

MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monroe, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2015

Present: Chairman Donna Lane
Vice-Chairman George King III
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board Member Jeff Guttman
Board Member Jerry Stevens
Board Member Alan Vaglivello

Absent: Board Member Christine Cascella
Board Member James Martinez
Board Member Carlos Reinoso, Jr.

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

Exemplary People-Masuk's Career Day Volunteer, Ben Maini

The Board recognized *Ben Maini* for his efforts and dedication in making Masuk's Career Day a success. *Penny Ploski* said that Career Day has grown tremendously, and *Mr. Maini* has brought in many new ideas and participants. *Mr. Maini* said he appreciated the Board's acknowledgement and thanked them as well as teachers and students for their support. He continued saying that his goal was to give students the opportunity to experience their areas of interest and all the opportunities available to them. *Mr. Maini* added that he wants to see more tradesmen participate in Career Day.

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Lane had no report at tonight's meeting.

Consent Agenda

Superintendent Agostine noted that Diane Sawicki from Jockey Hollow is retiring and the savings for next year will be discussed during the budget discussion.

Secretary Reilly-Monaco said that she thought an amendment was needed to reflect a discussion of residency that took place during the vote for Vice-Chairman. Secretary Reilly-Monaco had asked Board Member Crouch a question on the status of her residency which was unanswered. Board Member Vaglivelo asked how the amendment would read. Chairman Lane replied that the minutes would read that there was a question about residency that was unanswered.

Board Member Guttman added that he felt that residency of any elected official should be brought up to every board and commission. Board Member Vaglivelo asked what the criteria are. Superintendent Agostine said that the Charter specifically states that a member of any board or commission in Town needs to be a resident. Board Member Vaglivelo questioned what the definition of residency. Chairman Lane responded that they would need to get the State and Charter definition of residency, but the issue being raised on the minutes is not a discussion of how residency is defined; Chairman Lane continued that Secretary Reilly-Monaco was stating that the minutes did not reflect that discussion. Board Member Guttman stated that the minutes should reflect that there was a question asked about residency that was unanswered.

Vice-Chairman King said that Board Member Guttman's point was that the Board needs to look at this at either the Board or Policy Committee level to ensure compliance. Secretary Reilly-Monaco added that she felt the purpose of the minutes is to reflect what issues are voted on, and she believes this issue is pertinent, because it was "directly or indirectly pertaining to a vote." Board Member Guttman reiterated that Secretary Reilly-Monaco was stating a fact that something was missing from the minutes. Board Member Lane said that the line could read "there was a discussion regarding residency that was asked."

Superintendent Agostine said it was not necessary to vote to amend the minutes. The Board can approve the minutes as amended.

Motion to approve the Amended Consent Agenda

Motion: (J. Guttman)

Second: (G. King)

Motion passed 4 (Lane, King, Guttman, and Reilly-Monaco)-2 (Stevens and Vaglivelo)

15-099

Reports of the Committees and Liaisons

Masuk Student Representatives

Student Representative Moravek said there will be an Open Skate for the Boys' Ice Hockey Team on Saturday. Boys' Hockey has a game tonight, and she added that the Winter sports season is underway. *Student Representative Caplash* said Boys' Swimming had a meet today against Newtown. He added that the second quarter ends on

January 14, and Mid-terms will begin on January 15. *Student Representative Gupta* said there will be an early dismissal on Wednesday, and school will resume on January 4. He added there will be a Boys' Basketball Tournament, at Masuk, on the 26 and the 29.

Communications

Board Member Vaglivelio said the Communications Committee met tonight, and *Superintendent Agostine* discussed the budget and suggested a meeting with community members and stakeholders to review the budget. He said that they also discussed having a Budget Informational Session to be held two weeks prior to the vote. *Board Member Vaglivelio* continued that the Committee also discussed meeting more on an as needed basis.

Policy

Vice-Chairman King said that two policies will be up for first review at the next meeting, and that the Committee agreed to meet at 7:00 p.m. rather than at 6:30 p.m.

Public Participation

There was none at tonight's meeting.

Report of the Superintendent

Review of the Fund Activity Statement

Ms. DiBlasi said that insurance continues to trend favorably and that due to the mild weather, heating costs are down. *Ms. DiBlasi* continued that she attended a meeting last week with the state and the FDA on food services and they are planning to put out the template RFP in early January. *Ms. DiBlasi* said that rather than allowing Districts to include new equipment purchases in the RFP, there is a separate process, an RFI (request for information). Districts need to advertise walkthroughs in the kitchens and cafeteria serving areas to all potential food service providers to see what equipment they would recommend purchasing through the RFP process. *Ms. DiBlasi* continued that though potential vendors can make recommendations, the District needs to research the pricing. The District has already published the RFI, and the walk through date is January 8. The timeframe for advertising the RFP has been reduced to 30 calendar days, so it is possible to have the RFP and all responses back by mid-March. It is now required that at least three people review the bid, and the price has to be the highest weighted component in determining the bid.

2015-2016 Budget

Superintendent Agostine said that Ovation and Cigna's initial suggestion to increase the medical reserve by \$500,000 has been revised. Last Friday, *Jay Fiorello* contacted *Superintendent Agostine* to advise him that both he and Cigna agreed the District could scale back the increase by \$200,000-\$300,000. *Superintendent Agostine* said that both he and *Ms. DiBlasi* are concerned with scaling back too far as it is very early; they agreed to take \$205,744 out of the proposed increase and take it out of the budget. The additional retirement will save the District approximately \$48,000 which brings the total increase over this year's budget by 1.96%. *Superintendent Agostine* stated that this is "a phenomenal place to be at this early point." He did add that he wanted to reserve the right to re-examine the medical in the spring.

Board Member Guttman thanked *Superintendent Agostine* and the Administration for their efforts and for taking both the children and Townspeople into consideration when crafting the budget. *Chairman Lane* agreed with the conservative approach to reducing the medical. *Superintendent Agostine* added that he and *Dr. Zmary* will attend the Town Council's Strategic Planning Meeting tomorrow evening when they will be touring Chalk Hill.

Old Business

There was none at tonight's meeting.

New Business

There was none at tonight's meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

Motion: (J. Guttman)

Second: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 6 (Lane, King, Guttman, Reilly-Monaco, Stevens and Vaglivero)-0

15-100

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board of Education Secretary