

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on February 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Reed Intermediate School Library.

M. Ku, Chair	L. Rodrigue
R. Harriman-Stites (Vice Chair)	R. Bienkowski
D. Cruson, Secretary	3 Staff
D. Leidlein	1 Press
J. Vouros	3 Public
A. Clure (7:05)	
D. Delia	

Mrs. Ku called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved that the Board of Education go into Executive Session to discuss possible contract terms for the Superintendent finalist and invite in Mary Broderick. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 1 – Executive Session

Executive session ended at 7:35 pm.

Mrs. Ku asked for a moment of silence for the victims of the Florida school shootings.

Item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the High School Field Trip, the donation of \$1,000 to Sandy Hook School from Exxon Mobil, the resignation for retirement of Kim Jones, the resignation for retirement of Martin Swanhall, the resignation of Jane Rossomando and the correspondence report. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Clure wanted to publicly thank Exxon Mobil for their generous donation, which he is certain will be put to great use.

Item 4 – Public Participation

Item 5 – Reports

Chair Report: Mrs. Ku gave an update on the Superintendent Search. She said that the Superintendent Search Committee was nearing the end of their process and that contract terms were being discussed. She stated that the Board of Education member on the Head O'Meadow Principal Search would be Dan Cruson. Mrs. Ku reported that she attended a School Start Time Meeting at CAFE and representatives from Wilton spoke about this issue. It was very informative since Wilton had changed their school start times to later many years ago. She thanked Mr. Cruson for responding to so many emails on this topic. Mrs. Ku told the Board that on February 22, 2018 the Board of Finance would be reviewing the Board of Education 2018-19 budget.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Rodrigue reported that she attended the Unified Sports Tournament held at Newtown Youth Academy on February 13, 2018 and it was wonderful. She congratulated Kathy Davey on the model Unified sports program she has built at Newtown High School and has now very successfully helped to expand to Newtown Middle School. In recognition of Kathy's achievements in Unified Sports, in March she and Kathy will be meeting with the President of the Special Olympics. She stated that the

Board would be hearing from Mr. Memoli later on in the meeting regarding a review of the Newtown Public Schools Athletic Program. Dr. Rodrigue told the Board members that she had reached out to the Parkland, Florida Superintendent and had sent them a wreath of friendship and condolences from Newtown Public Schools. There will be a vigil held on Friday, February 23, 2018 at 6:00 pm on the track at Blue and Gold Stadium. This wonderful event is sponsored by the Newtown High School Junior Action Alliance and their advisor, Mr. Saladin.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites thanked Dr. Rodrigue for working with the students on this vigil and also thanked the Newtown Public Schools administrators for their support as well. She feels it is very important for our students to have a voice in this.

Committee Report:

Curriculum & Instruction Committee – Mr. Vouros reported that at the C&I Committee meeting, Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Earle came to update them on the excellent progress that's occurring with Project Challenge. He said that they have now tapped into eight third graders who need their services. Mrs. Evans Davila is also very pleased with the progress and how well Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Earle are working together.

Student Representative Reports:

Rory Edwards: On Friday, February 16, 2018 the Newtown High School band, orchestra and chamber choir performed for Reed students and it was enjoyed by all. The annual Gay Straight Alliance day of silence will take place on Friday, April 27, 2018. This is a student-led event where students take a vow of silence to raise awareness about the effects of bullying and harassment of LGBT students. On February 14th, the NHS Greenery sold carnations and other bouquets. The Best Buddies club had their successful Valentine's Dance on February 17th. Students can now sign up for an SAT boot camp that will be held on March 10 and 11, 2018. In-depth study materials will be provided at the end. Winter sports continue to finish up with swimming/diving and basketball teams holding senior nights and a Unified Sports Tournament held at NYA (supported by NHS Cheerleaders and Jay Edwards as master of ceremonies).

Financial Report:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report for the month ending January 31, 2018. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski told the Board members that, overall, things are much improved in the budget since last month. He then went over the areas in the budget where the improvements had occurred. On the offsetting revenue schedule, the Expense Cost Grant is based on new estimates and the State will pay out at 73% (although this is subject to change) and payment will come in February and May. In salaries, we benefitted from a transfer of funds in from the Town for the Armed School Security Officers, and are doing well in homebound and tutoring salaries, as well as substitute teachers. In the Benefits area, a check was received for Workman's Compensation and in the Unemployment area, we got a credit for claims. Energy now looks like it will break even – in part due to solar energy at Reed and the natural gas price has not risen as much. Also there was a reinstatement of the Alternative energy credit for 2017. At 50 cents a gallon that will amount to approximately \$8,000. Mr. Clure told Mr. Bienkowski that he appreciated the update and that it was good to hear positive news.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 6 – Old Business

Item 7 – New Business

Minutes of February 6, 2018:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of February 6, 2018. Mr. Delia seconded. Vote: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Vouros)

Minutes of February 13, 2018:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of February 13, 2018. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded. Vote: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Clure)

Athletic Program Self Study – Dr. Rodrigue told the Board of Education members that she and Mr. Memoli have discussed this proposed study at length and are excited about the impact this will have on our resources, athletes, coaches and the community at large.

