

MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monroe, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2016

Present: Chairman Donna Lane
Vice-Chairman George King III
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board Member Christine Cascella
Board Member Jeff Guttman
Board Member James Martinez
Board Member Carlos Reinoso, Jr.
Board Member Jerry Stevens
Board Member Alan Vaglivelio

Also present: Superintendent James Agostine
Assistant Superintendent John Battista
Finance Director Gabriella DiBlasi

Absent: Masuk Student Board Representative Kanu Caplash
Masuk Student Board Representative Amit Gupta
Masuk Student Board Representative Ali Moraveck

Call to Order

Chairman Lane called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Report of the Chairman

The Weller Foundation Donation to the Masuk High School Media Center

Superintendent Agostine said the Weller Foundation, which has supported teacher projects for many years, has made a \$1,250 donation to the Masuk library to provide assistance with the purchase of educational books. *Principal Kobza* said approximately \$900 has been spent to date on fiction for outside reading.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

Motion: (J. Guttman)

Second: (C. Cascella)

Discussion: Superintendent Agostine noted Serena Stanley's retirement and wished her well.

Motion passed 9 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Martinez, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivelio)-0

16-004

Reports of the Committees and Liaisons

There were no reports at tonight's meeting.

Public Participation

There was none tonight.

Report of the Superintendent

Ms. DiBlasi said that insurance claims are trending well; one individual has reached stop loss, and there are four claimants over \$50,000.

Ms. DiBlasi stated that they are using oil to heat Masuk due to the lower cost.

Ms. DiBlasi continued that the District had invited any interested Food Service Management Companies to tour the school kitchens and present proposed equipment upgrades by January 15. Only one of the three submitted a proposed equipment upgrade. The upgrades will be priced out and vetted for inclusion in the RFP. *Ms. DiBlasi* continued that the State has not put out the new RFP for food services and the timeframe is very tight.

Chairman Lane asked if the USDA required multiple bids; the response was that they did, and there are only three local companies: Sodexo, Chartwells, and Whitsons. *Vice-Chairman King* asked if all three could potentially provide a proposal, as only one proposed new equipment; *Ms. DiBlasi* responded that they could, and that the Federal guidelines state when a Food Service Management company bids on a contract, they have to provide details on the equipment they feel needs to be replaced.

Superintendent Agostine also updated the Board on the Turf Field. He said that the current height of the lights are 65 feet and the lighting vendor recommends 80 feet to provide more efficient lighting and reduce light spillage to the sides. The change may require a regulation change through Planning and Zoning, as the school is located in a residential area. Milone & McBroom are currently assessing the lights and the issue of the Turf Field now resides with Town Council.

Superintendent Agostine added that *Board Member Stevens* had the opportunity to meet the Commissioner of Education, *Dianna Wentzell*. *Ms. Wentzell* is a Masuk graduate, and she has tentatively accepted an invitation to speak at graduation this year.

Superintendent Agostine reminded the Board members that the self-evaluation form is on-line for them to complete.

Assistant Superintendent Battista provided the Board with a brief presentation of the curriculum mapping the District has been working on for the past few years. He said that they looked at a K-12 continuum and the curriculum can be accessed by grade level, subject area or by school. *Lisa Peterson*, Instructional Leader for World Language, suggested the maps could be created in Google Docs; the maps are posted on the District's website. The maps detail the course offerings and curriculum for each grade level, the standards being taught, the concepts and skills for each unit of study, as well as technology and integration. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* continued there is a staff page as well and noted that as the teachers use the maps, they can update them with the

materials and tools they have found helpful. He added that though it is a work in progress, it provides a solid framework for teachers and parents.

Presentations

Monroe Reads Book Reveal

Dr. Zmary, Directory of Technology/Operations, and *Margaret Borchers*, Director of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, spoke to the Board about Monroe Reads 2016. *Dr. Zmary* stated that Monroe Reads Together is a Committee comprised of staff from the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, community members, business owners, and members of Monroe schools. He added that the Committee's goal is to engage the community in literacy and have a dialogue about issues within the literature. *Dr. Zmary* continued that literacy instruction is one of the most important things the District does, and research has shown the multi-faceted benefits of reading.

The book the Committee has selected is *The Boys in the Boat*, a New York Times bestseller about the 1936 U.S. Men's Olympic Rowing Team. Though non-fiction, it reads like a novel and is character driven. Copies of the book are available at the school libraries, the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, and Linda's Story Time. *Ms. Borchers* noted there is also a companion book written specifically for younger readers and the book is also available on audio, e-books, and in large print. There will be a panel discussion on March 29, at Jockey Hollow Middle School. Members of the panel include *Mara Ford*, a member of the 1988 Olympic Rowing Team; *Tom Weil*, a nationally recognized rowing historian; and *William Randall*, Director of Rowing for the United States Coast Guard Academy. *Superintendent Agostine* will be the moderator.

Old Business

Policies-Second Review

Motion to approve Policy #5131.1, Students, Bus Conduct, and Policy #6142.101, Instruction, Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy) as presented

Motion: (J. Guttman)

Second: (C. Cascella)

Discussion: Vice-Chairman King said that Policy #5131.1 was updated to include the suspension policy and that Policy # 6142.101 addresses concerns with homemade food items coming into the schools.

Motion passed 9 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Martinez, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

16-005

New Business

Curriculum Proposal

Mike Crowley spoke about the requests for two senior electives: Ethical Arguments in Fiction and Non-Fiction and Travel Literature. Both are half year courses, and he provided the Board with copies of some of the proposed texts. As this is a first review, the proposal will be voted on at the next meeting.

Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation-Executive Session Anticipated

Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation inviting Superintendent Agostine

Motion: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Second: (C. Reinoso)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 9 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Martinez, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

16-006

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 9:41 p.m.

Motion: (J. Guttman)

Second: (C. Cascella)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 9 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Martinez, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

16-007

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board of Education Secretary