

**MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Monroe, Connecticut**

**Meeting Minutes  
December 19, 2016**

**Present:** Chairman Donna Lane  
Vice-Chairman George King III  
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco  
Board Member Christine Cascella  
Board Member David Ferris  
Board Member Carlos Reinoso, Jr.  
Board Member Jerry Stevens  
Board Member Alan Vaglivelio

**Also present:** Superintendent James Agostine  
Assistant Superintendent John Battista  
Masuk Student Board Representative Kevin Brown  
Masuk Student Board Representative William Santee

**Absent:** Board Member James Martinez  
Finance Director Gabriella DiBlasi  
Masuk Student Board Representative Michelle Cobuzzi

**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**

There was no report at tonight's meeting.

**Consent Agenda**

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**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda**

**Motion: (S. Reilly-Monaco)**

**Second: (D. Ferris)**

Discussion: None

**Motion passed 7 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco Cascella, Ferris, Stevens, and Vaglivelio)-0**

16-081

**Report s of the Committees and Liaisons**

**Student Board Representatives**

*Student Board Representative Santee* said the Strings Concert will be tomorrow evening, and Matthew Hurley is the Rotary Student of the Month. He added that Winter Sports are underway, and the teams are doing well. *Student Board Representative Brown* said

there will be a presentation on distracted driving from an individual who was seriously injured in an accident caused by distracted driving. On January 7, the Polar Plunge Club will plunge into Southport Beach to support *Mr. Castillo's* wife who is battling cancer.

#### Curriculum Committee

*Board Member Vaglivero* said that the Curriculum Committee met, and there will be a presentation later in the meeting.

### Public Participation

There was none at tonight's meeting.

### Report of the Superintendent

#### Fund Activity Statement

*Superintendent Agostine* said that claims through November 2016 were \$3,386,292 compared to claims of \$2,243,570 through last November. There are three claimants who have met stop loss for the year, and there are nine claimants with claims over \$50,000. Last year at this time, there was one claimant who met stop loss and five claimants over \$50,000.

#### 2017 Spending

*Superintendent Agostine* said that they will continue to monitor spending, and he may propose a spending freeze at the beginning of the New Year.

#### 2017-2018 Budget Discussion

*Superintendent Agostine* provided the Board Members with a comparison of other towns' budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17. He continued that the average for 2015-2016 was 1.91 and the 1.43 for 2016-2017 though there were many increases in the range of 3-5%. He will provide updates as information is available for the 2017-2018 budget.

*Superintendent Agostine* said that he anticipates a few additional retirements before the December 31 deadline, and there may be some slight adjustments in Special Education, but the budget will not be under 3% when the Board returns in January. The budget is currently at 3.47% and the four primary drivers are:

- \$600,000 Increase in Medical
- Transportation
- Special Education
- Contractual Obligations

*Chairman Lane* asked about the Kindergarten staffing at Stepney as the projection is a reduction of 26 students for 2017-2018, and the staffing summary shows four sections. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* said that they felt that *Milone & McBroom's* projection was very low, and they were not comfortable with reducing it due to the increase they experienced last year. *Stepney's Principal Lazar* added that they will know better at Kindergarten registration and that there was a significant increase in student enrollment over the summer. *Secretary Reilly-Monaco* said that the Stepney area has seen numerous real estate transactions in part due to the condominiums and Great Oak Farm, and she felt the projections were low.

*Vice-Chairman King* asked where the \$600,000 increase in medical positioned us. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* replied that it will not bring them above the 18% range. He added that there will be double digit increases in the premium for the employees. *Superintendent Agostine* noted that the Board of Finance did set up the Reserve Medical Fund, and he will continue to scrutinize the budget for any savings.

*Chairman Lane* added that they have been told there will be very significant reductions in State funding both on the municipal and education sides. The amount of funding will not be known until the end of June after the budget was been adopted.

*Board Member Vaglivelo* asked about the level of staffing for Paraprofessionals. *Superintendent Agostine* said that though there are a few recess and lunch Paraprofessionals, the majority are Special Education Paraprofessionals.

### **Old Business**

#### Masuk Parking Fees

*Chairman Lane* said there was a proposal from students to reduce the Masuk parking fees at a previous meeting. She provided the Board Members with a comparison of schools in the DRG and noted that the parking fee had been reduced from \$150 to \$125 for this school year. *Vice-Chairman King* said that he was comfortable with leaving the fee at \$125 and reviewing it over the summer. *Board Member Reinoso* added that, due to the budget constraints, he agreed. *Vaglivelo* asked for a commitment to revisit it over the summer. It will be put on the agenda for the July meeting.

### **New Business**

#### Curriculum Proposals-New Course and Instructional Materials-First Reveiw

##### New Course Proposal-Anatomy and Physiology, Science, Grades 11 and 12

*Jim Stoelzel* presented the New Course Proposal: Anatomy & Physiology. He stated that this proposal is due to student demand and the feedback he has received from current students and recent graduates studying in healthcare related majors.

The proposed course will be a year long, college prep level without lab. *Mr. Stoelzel* continued that the proposal meets the District's Mission as it provides a strong connection to college and career readiness as well as real-world application and problem solving. The course will have the following Units of Study:

Unit 1-Introduction to A &P

Unit 2-Support and Movement

Unit 3-Integration and Coordination

Unit 4-Transport and Defense

Unit 5-Absorption and Excretion

Unit 6-Human Life Cycle

Unit 7-Comparitive Anatomy

The cost of the proposed course is \$10,491 which includes resource materials, workbooks, and software/online textbooks. There is no additional training needed for staff and the course would be offered in September 2017 with two sections each of

twenty-five students.

#### Instructional Materials-AP Psychology Textbook

*Ian Lowell* presented a request for a new AP Psychology Textbook, *Myers' AP Psychology 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, as the current textbook is obsolete and contains outdated information. AP Psychology is the most popular AP course at Masuk, and it is often the first or only AP course for many students.

The current textbook aligns to DSM-4, and the AP Test has been changed to reflect the DSM-5. The DSM-4 provides inaccurate information to students on how mental disorders are classified as there have been changes over the years. The proposed text is directly aligned to the AP Course with practice questions, academic vocabulary, diagrams, and charts found on the AP Test.

*Mr. Lowell* continued that *Myers' AP Psychology 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, is the most widely used resource nationally. It has better readability, has teacher familiarity, and is the lowest price option by almost \$124.09 per book. In addition, it is the only textbook designed specifically for AP. The cost for 100 books including shipping is \$13,649.90.

*Mr. Lowell* noted that this edition will serve the District for several years as the publisher has said that *Myers' 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* will not be available for a few years.

*Board Member Vaglivello* asked if *Mr. Lowell* had researched other textbooks; *Mr. Lowell* responded he had.

#### Adjournment

##### Motion to Adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

**Motion:** (S. Reilly-Monaco)

**Second:** (G. King)

Discussion: None

**Motion passed 8 (Lane, King, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Reinoso, Stevens, and Vaglivello)-0**

16-082

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon Reilly-Monaco  
Board of Education Secretary