



Seymour Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2024

Chatfield LoPresti School Cafeteria

7:00 pm

Board Members in Attendance: Christopher Champagne
Kristen Bruno
Stephan Behuniak
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Peter Kubik
Lori Nespoli
Ed Strumello

Board Members Absent: Jay Hatfield

Others in Attendance: Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent of Schools
Mary Sue Feige, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Salvator Bucci, Business Manager
Derrick Martin, Technology
Keith O'Rourke, Principal, SMS
Ed Henry, Director of Security

I. Call to Order

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Introduction

Mr. Champagne called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance and Board Member introductions.

II. Recommended Actions

A. **MOTION:** to accept the resignation of Shannon Levey as Board of Education Member effective August 22, 2024. (Kristen Bruno / Sec. Stephan Behuniak)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 7-0-0

B. **MOTION:** to fill vacancy with Peter Kubik as a Seymour Board of Education Member to serve the remainder of Shannon Levey's term effective immediately. (Kristen Harmeling / Sec. James Garofolo)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 7-0-0

Mr. Fred Stanek swore Mr. Peter Kubik into office as a Seymour Board of Education Member.

C. **MOTION:** to appoint Shannon Levey as the Seymour Board of Education Clerk effective immediately. (Stephan Behuniak / Sec. Kristen Bruno)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

III. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

Mr. Michael Kearney could not be in attendance tonight. Dr. Compton reported that he will be recognized and the next meeting in October.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Fred Stanek, 22 N Benham Rd., congratulated Shannon Levey on her position as Executive Administrative Assistant. He said she will be an asset. Mr. Stanek congratulated Peter Kubik on his board appointment.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2024
2. Policy Committee Meeting Minutes – August 19, 2024
3. Policy Committee Meeting Minutes – August 28, 2024
4. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – August 28, 2024

B. Intra-District Student Transfers

C. Seymour BOE Organizational Chart

D. Seymour High School Attendance/Tardy Officers

1. To approve the renewal of the SHS Attendance/Tardy Officers for the 2024-2025 school year as follows: Lisa Cheney, Nicole Fearon, Mike Avena, Laura Verchili, Deidre Sponheimer. \$2,000 per faculty member.

E. Michael Briggs Memorial Bench

VI. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: to remove item E from the Consent Agenda. (Kristen Harmeling / sec. Ed Strumello)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

ABSTAIN: Mr. Garofolo

MOTION PASSES: 7-0-1

Ms. Harmeling praised Michael Briggs and those that have brought forth the memorial bench for Mr. Briggs.

MOTION: to accept the memorial bench for Mr. Michael Briggs (Kristen Harmeling / sec. Kristen Bruno)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

VII. REPORTS

A. School Safety Report – Ed Henry, Director of Security

1. Mr. Henry reported on the new hire of an armed security guard, Mike Rogers. He is a retired NYPD detective with strong local connections. They have attended yearly mandatory training with the academy, still working though the mandated child trafficking and mandated reporter trainings by DCF. Working with Chief of Police on School Safety Plans, they will be sent to the state October 1, 2024. Plan for Bungay School will need to be updated once the school is built/renovated. Add MOA to October agenda.

B. Bungay Building Committee Updates – Fred Stanek

1. Mr. Stanek provided an update on the Bungay Elementary School building plan including a draft pre-referendum schedule by Antinozzi Associates Architectures and Interiors. Mr. Stanek

explained the different options: building a new school, renovating the current building, or expanding the building. The Board of Selectpersons are in negotiations to purchase land adjoining the property to create a new egress and ingress. The concepts for the design are still very preliminary. The state reimbursement amount will depend on the final building plans. Ms. Harmeling expressed concern about creating equity between the two elementary schools, and to include BOE members' input in the decisions. The board members want to discuss this more in depth and revisit this at the October meeting. Mr. Kubik stated that plans will be fluid and adjustments can be made throughout the process. First, a price estimate is needed so that it can go to referendum. Mr. Stanek stated that concepts from Planetree Inc. will be considered when designing the building to create a soothing environment.

C. Finance Committee Report

1. Mr. Champagne mentioned the Financial Summary Report and stated that Mr. Bucci would report on it in detail later in the meeting.

D. Policy Committee Report

1. Mr. Strumello stated that the committee will be proposing three policies tonight.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. BOE Surplus Funds

1. Dr. Compton stated that there is surplus in funds. She received a report on the SHS turf and it is in need of repair. It can possibly make it 3 more years, but suggests the surplus funds go towards the turf. Ms. Harmeling stated that she feels it's hard to save that money for the future when we still have great current needs; which she suggests the surplus funds should be used for those other immediate needs.

MOTION: to appear before the Board of Finance to create a fund to use towards repairs that have been pushed off due to budget constraints. (Kristen Harmeling / sec. James Garofolo)

Ms. Harmeling also stated that she believes the town should take care of the turf field as they do all the other fields at the school (i.e. softball field). Mr. Champagne and Mr. Kubik recommended that a tarp/mat be used to cover the track at the entrances to prevent cleat damage. Mr. Garofolo asked if there was a timeline for when this decision needs to be made, the answer is no. The board agreed to table this topic until Tim Connors provides a facility needs assessment and a ROM cost.

MOTION: to withdraw previous motion (Kristen Harmeling / sec. James Garofolo)

MOTION: to table this action and the surplus funds until Mr. Connors provides a needs assessment and a ROM cost. (James Garofolo / sec. Stephan Behuniak)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

B. Final Line Item

1. 2023-2024 has been consistent with what's been reported. Positive variance in energy has saved us in cost of gas. We have been controlling and monitoring costs and utilizing funds that needed to be done for the best fiscal management. Budget planning will start in October. Ms. Harmeling would like to see a year end summary with big ticket items and the money spent on those items.

MOTION: to approve the final line item Seymour Board of Education allocation for fiscal year 2023-2024. (Kristen Bruno / sec. James Garofolo)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

C. Proposed Line Item Seymour BOE Allocation for FY 24-25

1. Mr. Champagne commented on how refined the budget is with specific line items. He stated that they worked hard on properly classifying personnel into the correct categories to help obtain grants. Mr. Bucci agrees that the budget is refined.
MOTION: to approve the proposed line item Seymour Board of Education allocation for fiscal year 2024-2025. (Kristen Harmeling/ sec. Stephan Behuniak)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

D. Seymour Public School Increasing Educator Diversity

1. Dr. Compton stated that the board has to adopt the revised plan. It was approved with conditions to show a path of recruitment. They consulted with the state on this. They have done more recruitment in hiring.
MOTION: to approve and adopt the revised Seymour Public School Increasing Educator Diversity plan. (Kristen Bruno/ sec. Kristen Harmeling)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

E. Seymour Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plan

1. Dr. Compton thanks Mrs. Feige and the committee. The plan was submitted, has been approved and now needs the BOE's approval to adopt.
MOTION: to approve and adopt the revised 2024-2025 Seymour Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plan. (Kristen Harmeling/ sec. Ed Strumello)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

F. CAFE Mandated Policies

1. Policy 4000.1, 4200.1, 5145.44
MOTION: to accept and adopt the CAFE mandated policies with approval from the board's attorney including 4000.1, 4200.1, and 5154.44. (Kristen Harmeling/ sec. Ed Strumello)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0
2. Policy 3542.22
MOTION: to accept and adopt CAFE policy 3542.22 (Ed Strumello / sec. Kristen Bruno)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0
3. Policy 3542.21
MOTION: to accept and adopt CAFE policy 3542.21 (Kristen Harmeling/ sec. Pete Kubik)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

MOTION: to add item 8G to the agenda, to approve the hire of Jodi Germaine as an instructional paraprofessional at Bungey Elementary School. (Kristen Bruno / sec. Jim Garofolo)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

G. New Hire Jodi Germaine (added to agenda)

1. Dr. Compton explained that the agenda had already been submitted to the town when this new hire was sent.

MOTION: to accept the hiring of Jodi Germaine.(Kristen Bruno / sec. Kristen Harmeling)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

MOTION: to add item 8H to the agenda, to add flagman. (Stephan Behuniak / sec. Kristen Bruno)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

H. Flagman Safety Proposal (added to agenda)

2. Dr. Compton explained that the agenda had already been submitted but the Flagman is a grant through Honda and Ms. Fran Mayco has a proposal for the district. Flagman Safety is a non-profit organization. It's mission is to create greater awareness of slow down, move over laws and to educate the public. It was piloted in Fairfield last year. There is an educational, interactive presentation component. \$50,000 grant from Honda. Ms. Mayco provided handouts to BOE members. Town stakeholders (Fire Chief, Police Chief) will work collaboratively on this. The BOE supports this program and thanked Ms. Maco.

