

Milford Board of Education Board of Education Meeting November 8, 2010

Board members present:

Dave Amendola
Tracy Casey
Suzanne DiBiase
Josip Jukic
Jack O'Connell
Gregory Oliver
Robert White

Board members absent:

Diane Kruger-Carroll
Mark Stapleton
Jay Tranquilli

Administration present:

Michael Cummings
Philip Russell
Susan Kelleher
Wendy Kopazna

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Milford Board of Education held a Regular Business Meeting on Monday, November 8, 2010, in the Board of Education Room at the Parsons Complex. Majority Leader Robert White called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

Mr. White announced that Dr. Stapleton had a work conflict and would not be in attendance. Mrs. Kruger was absent due to being ill.

II. STAFF RECOGNITION

SOS: Supplies for Our Soldiers

Mr. Cummings recognized Ms. Ferency for her efforts coordinating a collection drive for the military troops. During October, Ms. Ferency facilitated a drive for toiletries, magazines and other items for the troops overseas. Ms. Ferency is the Adult Education secretary, therefore, she outreached to the community through that connection. She collected enough items to fill 25-30 boxes of various items to be sent overseas.

Teacher of the Year

Mr. Cummings and Mr. Beinstein recognized Ms. Dory Holmes for being selected a semifinalist to the State's Teacher of Year award. Ms. Holmes is currently Milford's Teacher of the Year. She was invited to compete at the state level by submitting essay's and recommendations. She was one of 15 semifinalist's that were recognized recently at an awards ceremony at Central Connecticut State University.

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

Mr. Amendola made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2010 Board of Education meeting. Mr. Oliver seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Amendola made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2010 Board of Education meeting. Mr. Oliver seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:

APPROVED

Mrs. C. Berni – 96 Centennial Drive – Mrs. Berni explained that she did not understand how the board could approve minutes that were not correct. She further said the board did not reconvene to public session before adjourning at the October 25, 2010 meeting. She also said the reason for an executive session was unacceptable. The board self evaluation should have been done in public session. It is very important that the voters know the time was not well spent.

Mrs. K. Bonetti – 157 Seaside Avenue – Mrs. Bonetti updated the board on the recent PTA Council meeting. The next meeting will be held on November 18th at West Shore Middle School.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT:

Mr. White updated the public on the superintendent search process. He reported the committee is reviewing candidates and would begin interviews soon.

Mr. White reported that MGAT and Mr. Russell's office are partnering to fix the sound system in the board room. This will able the people who view the meetings on cable to hear the meetings better. Mr. Russell will update the board when the project is complete.

Mr. White asked if there were any board liaison reports.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Student Reports

Courtney Murray reported on the latest activity and upcoming events occurring at Jonathan Law High School. Kate Sylvester and Dan Evanich presented the report for Joseph A. Foran High School. Both reports are on file.

2. Instructional Report

Administrative Policy Revisions

Mr. Cummings explained how the current language in the Attendance Policy links attendance to course credits. Administration believes an attendance policy should be about students attending classes. Therefore, some changes are needed to the policy. Those changes were highlighted throughout the policy. A team of school administrators met at length to review the policy. The high school administrators were in attendance to clarify the changes. They explained to the board that the revised policy is aligned to the State's attendance policy. The changes to the policy were then reviewed by the school administration's legal counsel. The policy is now being presented to the board as a first review.

After board discussion, Mr. O'Connell asked the administration to research changing the "truancy" definition from four unexcused absences to two. Mr. Cummings told him the policy mirrors the State's policy; however, he would look into it. The policy would be presented to the board at the December meeting for final approval.

Mr. Cummings, with the support of the high school administrators presented the changes to the Breathalyzer Policy. He explained to the board the current policy only allows administration, or a designee to administer the breathalyzer test at "school dances." The revisions would now allow administration to administer the test at "school sponsored events." The current policy has been proven to be effective since it was adopted in September, 2008.

3. Operations Report

Personnel Report

Mrs. Kopazna presented the Human Resources Report to the board. Included in the report were job openings, terminations, retirements, resignations and stipend appointments. She then reported that the department has completed yet another State report, The Fall Hiring Survey. The survey identifies statewide teaching shortage areas for the following year.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Amendola asked for a motion to approve consent agenda items a-d. Mr. Oliver seconded.

Mrs. Casey asked that item b. be moved to New Business.

APPROVED

Mr. Oliver removed his second. Mr. Amendola removed his motion.

Mr. Amendola asked for a motion to approve consent agenda items a, c & d. Mr. Oliver seconded.

The consent agenda included two items this month. These were:

- a. Voucher List (Disbursements): Administration recommends approval of the Disbursement report. (EL-6, EL-7)
- b. Moved to New Business
- c. Jonathan Law High School Science Room Renovation: Administration recommends approval of the Jonathan Law High School Science Room Project 084-0175 A/EC as complete
- d. Joseph Foran School Science Room Renovation: Administration recommends approval of the Foran High School Science Room Renovation Project 084-0174 A/EC as complete

The motion passed.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Unfinished Business
None
- b. New Business
Child Nutrition Authorized Signatures Change Form
Mrs. Casey made the recommendation to change Mr. Russell's title to "Acting Deputy Superintendent of Operations." His retirement has taken effect.

Budget Priorities and Assumptions

Mrs. Casey expressed concern about the \$1.5M gap that will be left when the stimulus money ends. The money is to expire at the end of the current school year. She further said that administration should present a budget with the assumption that the money will not be there.

Mr. Cummings explained that the 2011-12 operational budget is projected to increase by 3%.

Mr. O'Connell feels that the government will continue the program and the district will receive the \$1.5M.

Mr. Amendola believes that the administration should assume that the money will not come in.

Mr. Oliver agreed with Mr. Amendola. He does not want to make the assumption the money will be there.

Mr. O'Connell told the board that public education is one of the most important things at the National and State level.

Mr. White told him the State has not come forward with those funds at this time. A budget needs to be presented in January.

Mr. Jukic feels if the board is going to eliminate the \$1.5M for next year, it should be taken out for all years to come.

The consensus of the board was to move "State and Federal financial support of education will not keep pace with increased programming mandates." to the second line of Assumptions. Administration was also asked to include language about the \$1.5M loss. This is to be brought to the board at the December meeting.

The board also asked administration to expand the language in the Priorities, item one to include enrichment, arts and athletics.

Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Amendola made a motion to approve the 2011-16 Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Oliver seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

APPROVED

Mr. Amendola made a motion to approve the settlement of two discrimination complaints filed against the district in the form presented to the Board. Mr. Oliver seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

IV. BOARD COMMENT:

Mr. O'Connell told the public that he was in attendance at the October 25, 2010 board meeting. The meeting convened in an open session, adjourned to executive session and then reconvened into public session before it was adjourned. Therefore, the minutes are accurate.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Amendola made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Oliver seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Robert White
Corresponding Secretary

Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary