

Approved

**MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Meeting Minutes  
December 9, 2013

Board Members Present

Tracy Casey  
Michael DeGrego  
John DeRosa  
Suzanne DiBiase  
Laura Fucci  
Susan Glennon  
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin (7:02 p.m.)  
Anthony Piselli  
Christopher Saley  
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration Present

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Michael Cummings  
James L. Richetelli, Jr.  
Wendy Kopazna

Also Present: Patrick Bradbury, Maintenance/Director of Facilities, Jim Whittaker, Energy Specialist, Attorney Floyd Dugas

**I. Call to Order**

Chairwoman Glennon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone present to join in saluting the flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. With the approach of the one year anniversary of Sandy Hook, Chairwoman Glennon asked everyone to join in a moment of silence for those lives changed by the event of December 14, 2012.

**II. Musical Presentation**

1. Jonathan Law Choir – Chairwoman Glennon stated she hoped everyone enjoyed the musical presentation from the Jonathan Law High School choir, led by Ms. Rizzotti.

**III. Student and Staff Recognition**

1. Jonathan Law High School – Michelle Novak and Gabe Salles were present and reported on the latest activities at Jonathan Law as well as the upcoming events occurring at the school, including the upcoming winter concert on December 18.

2. Joseph A. Foran High School – Erin Dunn and Andrew Jones were present and reported on the latest activities at Foran High School as well as the upcoming events occurring at the school, including their upcoming winter concert on December 17.

A full report from both schools is on file.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

Cathy Berni – 96 Centennial Drive - She congratulated the Administration on the technology grant and stated the first big job of the Board would be the budget. She asked the Board to use all of the resources that are available to them.

Mark Ahrens – 258 Oak Ridge Road – congratulated the new members of the Board. Reading from a prepared statement he spoke of about Common Core and school reconfiguration.

Augie Harrigan – 107 Oronoque Road – He stated he is a parent leader and co-Vice President of the Milford Education Foundation. He provided the Board with an update of the activities of the Foundation

#### **V. Chairman's Report**

Chairwoman Glennon explained briefly the use of the microphones. She also noted that Mrs. Griffin was away with her daughter, but was happy to have Mrs. Huber fill in. Chairwoman Glennon also explained the consent agenda items at the end of tonight's agenda. She stated typically they are passed as a block if there are no issues. She stated if any member wished to take something off they must do so prior to that time.

Mrs. Casey stated she wished to clarify for the Board that there could not be any discussion.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin stated she had a correction on p. 47 of the minutes of the December 2, 2013 minutes.

Chairwoman Glennon stated that item would be moved to New Business.

Mrs. Casey stated there was a correction on p. 44 of the minutes of November 25, 2013.

Chairwoman Glennon stated that item would also be moved to New Business.

1. Liaison Assignments and Reports – Chairwoman Glennon reported every attempt to honor all requests was made and that most were met. She stated there are two liaison positions that were still open, the Planning and Zoning Board and also Milford Prevention Council. She stated if anyone had any interest of serving on either of the two Boards to contact her. She asked if any returning Board member had an outstanding report to catch up on.

Chairwoman Glennon reported on the Long Range Planning Committee. She stated the Committee is compromised of members of the Board of Education, Board of Aldermen, fourteen parents and members of the community. She stated a public forum would be held in January and recommendations would be made to the Board of Education in March. She stated the Committee had indicated they would like to see a return to the 3 tiered school configuration.

#### **VI. Superintendent's Report**

1. Energy Conservation Program Update – Dr. Feser reported there are three pieces to the program. She proceeded to turn the meeting over to Mr. Richetelli.

## Approved

Mr. Richetelli stated he was pleased to bring the Board up to date with the district's energy conservation in the schools. He also stated he was pleased to announce that Milford is the recipient of the Energy Excellence Award. He went on to provide the background of the program which he stated dated back to December 2010, with the program actually getting underway in January 2011. He stated over the course of time there has been significant savings. He continued with an explanation, recognizing the tremendous success of the program since 2011.

a. Presentation of Energy Excellence Award – Dr. Thomas Jokubaitis of Cenergistics. Dr. Jokubaitis presented the Energy Excellence Award to Dr. Feser and Chairwoman Glennon. He stated Milford has had over \$1.2 million in savings over 28 months, with 23% savings and commended the district on their excellent stewardship. Dr. Jokubaitis stated Cenergistics was proud to be partners with Milford.

b. Recognition

U.S. EPA Energy Star Certification of all 14 Milford Public Schools – Mr. Richetelli.