IX. INFORMATION

A. Department Chairs and coordinators

- Melissa Anelli – School Counseling
- Lisa Cheney – English
- Cathy Federowicz – Math
- Erin Scozzafava – Science
- Dave Willadsen – Social Studies

B. Department Coordinators

- Melissa Anelli – School Counseling

C. Staff Hiring – Non-Certified

1. Flor Melgar-Soto

- Instructional Paraeducator
- Chatfield Lo-Presti School
- Replacing Karen Torres

2. Laura Ercoli

- P/T Monitor Para
- Bungay Elementary School
- Replacing Olivia Deeley-Shay

3. Ayleen Gutierrez

- Instructional Paraeducator
- Seymour Middle School
- Replacing Dawn LaLlave

4. Michael Rogers

- Armed Security Officer
- Seymour High School
- New Position

5. Tonya Johnson

- Para Monitor
- Seymour High School
- Rehire (due to not having leave of absence benefit)

6. Jodi Schraier

- Tutor
- Chatfield Lo-Presti School
- New Position (Title I funds)

7. Evelyn Ramos

- Instructional Paraeducator
- Bungay Elementary School
- Replacing Shaakier Abrahams

C. Staff Hiring – Certified

1. Yenny Jimenez

- Special Education Teacher
- Seymour Middle School
- Replacing Elizabeth Kiley

2. Kristi Maler

- English Teacher
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Stephanie Ciccone

3. Casey Poklemba

- Bungay Elementary School
- Classroom Teacher
- New position (due to grade level changes)

4. Keith Weston

- Part-time/1 class CSDE Computer Technology Teacher
- Seymour High School
- New Position (Grant funds)

D. Appendix D

1. Dan Carboni

- Cross Country Coach
- Seymour Middle School
- Replacing Paul O'Connor

E. Volunteer

1. Scott Snell

- Volunteer Volleyball Coach
- Seymour Middle School

2. Curtis Williams

- Volunteer Football Coach
- Seymour High School

F. Staff Transfers – Certified

1. Kristen DeLorenzo

- Preschool Teacher to Inclusion Facilitator
- Districtwide

G. Staff Transfers – Non-Certified

1. Nick Kubik

- Head Custodian
- CLS to SHS, Replacing Victor Gonzalez

2. Erin Swan-Buhl

- o Head Custodian
- o Chatfield Lo-Presti School
- o PT Custodian/PT Food Service, Replacing Nick Kubik

3. Stephanie Delpo

- o Float Nurse/Full Time
- o Districtwide
- o Substitute nurse, ESY nurse, Past position filled

H. Staff Retirements/Resignations – Certified

1. Elizabeth Kiley

- o Special Education Teacher
- o Seymour Middle School
- o Effective August 14, 2024

2. Shane Cather

- o Spanish Teacher
- o Seymour High School
- o Effective August 23, 2024

3. Jim Freund

- o Principal
- o Seymour High School
- o Effective January 31, 2025

I. Staff Retirements/Resignations – Non-Certified

1. Victor Gonzalez

- o Head Custodian
- o Seymour High School
- o Effective October 5, 2024

2. Trisha Massaro

- o Instructional Paraeducator
- o Seymour Middle School
- o Effective August 15, 2024

5. Chelsea Troxell

- o Instructional Paraeducator
- o Seymour High School
- o Effective August 14, 2023

Mr. Strumello expressed concern about the date of retirement of the SHS principal due to it being in the middle of the school year. Dr. Compton stated that Mr. Freud has done an outstanding job. It was very difficult for him to hand in his resignation letter. She said let the process work. We will post for the position at the end of October. Ms. Harmeling was curious about how an interim principal might work since it is the middle of the school year.

X. BOE COMMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

A. BOE Comments

1. Chairman: welcomed Mr. Kubik, he is glad to have him back. He is also glad to have Mrs. Levey still at the table.
2. Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli congratulated and welcomed Mr. Kubik and Mrs. Levey.
3. Mr. Kubik: stated he is glad to be back and as always focus on the kids.

B. Superintendent's Comments

1. Meet the teacher's night is coming up. Seymour Day was a great success, well attended, good collaboration. Buddy Bench was a nice celebration. Ms. Nespoli had a vision and it was a job well done. There are 12 different locations. Dr. Compton thanked the BOE for a good evening.
2. First Selectwoman had no comments.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting (Jim Garofolo / sec. Stephan Behuniak)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli,
Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM

Submitted by:
Shannon Levey
Board Clerk