

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting  
November 21, 2011

The Webutuck Board of Education held their November 21, 2011 meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Webutuck High School Library.

The following Board members were present:

Dale Culver, President  
Joanne Boyd  
William McGhee arrived 7:42 pm  
Judy Moran  
Kristen Panzer  
John Perotti

Also Present:

James Gratto Jr., Superintendent  
Therese Trotter, District Clerk  
Kenneth Sauer, WHS Principal  
John Zenz, Athletic Director  
Brian Christofel, Student Representative  
David Shufelt  
Tara Morey  
Stefanie Giglio, Millerton News  
Laura Calabrese, PTA President  
Community Members

Absent:

Robert Trotta  
Mary Grden, School Business Manager

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Culver called the business meeting of November 21, 2011 to order at 7:35 p.m.

**PRESENTATION**

Jennifer Dowling – Berkshire Taconic Foundation

This presentation has been postponed until the December 5, 2011 Board of Education meeting.

**PRINCIPALS' REPORT**

Ken Sauer, High School Principal:

Saturday Support, Fall Sports, Financial Aid Night, Report Card Pick Up Night, High School BET

Mr. Sauer spoke about the fall sports results and that all the teams did well. He did note that the girls' field hockey team is the 2011 Sectional Champions. He pointed out that the field hockey team did not have a varsity team for approximately five years and early on this year they did not even have enough girls for a full team. Mr. Sauer reviewed Financial Aid Night and Report Card Pick Up attendance and noted both were well attended. The Guidance staff recently took a field trip to Trinity College as one of several college visits they take during in the year. Mr. Sauer reported that Honor and

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Merit roll has been announced: 17% of the student body is on merit, 18% of the student body is on honor roll and 22% are on high honor roll and the failure list was 18% of the student body. Saturday Support has taken place three times since being given approval from the Board of Education. Mr. Sauer is not seeing the numbers of students attending that he would like. He would like to adjust the start time and possibly pay a teacher an hour after school to stay with students since they are already here at school. He will discuss the possibility with Superintendent Gratto. Lastly, he noted that the High School BET did not meet in October due to the power outage. Ms. Moran questioned if there was a structured schedule in place now that shows who is staying after to help students each day. Discussion ensued.

The Board of Education requested a presentation on the High School BET goals.

**STUDENT REPORT**

Brian Christofel

Today was the first reading for the script of Anything Goes, the 2011-2012 Webutuck Musical. Teens Encouraging Athletes to be Mentors (TEAM) took their annual trip to the food pantry in Millerton where they helped pack forty-three boxes of food to be delivered during the holidays. Mr. Christofel stated that at the last meeting, Mr. Trotta asked him what Student Council does. He reported a few of the things they have done since the beginning of the year: they are fund raising for the school sign on Route 22; they set up the competitive food drive between the classes at the High School that is currently going on; they developed the Pep Rally at the beginning of the year; and lastly Student Council members babysat at Open House in the beginning of the year.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

-Mr. Shufelt addressed the Board about open negotiations with the teacher's union (WTA). He would like all negotiations held in public. He requested a letter be written to WTA asking for open negotiations throughout the negotiations.

-A parent spoke about her son who was involved in an incident at school which happened in the gym locker room.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Perotti made and Ms. Panzer seconded a motion to adjourn to executive session at 8:31 pm for the purpose of discussing the student issue with a parent.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**RECONVENE PUBLIC SESSION**

Ms. Moran made and Mrs. Boyd seconded a motion to adjourn the executive session and to reconvene the public session at 8:55 pm.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**CONSENSUS AGENDA VOTE**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion to approve the Consent Agenda (as amended). The amendment by Dale Culver called for removing D under Curriculum & Instruction. Mrs. Boyd questioned A under Curriculum and Instruction

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about the cost of the SAT course if there were not ten students. There was a suggestion to not offer the course if there were fewer than five students. The Superintendent stated that he would update the Board on attendance at the time of the offering. Discussion ensued.

A consent agenda is a single vote, which approves all asterisked items. Board policy (#008a) prohibits discussion of consent agenda items. Asterisked\* items can be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion by any one Board member.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**DISTRICT CLERK'S REPORT**

**\*A.** Approval of Minutes for November 7, 2011 Board meeting.

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded a motion to accept the minutes as submitted:

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**\*B.** Acceptance of Financial Reports as submitted:

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded a motion to accept the Financial Reports as submitted:

Treasurers Report for the month ending October.

Comprehensive Budget Status Report ending October.

Comprehensive Revenue Status Report ending October.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**C.** Delegations - None

**PERSONNEL**

**\*A. Abolishment of Support Staff Positions**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Webutuck Central District hereby abolishes the following position: one, full time (1.0 FTE) *Teaching Assistant*, effective November 22, 2011.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**\*B. Creation of Support Staff Position**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Webutuck Central School District hereby approves the creation of one, full time (1.0 FTE) *Teacher Aide*, effective November 22, 2011.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

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**\*C. Leave of Absence**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education hereby approves the following unpaid medical leave of absence:

Louis Simmons

Bus Driver

Effective: approx. Nov. 21, 2011- Jan. 3, 2012

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**A. Letter from Robert Dweck regarding our School mascot**

The Superintendent recognized the letter from Dr. Dweck regarding changing the North American emblem. Mrs. Boyd felt unless there was more community push to revisit it, that it had been addressed years ago. President Culver stated that the District did solicit input from Native American community members. He referred to Dr. Dweck's letter stating that the only opinions that matter were those from people who are activists. Mr. Culver did not agree and went on to say we had a number of meetings and input to discuss this topic; noting that there was not 100% agreement, but pointing out that is hard to get on a myriad of topics. The Board would like Mr. Gratto to draft a letter for them to review before sending out. Mrs. Moran found Mr. Dweck's letter very offensive on many levels. Discussion ensued.