Mr. Richetelli reported all 14 schools have been certified by US EPA Energy Star. He stated it is very rare for a district to have all of their schools obtain this certification.

c. Annual Update – Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Whittaker stated he is the Energy Specialist for the Milford School District. He went on to explain the program. He stated turning off computers and monitors has generated a savings of about \$30,000 a year. He stated they also de-lamped all vending machines, which resulted in a savings of \$6,000. Mr. Whittaker also reported that teachers were asked to remove all mini-refrigerators from their room, which resulted in a savings of about \$20,000. He stated on the systems side of things, they save a lot by keeping the system temperatures at 68-72°, going lower on the weekend. Mr. Whittaker continued with the PowerPoint presentation (handout provided to each Board member). Following the PowerPoint Mr. Whittaker thanked the school Board for proactively implementing the program. He also thanked the principals, staff, teachers and maintenance and custodial staff for their support.

Mr. DeGrego thanked Mr. Whittaker for the presentation. Regarding the mini-refrigerators he asked how many were taken out of the classrooms.

Mr. Whittaker replied 144.

Mr. DeGrego asked if the refrigerators were the property of the teachers.

Mr. Whittaker stated yes and reminded him they were the mini type refrigerators.

Mr. DeGrego asked if the vending machines were on a timer.

Mr. Whittaker explained Coca Cola is the vendor for the machines. He stated the change to de-lamping was done voluntarily. He noted there is a sign on each machine that says "my lights may be off, but I still work."

Mr. DeRosa asked about computer usage and if there was a system in place that is now automated to power off.

## Approved

Mr. Whittaker explained IT installed an automatic shut down at a certain time, however, he still asks the teachers to power down. He stated they do this because of the varying times school ends, i.e. high school gets out at 2:00 p.m., so they have an automatic shutdown at 4:00 p.m. which gives 2 hours of savings that could be lost.

Mr. DeRosa asked if Energy Star provides any guidelines/ideas.

Mr. Whittaker explained there is a point when things level off, but they are always thinking outside the box. He stated he works a lot of hours, including nights, weekends, etc. He encouraged the Board to take a look at the schools throughout the district and see what is on or off.

Mrs. Fucci congratulated Mr. Whittaker on his hard work. She asked if he anticipated a spike because of the increase computer labs in the schools.

Mr. Whittaker responded yes, that they expected somewhat of an increase, but they are working on addressing it. He also noted they are constantly looking at varying ideas, including recommendations made by their custodians. Mr. Whittaker stated the program is about education which they continue to work on.

Mr. Saley asked the optimum temperature to turn the building down to so that energy is not wasted have to turn it back up to warm up a building.

Mr. Whittaker explained the recovery time of a building which he stated is generally 15-20 minutes.

Mr. Bradbury added it does vary depending on the building, room locations, etc. He stated adjustments are made weekly.

Mr. Saley asked what the optimum temperature is.

Mr. Whittaker stated none of the buildings get that low.

Mr. Saley asked if the baseline for savings is the 2009-2010 fiscal year. He noted the following year was higher and asked why it went up.

Mr. Whittaker stated the contract was signed in January 2011. But actually started in April 2011, so the program was not going on when the cost went up.

Mr. Saley asked about Simon Lake School and its impact on the program.

Mr. Whittaker stated Simon Lake is not a part of the program.

Mr. Saley commented he serves on the Permanent School Facilities Building Committee and that the committee would like to see air conditioning in all future school building projects. He stated this would likely mean a spike.

Mr. Whittaker stated it would actually be better for the program because it would even eliminate the use of the number of window units.

## Approved

Chairwoman Glennon stated her understanding of the chart was that it reflected the costs had the district done nothing; the expectation was that the cost would go up.

Mr. Whittaker responded yes, that was correct.

### 2. MEA Binding Arbitration Award – Attorney Floyd Dugas

Attorney Dugas explained negotiations are done ahead of time. He stated the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education and MEA expires on August 31, 2014. He stated they began negotiations in May 2013. He explained a Negotiating Committee (T. Casey, C. Saley, J. Richetelli, M. Cummings, W. Kopazna and Attorney Dugas) was appointed with several negotiation sessions taking place thereafter. He stated the good news is that they were successful in reaching negotiated compromises regarding insurance. He also reported in terms of health insurance, they switched from the current Anthem post 65 to the State Retirement Program, which he stated is managed by Sterling and Sterling. He stated that is for retirees starting next year and going forward. He stated with regard to salaries they compromised at just around 9%. He pointed out the State average is over 9, so about a percentage point was saved. Attorney Dugas stated the balance of the contract concerned language. He proceeded to go over each of the details.

Chairwoman Glennon stated she wished to clarify that longevity pay for new hires no longer exists.

