Members along with the Board. A survey will be conducted to gain feedback from the residents of the district. There will be a short time frame for the application process. The final decision will be made by the Board. Updates will be made through email, Facebook, school website, parent square and news media sites.

3.2.2 Board Members Forum-

Mrs. Rath wanted to thank Mrs. Melody Collinsworth for her countless sports pictures. She enjoys seeing all the pictures of our students from each event.

Mrs. Brewer commented on the Budget Committee meeting that was held prior to the regular meeting. It is going to be tough budget year with underfunding of the rural schools through the decrease in our foundation aid. There will be challenges ahead and she thanked Marty and Ed for updating information as it becomes available.

Mr. Karlsen added to his previous comment last meeting on our local test scores and was even more impressed when he looked in detail to a larger comparison of districts and we still scored higher. He thanked the teaching staff for their resilience to overcome the struggles of the pandemic. It impressed him when his daughter wanted to come to school when out sick, so she isn't missing out of the daily activities.

Mr. Wilson inquired about the Superintendent Search postcards. Shannon Marshall from BOCES was in the audience and stated the draft would be sent to the district tomorrow.

3.2.3 Superintendent's Report – Mr. Rotz updated the full board on the budget process and discussed the major hurdles the district faces in drafting the 2024-2025 budget. There is a current \$500K transition deficit from the Covid grant money along with a \$530K decrease in Foundation Aid from the State. There was no forewarning from the State that this decrease would be initiated. Mr. Rotz and Mr. Ninestine will be meeting with Department Supervisors to review budget figures. The school budget needs to be finalized by April 9 to remain compliant with the requirements for the May 21 vote. It was also commented that the Electric Bus mandate was not changed. Mr. Rotz stated that the proposal for the

2 new service applications were submitted, and it would cost the district \$14K for the interconnect at this time. Any new buses purchased in 2027 and beyond would need to be zero emissions with the entire fleet by 2035.

3.3 Other Items

4. **BUSINESS OFFICE REPORTS**

4.1 Resolutions

4.1.1 Acted upon the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following:

4.1.1.1 Accepted the Extra Class Monthly report for December 2023

SENECA COUNTY MOA FOR THE IMAGE CASE VOTING MACHINE USAGE AUTHORIZED

4.1.1.2 Authorized the Superintendent to sign the MOA between Seneca County Board of Elections for the use of the Image-Cast Electronic Voting Machines for the annual meeting. (Budget Vote and Election.

CREATION OF NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR POSITION AUTHORIZED

4.1.1.3 Authorized the creation of a Full-time 12-month Network Administrator position for the 2024-2025 school year.

4.1.1.4 Accepted the Treasurer's Report for December 2023

Moved: Mr. Wilson Seconded: Mrs. Rath

Discussion: Mr. Wilson requested that 4.1.1.3 Network Administrator position be put on hold due to the deficit in the upcoming budget. This position is currently being outsourced through BOCES. The creation of this position is the start of the process to have the Competitive Civil Service title on our list- the district could wait to post the positions and the board would have the final approval to appoint the position. Mr. Ninestine said that it could be a savings to the district with the position being within the district instead of being a shared position.

Approved 5/2. (Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Rath voted no)

4.2 Announcements and Reports

4.3 Other Items

5. **COMMUNICATIONS**

5.1 Resolutions

5.2 Announcements and Reports

5.3 Other Items

6. **PERSONNEL**

6.1 Resolutions in Regard to Administrators and Teachers

6.1.1 Acted upon the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following personnel issues:

JAMI THOMPSON APPROVED AS CLAY TARGET LEAGUE CO-ADVISOR

6.1.1.1 Appointed Jami Thompson as Clay Target League Co-Advisor for the 2023-2024 season at a stipend of \$750.00.

Moved: Mrs. Rath Seconded: Mrs. Wolverton

Discussion: Mrs. Rath inquired how many students were involved in this league and could this be a volunteer position. Mrs. Wolverton thought there at least 14 students and this 3rd advisor would be responsible for the paperwork, team certifications and fundraising accounting activities.

Approved unanimously 7/0.

6.2 Resolutions in Regard to Support Staff

6.3 Resolutions, Other

6.4 Announcements and Reports

6.5 Other Items

7. CURRICULUM

7.1 Resolutions

7.1.1 Acted upon the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the following placement/academic opportunities:

7.1.1.1 To approve the placement of the Committee on Special Education Minutes dated January 3, 2024 (Student Numbers #67437, #67309, #67139 and #67067); from the meeting dated January 5, 2024 (Student Numbers #67428 and #67127); from the meeting dated January 8, 2024 (Student Number #06849); from the meeting dated January 12, 2024 (Student Numbers #06602 and #06786).

7.1.1.2 Approved the placement of the Committee on Preschool Special Education from the meeting dated January 11, 2024 (Student Number #67543).

7.1.1.3 Approved the placement of the Section 504 Meeting Minutes from the meeting dated January 5, 2024 (Student Number #67302); from the meeting dated January 8, 2024 (Student Number #06781); from the meeting dated January 10, 2024 (Student Numbers #66721 and #06770).

Moved: Mrs. Rath Seconded: Mrs. Wolverton

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

7.2 Announcements and Reports

7.3 Other Items

8. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

8.1 Resolutions

8.2 Announcements and Reports

8.3 Other Items

9. TRANSPORTATION

9.1 Resolutions

9.2 Announcements and Reports

9.3 Other Items

EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – was requested by President Bateman to discuss specific personnel issue and matters on Collective Bargaining Negotiations with legal counsel at 7:48pm with no further action being taken this evening.

Moved: Mr. Wilson Seconded: Mr. Karlsen

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENT 2nd Session**- Mrs. Lorenzetti questioned why there is a second public comment section and how can someone speak during this time? Will the Board entertain additional comments? Mrs. Bateman said there would be no further public comments this evening.

Motion to adjourn the executive session and return to the open meeting at 9:55pm by Mr. Karlsen and was seconded by Mrs. Rath

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was offered to adjourn at 9:56pm

Moved: Mrs. Brewer Seconded: Mrs. Wolverton

Approved Unanimously 7/0.

13. DISTRIBUTIONS

14. NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Nicholson

District Clerk