**B. Update on District Leadership Team**

The Superintendent stated that the DLT had a presentation by Edline for a new website. The Technology Department is putting together a presentation for the Board of Education in February to view the information. Ms. Moran asked if there is information on the cost of the AlertNow system. The Superintendent stated that it is presently being put together.

**C. Other**

A Kildonan parent wrote a letter asking for his daughter to be able to play basketball at Webutuck. The Superintendent and President Culver stated it is clear in the New York State Education law that it cannot be done.

**D.** The Superintendent stated that our next Board meeting is scheduled for December 5 and the next meeting is four weeks away on January 9. It was discussed and decided by the Board members to add December 12 as an additional Board meeting.

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

**\*A. Approval of SAT Course**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the SAT Course which will be offered at the high school for Webutuck students at a cost of \$50.00 per student, out-of-district students will be charged \$75.00 if space allows for their attendance. The total net cost to Webutuck School District will not exceed \$500.00

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

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**\*B. Approval of the German Trip**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the trip to Germany (and Switzerland and Italy) scheduled for March 28 – April 6, 2012.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**\*C. Approval of the Senior Trip**

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the Senior Class of 2012 Class Trip to Virginia for three (3) days and two (2) nights from June 1 to June 3, 2012.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**D. Approval of Ski Club**

Mr. McGhee questioned if this will cost us anything and are we paying a chaperone? He stated that per the WTA contract if it is a Club, the District has to pay a chaperone.

President Culver stated that it is not school run therefore we do not have to pay a chaperone. Mr. McGhee also had concerns about insurance coverage for parents.

Parents have their own insurance and are not covered under the School District.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Panzer made and Mrs. Boyd seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Ski Club (with the cost of transportation calculated into the total cost per student) for the 2011-2012 school year.

Ayes 5      Nays 1      The motion carried.

Mr. McGhee was the lone dissenter.

**BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS**

**\*A. Approval of Budget Transfer**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the attached budget transfer over five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per Board resolution dated 7/5/11.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**\*B. Approval of 2012-2013 Webutuck School District Budget Development Calendar (as presented)**

Mrs. Boyd made and Ms. Moran seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, and based on NYS formula, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves the 2012-2013 Webutuck School District Budget Development Calendar (as presented).

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**C. Authorization for Filing of 2011-2012 Returned Tax Claims (Resolution distributed in Board Packet).**

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Ms. Moran made and Mrs. Boyd seconded the following motion:

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves the authorization for filing 2011-2012 returned tax claims (as listed).

Ayes    6            Nays    0            The motion carried.

**D.** President Culver stated that he will be executing a ban renewal on the \$504,000 note for the EXCEL project on November 30.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**A. Adoption of Policies 0000 and 1000**

Ms. Moran made and Mr. Perotti seconded the following motion:

Mr. McGhee questioned if the Policy Committee were fine with all of the policies. Ms. Moran stated that the Committee's intent is keeping the policies useful but basic as possible. Discussion ensued.

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves policies #0000 Series Philosophy, Goals, and Objective and #1000 Series Community Relations.

Ayes    6            Nays    0            The motion carried.

**B. First Reading of Policies #2000 series School Board Governance, and Operations, #3000 Series Administration.**

**C. Report on Budgeting in the New Normal program on November 14, 2011**

Jim Gratto, Dale Culver and Judy Moran attended the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual School Boards & Superintendent Joint Dinner last week. President Culver explained that it was supposed to provide information about how to handle the new tax cap and situations that may arise from it. School representatives from New Jersey and Massachusetts were the panel that led the discussions. President Culver felt the night was deficient on the reality of the 2% tax cap. Much time was spent on integrity and ethics and building a good relationship within communities; however, they then turned around and spoke about how to get a vote through. He stated that the District has done more to prepare than what they explained to people at the meeting. President Culver suggested we do what is right for our District. Both President Culver and Judy Moran stated that the District needs to press BOCES regarding insurance. She also explained that a useful point the speaker from Wisconsin stated was that what schools want to do is try very hard to keep your growth to as close to nothing as much as you can because sooner or later you will need to go to the taxpayers and say we need an increase and it is easier to do that when growth has been kept to a minimum. Discussion ensued.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**A.** President Culver spoke about the Webutuck Warrior monthly newsletter that recently came out. He stated it was the best one yet. It was student centered as it should be.

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**B.** President Culver suggested having a volunteer recognition night this year to acknowledge the many people who do many things for our school. The Board agreed and we will tentatively begin planning it in January.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

-John Zenz, the Athletic Director was introduced to the public. He stated that the quality of coaches that have been hired this year are excellent.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. McGhee made and Ms. Moran seconded a motion to adjourn to executive session at 9:44 pm for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person or persons.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**RECONVENE PUBLIC SESSION**

Ms. Moran made and Mrs. Boyd seconded a motion to adjourn the executive session and to reconvene the public session at 11:29 pm.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. McGhee made and Mrs. Panzer seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting of November 21, 2011 at 11:33 pm.

Ayes 6      Nays 0      The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Therese M. Trotter  
District Clerk