Attorney Dugas responded yes.

### 3. Proposed New Transportation Policy 3541 (First Reading) – Mr. Richetelli

Mr. Richetelli reported they looked closely at transportation and how they provide transportation services. He explained based on the direction of the Board they looked at the CAFE policy and also many other transportation policies in the State. He reminded the Board this is a first read. He also stated it is a comprehensive policy and that they tried to cover everything they do with regard to transportation.

Mrs. Casey thanked Mr. Richetelli. She stated there have been a lot of updates over the past few months with two key components. She stated the policy still needs page numbers. She also stated the language with regard to walking distance does not provide how far a student would walk to a bus stop, but only an explanation. She stated it was the recommendation of the audit that the expectation of how far a student is expected to walk to the bus stop be addressed.

Mr. Richetelli stated a lot of thought went into that suggestion. He asked Mrs. Casey if she was saying there should be an expectation of walking to a bus stop. He stated there are a number of variables to consider. He stated what a reasonable distance in one neighborhood may not be a reasonable distance in another.

Mrs. Casey suggested they ask the company that provided the audit since it was their recommendation.

Mr. Richetelli asked if she was asking for the maximum distance a child could walk.

Mrs. Casey reiterated since the recommendation came out of the audit, they should ask them. He also stated it should come with sample language.

## Approved

Mr. Richetelli stated CAGE provided sample policy all of which had the same definition and none defined the expectation.

Mrs. Casey stated she also had concerns on p. 12, sub-section "B-2a". She asked why a pre-school has a separate policy. She recalled 5-6 years ago the Board of Education cut busing for pre-school students, except for special education students. She stated the language in this paragraph is not consistent with Board direction and that it should have come back before this Board for discussion as to whether or not there should be busing for non-special education students. Mrs. Casey asked if administration was recommending re-instating busing for all students or if this section was for special education students. Mrs. Casey stated this language is against Board policy and that she had concerns with regard to legal issues. She also stated this was something that was discussed extensively sometime ago with Attorney Dugas and others. Mrs. Casey stated she felt very strongly the language should come out.

Chairwoman Glennon suggested a motion be made.

Mrs. Casey and Mrs. Fucci made and seconded a motion to strike Paragraph IV, Subsection B, 2b from the policy.

Mr. DeRosa commented regarding a remark made by Mrs. Casey concerning previous conversations regarding this issue. He stated he would like to have a history of how this came about so that he could make a qualified decision.

Mrs. Casey stated the conversations have been over time, possibly as long as six months. She commented there had been a personal situation concerning the busing situation which resulted in deviating from the policy. Mrs. Casey stated she has had conversation with Mr. Richetelli and Ms. Kelleher regarding the policy when she was the Chair of this Board. She stated those conversations took place prior to the election and were in light of a complaint that his Board was not necessarily following its own policy.

Mr. Cummings interjected, stating this dated back to 2007-2008.

Mrs. Casey stated sub-section B.2 was not policy. She also pointed out that sub-section 2.a is against Board policy as well. She stated if there is a reason why administration feels the Board should change the policy, she would like it brought forward to the Board.

Chairwoman Glennon asked Mrs. Casey for clarification if she was looking for this to be one way or the other.

Mrs. Casey reiterated this is not the direction the Board of Education gave. She stated the language reflects what administration wants to change then they must come before the Board.

Mr. Richetelli stated he could not speak for Ms. Kelleher who he stated was not present tonight due to illness. He stated the language was not arbitrary, nor was it done to defy Board policy. He stated the policy has always been to provide transportation as provided by State law. He explained the pre-school program has three types of students: special education, at risk students and typical students. He stated transportation could be an issue for some students. He stated this is in the best interest of the student. He also stated there have been exceptions made for extenuating circumstances for the balance of the program.

## Approved

Mrs. Casey stated her motion did not strike out section 2.a, only 2.b. She stated it was her recollection this had been done in part because they were losing students and stated you just cannot change policy because of a negative implication. She reiterated this needed to come before this Board for discussion. Mrs. Casey also stated she spoke with Mr. Dugas who felt they may be treating people differently, which could lead to an issue. She stated she just did not expect this language in this policy.

Mr. Richetelli stated they would be willing to come to the Board with a policy that includes it. He stated this policy was administration's way of bringing it to the Board for direction.

Mrs. Casey stated she believed a legal opinion was needed.

Mr. Richetelli stated the policy was in the process of being reviewed by legal counsel.

Mrs. Casey stated the question is whether they should be providing busing to pre-school age children in its entirety, noting it only stopped a few years ago because of funding.