Mr. Memoli told the Board that there is obviously a lot of interest in this study and that he, Dr. Rodrigue and Mr. Roach will be working diligently on it. For now the self-study is in its infancy stages. They will work to put together a group to achieve a 3 year plan that will impact approximately 100 coaches and 1000 students. Their goal is to present to the Board of Education the best pay to participate structure for the 2019-20 school year.

Mr. Vouros thanked Mr. Memoli for taking on this important study.

Mr. Delia asked if a Board of Education member would be part of the Athletic Program Self Study group?

Mr. Memoli replied that there would not be a Board of Education member in the group but that there would be teachers, coaches, student athletes and parents.

Mr. Clure asked if the Board of Education could get periodic updates?

Mr. Memoli agreed to do so and Mrs. Ku asked if those updates could be quarterly.

Mrs. Ku also requested that the group look very carefully at what they consider “equitable” to mean.

Mr. Memoli told the Board members that he is excited to showcase our athletic program and, as regards looking carefully at what “equitable” means, he has looked at each dollar allocated and believes the majority of sports do receive equal funding.

Mr. Cruson stated that he’s glad that the Athletic Program Self Study is beginning but is a bit disappointed that it’s focused on Newtown High School. He wants to make certain that the Newtown Middle School receives consideration as well.

Dr. Rodrigue said that the Athletic Program Self Study will be looking at the whole athletic program so the Newtown Middle School will definitely be a part of it. However she also stated that the other extracurricular activities at Newtown Middle School are a separate study.

Mr. Cruson agreed and thanked Dr. Rodrigue.

Action on Clarification of Intent Regarding Hawley School Roof Replacement

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved that the Board of Education approve the following motion:

Let it be resolved that whereas this Board of Education at its meeting of April 18, 2017 unanimously acted on a three part resolution for a school construction grant application for the roof replacement project at Hawley Elementary School, which was forwarded for further action to the Legislative Council which was also unanimously affirmed at their meeting of May 17, 2017, let it be further resolved that the intent of the wording “that the Board of Education be assigned the responsibility for this project”, was that said Board was to act as the Building Committee for the Hawley School Roof Replacement Project, because its scope and duration was far less than what the standing Town Building Committee would oversee.

Mr. Cruson seconded.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked Mr. Bienkowski if the Board of Education has functioned as a Building Committee for smaller projects in the past.

Mr. Bienkowski replied that the Board of Education has functioned as such in the past and this was our intent for the Hawley School Roof Replacement Project. However the State reviewers of our application for financial assistance for this project had a problem with the way the motion was worded and requested clarification in writing from the Board of Education. Therefore it is his hope that this resolution will satisfy the State in that it was our intent that the Board of Education was to act as the "Building Committee" for the Hawley School Roof Replacement Project (even though we didn't use those exact words).

Mr. Vouros asked Mr. Bienkowski to define "Building Committee".

Mr. Bienkowski said that schools can have two or three Building Committees, or we could have forwarded it to the Town Building Committee. However it was felt that it would be more expeditious to have the Board of Education do it. He feels that there really is to be no more involvement and it should be a smooth, quick project.

Mr. Vouros asked who is going to be involved on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to make certain that what they're doing is what they said they would do? He stated that if we're responsible, we need to take ownership.

Mr. Bienkowski said that Mr. Faiella will be our eyes and ears, as he was with the Newtown High School roof replacement.

Mr. Vouros asked who we assigned the contract to?

Mr. Bienkowski replied that the Project Manager works with Garland Roofing, the same as at Newtown High School. Mr. Vouros asked if this was the same as at the Newtown Middle School.

Mr. Bienkowski said that it was not.

Mr. Clure asked if there is someone who is the Project Manager?

Mr. Bienkowski said that the representative from Garland Roofing is putting together specifications for bids like they did for Newtown High School. They are an installer.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Public Participation

Kathleen Young
63 Charter Ridge
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Kathleen told the Board members that she is the Newtown High School PTSA President and wanted to make them aware of a fundraiser that is going to be held on Sunday, March 11, 2018 from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm. It is called the Nighthawks Challenge and teams of NHS students, NPS Faculty and Staff, and BOE members are to compete in a series of obstacles testing their physical, mental and creative abilities. This is a community event that is on Event Brite. The money raised will go to the NHS PTSA Scholarship Fund, Teacher/Classroom Grant Program and a NHS students-voted cause.

Item 9 – Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Cruson made a motion to adjourn and Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Daniel J. Cruson, Jr., Secretary