

Unapproved

Milford Board of Education

Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2011

Board members present:

Tracy Casey
Suzanne DiBiase
Diane Kruger-Carroll
Dr. Mark Stapleton, Chair
Robert M. White

Board members absent:

David Amendola
Josip Jukic
Jay Tranquilli
Jack O'Connell
Greg Oliver

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Mike Cummings
Wendy Kopazna
Phil Russell
Sue Kelleher

I. Call to Order

The Milford Board of Education held a Business Meeting on Tuesday, October 11, 2011, in the Board Room at the Parsons Government Complex. Dr. Stapleton called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

Mr. White made a motion add Student and Staff Recognition to the agenda. Mrs. Casey seconded. The motion passed.

Dr. Stapleton turned the meeting over to Dr. Feser for the Student and Staff Recognition.

II. Student and Staff Recognition

Dr. Feser began by offering her gratitude to the Jonathan Law band and color guard for their community efforts during the clean up of Hurricane Irene. She noted that they were recently given a proclamation from Mayor Richetelli. She also thanked those who helped their neighbors, staff and students during this difficult time.

Dr. Feser then updated the board on the recent New Haven Symphony Orchestra concert held at Parsons. There were two shows and both shows had more than 500 attendees. The choruses from both Law and Foran performed on stage with the orchestra. She reminded the board the proceeds from the event will go to the Milford Public Schools music program. Kathy Bonetti was instrumental in the success of the event. She thanked her for all of her work.

Unapproved

Student recognition was next on the agenda. Nina Klug, a 2nd grader from Orange Avenue named is a master at Taekwondo. She recently won a Gold and Bronze medal at the 2011 Jr. Olympics in San Jose, California.

The next recognition of the evening was given to three East Shore seventh graders. They entered essays in the Trumbull Arts Festival Literary Competition. Those recognized were:

Veronica Piscitelli, 2nd place Memoir category
Sarah Fitzgerald, 1st place in the Fiction category
Genevieve Jaser, 1st place in the Memoir category and Honorable mention in the Memoir category

Tess Gildea, a senior at Foran High School was the next to be recognized. Tess was named the News 12 Connecticut Scholar Athlete of the Week. Tess is a top swimmer at Foran and carries a 4.0 GPA, has earned High Honors while carrying AP classes and performing community service. She congratulated Tess.

The final recognition of the evening was given to Hope Pardee. Hope is a fifth grade teacher at Meadowside Elementary School. Hope was selected to attend a seven day professional development program at the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City.

Exxon Mobil partnered with Phil Mickelson and his wife in 2005 to found the Mickelson and science at an early age to retain their interest in these subjects through college and into their careers.

III. Consideration of Minutes

No Action.

IV. Student Reports

Gabrielle Novak and Matthew Ouellette reported on the latest activity and upcoming events occurring at Jonathan Law High School. Tess Gildea and Thomas Bassine the report for Joseph A. Foran High School. Both reports are on file.

V. Public Comment

Cathy Berni – 96 Centennial Drive – Ms. Berni expressed her disgrace with only five board members present at the meeting. The board is not able to vote on items.

Lisa Biagione – Sentinel Hill Road – Ms. Biagione encouraged the board to have a special workshop on Special Education. She also asked the board to put the policies on hold until the parents and students could be made aware of the changes.

Unapproved

Jack Fowler – Pine Knobb Hill Road – Mr. Fowler presented the board with a spreadsheet to review. The spreadsheet had information about the district and surrounding similar districts, cost per pupil and the CAPT scores. He further explained the scores are very disturbing.

Kathy Bonetti – 157 Seaside Drive – Mrs. Bonetti told the board that the PTA Council will host the “Candidate’s Forum” at Foran on October 25th at 7:00 p.m. Questions will be pulled out of a hat. She encouraged all to attend.

VI. Chair’s Report

Dr. Stapleton told the public that the current board is finishing their term on the board.

Mrs. Casey told the board that she was at a Secretaries negotiation meeting last week.

VII. Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Feser reviewed the budget priorities and assumptions to the board. She explained the assumptions are non-negotiable ie, health insurance, contracted increases.

Mrs. Casey asked when the transportation contract would be expiring and was told the end the 2011-12 school year. Mr. Russell told her he has been surveying other companies. However, he believes Durham is the second least expensive. The contract would need to go out to bid by November if that is what the board chooses to do.

Mrs. Casey believes there should be an assumption for the energy savings from the energy company. Mrs. Casey would like to add language separating the energy savings due to contracting with Energy Education.

Mrs. Casey explained class sizes were included in the priorities last year. However, the language changed to “we will make every attempt” this year and was moved to assumptions.

Dr. Feser told her there was no intention to change the philosophy. The assumption precedes the priority.

Mrs. Casey believes that in reading the new language, it could be perceived that class sizes are no longer a key fundamental.

Dr. Feser said the assumptions are less negotiable than a priority.

Mrs. Casey asked Dr. Feser if the new board would adopt the assumptions and priorities.

Dr. Feser told her that there is one more business meeting and given the timing, the assumptions and priorities need to be complete in order to begin the budget process.

Unapproved

Mrs. Casey explained that has not been past practice. The new board will be the ones approving the budget. Therefore, they should be approving the assumptions and priorities. She further said December is when they were approved last year.

Dr. Stapleton stated that when the current board was elected the priorities were already in place.

Mrs. Casey said that she recalls they were brought back before the board. The new board would need to be in agreement with them.

Dr. Feser expressed the difficulty that the budget needs to be developed.

Mr. Russell told the board the process begins in September.

Dr. Feser then reviewed the priorities with the board.

Mrs. Casey asked why The Academy was added. She was told the input came from the principals. The Academy can be something that is vulnerable. The programs are solid and the students in them are served well in their setting. It would not be cost effective to close The Academy and relocate the programs.

Dr. Stapleton said he believes the assumptions and priorities should be adopted before the new board is seated. They should be presented to the new board. It is an enormous undertaking to make major decisions that could dramatically impact the schools without some guidance.

Mrs. Casey asked if the assumptions and priorities could be added to the agenda as a discussion item.

Simon Lake Relinquish Control to the City

Dr. Feser explained the K2/35 conversion is in its final stage. Administration has been cleaning out Simon Lake. However, the district does not have a lot of storage. The administration determined that it would be beneficial to retain some space to house curriculum materials.

Instructional Division

Enrollment Report, October 1, 2011

Mr. Cummings shared the Enrollment Report as October 1, 2011 with the board. The state requires district's to report enrollment as of October 1st. The information is used for census and other reports.

Operational Division

Summer Projects

Unapproved

Mr. Bradbury navigated through a PowerPoint that showed step by step procedures of the work that was done at the schools over the summer. The PowerPoint will be loaded on the website.

Quarterly Budget Report

Mr. Russell reported that 89% of the budget has already been expended. He continues to monitor the fuel accounts.

Human Resources Report

Mrs. Kopazna presented the annual human resources report to the board. The report includes information regarding hiring, staffing positions, employee benefits, labor relations, record keeping and more.

Mrs. Kopazna then gave the report for the month of September. She reviewed the stipends with the board.

VIII. Consent Agenda

None.

IX. Action

None.

X. Board Comment

Mrs. Kruger-Carroll asked Mr. Russell what exactly is the costs savings from going paperless in regards to the progress reports. Mr. Russell told her that the postage is significant however, he would do an audit.

XI. Adjournment

Mr. White made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Casey seconded. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Recording Secretary:

Pam Griffin

Corresponding Secretary:

Robert M. White