Mr. DeRosa stated it does not appear the way the policy was written was with any malice. He stated there are many people on this Board that were not at the table when discussion occurred. He stated he would leave it the way it is or table it for more information.

Mr. Richetelli stated it would be up to the wishes of the Board.

Mr. DeRosa and Mr. DeGrego made and seconded a motion to table the matter. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairwoman Glennon asked administration to have Attorney Dugas look at this policy for the second read next month.

Mrs. Casey stated she was not saying anything inappropriate was done; simply that Board direction was not followed.

Mr. Whiskeyman asked if tabling the matter would mean there was no first read.

Chairwoman Glennon stated the Board was tabling the item brought forward by Mrs. Casey.

Mrs. Fucci asked about the reduction for courtesy riders and how it would impact traffic in and around schools as well as parking and if that was looked at as well.

Mr. Richetelli stated the policy does not address the plan of how. He stated they would go forward with "courtesy riders" based on what the industry calls for. He also stated they did not look at traffic and parking, but they could do that.

Mr. Saley commented whatever is done needs to be in the best interest of the child.

Chairwoman Glennon stated the matter has been tabled and that administration would look into those items and then come back before this Board next month for the second read.

4. State Technology Grant – Mr. Cummings and Mr. St. Germain

Mr. St. Germain explained back in July 2013 the State of Connecticut put out a request for proposals for technology investments to implement the CCSS and help with administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments. He stated the award was granted on November 16, 2013. He stated the general purpose was to support the Common Core State Standard. He continued with an explanation and background of the grant.

Chairwoman Glennon asked if this was a matching grant.

Mr. St. Germain replied no. He explained when they first applied they thought it was, but found out it was not. He referred the Board to p. 21 of the handout and provided an explanation of the Grant Purchasing Summary.

Mr. DeRosa asked if the total cost is \$230,000 or \$460,000 and asked where the balance was coming from.

Mr. St. Germain stated it would be from the school district. He reiterated originally they thought it was a matching grant, but that changed.

Mr. DeRosa stated he had submitted a number of questions and asked Mr. St. Germain if he had the opportunity to address them.

Mr. St. Germain stated he is continuing to work on those questions and would provide the answers very shortly. He stated they are intent on building instructional capacity. He also stated they are working with staff on training. Mr. St. Germain stated they have a new technology committee in Milford that includes teachers. He stated the plan is to submit a new technology plan to the State next year.

Mr. DeRosa asked Mr. St. Germain if they had looked at web technology. He stated the cost of licensing is prohibitive but that other technology is available with less of a footprint.

Mr. St. Germain stated they are looking at those as well. He stated there are some issues with backing up files.

Chairwoman Glennon referred to the questions submitted by Mr. DeRosa and asked if the entire Board would receive the answers to those questions as well.

Mr. Cummings responded yes.

Mr. DeRosa asked what the computers would be used for outside of testing periods, etc.

Mr. St. Germain explained they would be used at the home schools for other purposes than testing - daily use.

Mr. DeRosa asked if it had been defined as yet.

Mr. St. Germain stated there would be a practice test in March.

Mr. Cummings pointed out they are looking to purchase for next year.



## Approved

Mr. St. Germain added they have staff looking at more opportunities to use technology, specifically at the elementary school level. He also stated the computers would be used to support teachers and future planning.

Mr. Whiskeyman asked if the additional cost would be a part of the budget for next year.

Mr. Cummings replied yes.

Mr. Whiskeyman asked about “1 on 1” and if that issue were achieved if there was a vision of how that would play out and how long it would take.

Mr. St. Germain stated that was still some time away. He stated he has been looking at other school districts to see what they are doing, adding there are so many configurations so that it why they have a committee. He stated the committee has been very helpful.

Mr. DeRosa stated he felt someone from this Board should serve on that committee and that he would like to represent the Board on that committee.

Chairwoman Glennon stated she would take it up with Mr. Cummings and Dr. Feser.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin expressed concern with the budget total of \$460,000 and the State approval of \$230,000. She also echoed the comments of Mr. DeRosa about having someone from this Board on the committee and stated she too would like to serve on that committee.

### 5. 2014 Board of Education Meetings – Dr. Feser

Dr. Feser explained under State law they are required to submit to the City Clerk by January 31, 2014 the Board’s meeting schedule. She noted the vast majority of meetings will take place on the second and fourth Monday’s of the month, except for holidays (Memorial Day), which would move the meeting to Tuesday.

Mrs. Fucci and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to accept the 2014 Board of Education meeting dates as presented.

Mr. Whiskeyman questioned an early meeting in August. He stated this schedule indicates the only meeting in August will be held on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Chairwoman Glennon stated that Board policy dictates when the August meeting will be held. She stated the Board has officially been put on notice of the August meeting and should mark their calendars accordingly.

