

MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monroe, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2018

Present: Chairman Donna Lane
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board Member Christine Cascella
Board Member David Ferris
Board Member Jeff Fulchino
Board Member Jessica Katuska
Board Member Jerry Stevens
Board Member Alan Vaglivelo

Absent: Vice-Chairman George King III

Also present: Superintendent John Battista
Assistant Superintendent Jack Zmary
Finance Director Gabriella DiBlasi
Masuk Student Board Representative Kevin Brown
Masuk Student Board Representative William Santee

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 and Jockey Hollow/STEM Robotics

Mr. McDonough said this is the 9th year for the Robotics Team and the 7th consecutive year that Monroe will have teams at the World Championships. All three teams, High School Team 4478V, High School Team 4478x, and Middle School Team 8878D, will attend the VEX World Championships from April 24-April 29. He added that all the robots are designed, built and maintained by the students. The parent volunteers are present strictly for support and guidance. The students gave a demonstration of 3 robots, performing a task of stacking cones. *Superintendent Battista* thanked *Mr. McDonough* for his leadership in the Robotics program and acknowledged the students with certificates.

Report of the Chairman

There was no report at tonight's meeting.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

Motion: (J. Stevens)

Second: (J. Fulchino)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 8 (Lane, Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Fulchino, Katuska, Stevens, and Vaglivello)-0

18-012

Reports of the Committees and Liaisons

Masuk Student Representatives

Student Representative Brown said that spring sports have begun. The 5th Annual daVinci Festival is Friday and Saturday. And a student production of *The Dining Room* will be performed Thursday-Saturday. *Student Representative Santee* said, weather permitting, SATs will be administered to Grade 11 students on Wednesday; students in grades 9 and 10 will take the PSATs. On March 14, there was a student forum on violence. *Student Representative Santee* said the student consensus was that it was a good first step and it gave the students a voice. *Chairman Lane* and *Board Member Vaglivello* attended the forum as did *First Selectman Kellogg*, *Representative Sredzinski* and the Registrar of Voters. *Chairman Lane* noted it was a very positive experience. *Superintendent Battista* added that 5 students spoke and the audience was respectful to all.

Public Participation

Amanda Wall, a Masuk student, spoke against having the armed resource office, as she felt that their presence would make students more anxious than necessary. She also expressed concern regarding the cost of having an officer with their required training and certification. *Ms. Wall* continued that one of the requirements is that an officer has to be of "good moral character", she questioned who would determine and assess that. She also asked about liability and who would be responsible if the officer misread a situation; having an officer would be "more distracting than their offer of safety."

Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Battista thanked the Board Members and Student Representatives for their service with a token of appreciation as March is Board of Education Appreciation

Review of Fund Activity Statement

Ms. DiBlasi noted that though there are 4 claims over stop loss; the insurance seems to be stabilizing. The Finance Departments on both the Board of Education and Town side are testing the newest version of Munis. They anticipate going live in May.

2018-2019 Budget Update

Superintendent Battista said the Board of Finance has the budget and that the administrators attended the Board of Finance workshop on March 6th. He added that he

and *Assistant Superintendent Zmary* have attended PTO meetings to address both the budget and safety concerns. They will visit the Senior Center prior to the vote.

Student Forum of School Violence Update

There was no further discussion as it had been addressed during Committee and Liaison Reports.

da Vinci Festival Invitation

Superintendent Battista invited everyone to view the student artwork that will be on display at the da Vinci Festival this weekend. He added that snow is looking more likely for Wednesday and they will be watching the forecast closely. There are 182 days on the District calendar and the state requires 180 days. The Board will vote on Masuk and Jockey Hollow graduation dates at the April 2nd meeting.

Old Business

ASSO Position

Superintendent Battista said the current SRO Officer at Fawn Hollow is an active military and will be deployed for a year. Training an SRO takes a full year and they need to hire someone promptly to fill the vacancy. Though he, *First Selectman Kellogg*, and *Chief Salvatore* all agree an SRO is preferable, this is a temporary position for a year. There is a recently retired Monroe police officer with over 25 years whom they would like to hire for the safety component. *Superintendent Battista* continued that he researched the ASSO position at Newtown and the job description he provided to the Board came from Newtown. He explained that the officer has to be hired by the Board of Education due to restrictions in the Town for re-hiring a retired officer. The officer will be directly supervised by the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Principals but the Police will manage the weapons training piece. The officer will be at the school for security; they will not have access to school records, interfere with school policies or take disciplinary action. The hourly wage is \$22.00 and the Board of Education will be reimbursed by the Police Department. *Superintendent Battista* continued that they only want retired police or military with 15 years of experience. As there are only 4 SROs for 5 schools, if the District keeps the officer after the year, all schools would have coverage for security. *Superintendent Battista* reiterated that there is nobody currently trained to be an SRO, this is the best situation for the short term.

Motion to approve the new ASSO Position beginning in April 2018

Motion: (D. Ferris)

Second: (S. Monaco)

Discussion: Board Member Ferris said that he supports this position fully as all of his questions have been answered. He said this is a next best thing and he is not a proponent of arming teachers. Board Member Katuska asked if there were plans to hire another SRO; Superintendent Battista said there aren't and there have always only been 4 SROs as Stepany and Fawn Hollow share an officer. Board Member Ferris added that he feels having an ASSO will be a good resource for the community.

Motion passed 8 (Lane, Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Fulchino, Katuska, Stevens, and Vaglivo)-0

18-013

New Business

Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting the Board of Education Self Evaluation

Motion: (C. Cascella)

Second: (J. Stevens)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 8 (Lane, Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Fulchino, Katuska, Stevens, and Vaglivello)-0

18-014

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 9:06 p.m.

Motion: (D. Ferris)

Second: (J. Stevens)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 8 (Lane, Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Fulchino, Katuska, Stevens, and Vaglivello)-0

18-015

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reilly Monaco
Reilly

Shannon Monaco

Board of Education Secretary