Dr. Feser stated the August meeting date is in accordance with policy.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Human Resources Report – Mrs. Kopazna

Mrs. Kopazna referenced the handout to the Board members which she stated included job postings, personnel recommendations, retirements/resignations/terminations and stipend appointments, which she stated were mainly for winter sports.

Mrs. Casey asked about the stipend appointments for school website liaison and if that was a new position.

Mrs. Kopazna replied yes.

Mr. Cummings explained there is an individual in each building for the school based web-site.

Mr. Richetelli explained these positions were originally budgeted under “Contracted Services.” He stated it was found that it would be better to have school employees in those positions. He stated the money is in the budget, but under contracted services.

Mrs. Casey asked if the work that was being done by the employee was outside of the regular day.

Mr. Cummings replied yes.

Chairwoman Glennon asked Mr. Cummings for an explanation and/or details of their job responsibilities.

Mr. St. Germain stated the website will be getting a new makeover and there would be more of a Facebook like interface. He went on to explain how students log in for assignments, etc.

Chairwoman Glennon asked if the work was done exclusively after school hours.

Mr. St. Germain replied yes.

Mrs. Casey stated if this is a new position it should have come before this Board.

Mr. St. Germain stated he has been with the district 1 ½ years and that he put this request forward without realizing what the proper channels were. He indicated he would not make that mistake again in the future).

Mr. DeRosa asked what type of company for the site.

Mr. St. Germain stated it is Final Site. He stated it is an outside company that will house all of the data.

Mrs. Fucci asked why the interim supervisor for special education.

Mrs. Kopazna explained it is mainly due to the time of year in conducting a search.

Mrs. Fucci asked the number of applicants to date.

## Approved

Mrs. Kopazna replied four. She stated they had not yet begun interviews because they were hoping for more applicants.

### **VII. Consent Agenda Items**

Chairwoman Glennon stated she would entertain a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 1 and 2a and 2c.

Mrs. Fucci and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 1 and 2a and 2c. Motion carried unanimously.

### **VIII. Unfinished Business**

None.

### **IX. New Business**

1. Consideration of the minutes of the November 25, 2013 Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Mrs. Fucci and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2013 Committee of the Whole Meeting with the following corrections:

Mrs. Casey stated on p. 44 under "Matters of Organization", second paragraph, the motion was *seconded by Mr. Whiskeyman*.

Motion carried unanimously with the correction noted above.

Mrs. Fucci and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2013 Board Workshop with the following corrections: p. 47 of the minutes should reflect that *only Dr. Feser was present from Administration* and Dr. Gold-Dworkin was present in person, not via "skype". Motion carried unanimously as corrected.

3. Mr. Saley stated he wished to introduce New Business.

Mr. Saley and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to add to the agenda discussion and changing the Assumptions and Priorities for 2014-2015.

Mr. Saley stated this is a very important discussion for the Board to have especially as a new Board. He expressed his hope the Board would take this seriously. He reiterated it was important for this Board to have this discussion and to have it in a timely manner.

Mr. DeRosa stated he agreed with Mr. Saley. He stated as a new Board member he felt it was important to have this discussion and that it especially important for the new Board members.

Chairwoman Glennon stated a motion to add new business to the agenda requires a 2/3 majority (7 votes).

Approved

By roll call vote, the motion failed 4 no (Casey, Fucci, Glennon, Whiskeyman) and 6 yes (DeGrego, DeRosa, DiBiase, Gold-Dworkin, Piselli, Saley).

**X. Board Comment**

None.

**XI. Adjourn to Executive Session**

1. Discussion of Salaries for Non-Certified/Non-Union Employees

Mrs. Fucci and Mrs. Casey made and seconded a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purposes of Discussion of Salaries for Non-Certified/Non-Union Employees.

Chairwoman Glennon stated those entering Executive Session would be the full Board along with Dr. Feser, Mr. Richetelli, Mr. Cummings and Mrs. Kopazna.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 9:26 p.m.

Mrs. Kopazna left Executive Session at 9:47 p.m.

Chairwoman Glennon reconvened the Board in public session at 10:11 p.m.

Mrs. Fucci and Mr. DeRosa made and seconded a motion to approve \$49,873 to be used for salary increases for non-union employees at the discretion of the Superintendent based on performance and an additional \$7,500 to partially correct equity differences amongst the Occupational Therapists as appropriate. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to discuss, Mr. DeRosa and Mrs. Fucci made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 10:12 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber  
Recording Secretary  
Acting for Pam Griffin