

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

Minutes of the special Board of Education meeting held on November 30, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, Connecticut.

D. Zukowski, Chair
J. Vouros, Vice Chair
D. Ramsey, Secretary
A. Plante
T. Higgins
S. Tomai

C. Melillo
4 Public

Item 1 – Call to Order

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Item 2 – Vote to Fill Board of Education Vacancies

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved that the Board of Education appoint Doria Linnetz as a new member of the Board of Education. Mrs. Plante seconded.

Ms. Zukowski noted that per Charter this is now a decision among those of the same political party as the departing member so that means this will be a motion and a vote solely from the Democrats.

Below is Mrs. Plante's statement.

"First, I'd like to give a window into the process that we went through to select Ms. Linnetz so that the public has transparency into how we approached this. As all of you know, the Charter requires that when a member of the Board of Education resigns, the remaining members of that person's party select the new member. That placed the responsibility on me and John; however, we both felt strongly that this needed to be a bipartisan, collaborative effort and needed to include our fellow Board members if we want to continue our momentum of operating as a unified team.

Once we posted the vacancy announcement and had a pool of applicants, we shared the resumes with all Board members and invited all of our colleagues to join us when we interviewed the candidates. We held those interviews earlier this week and were very pleased to have Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Higgins join us. Their perspectives were invaluable and I'd like to thank them for making the time to attend. While our policy offers flexibility on how to run this process, I sincerely hope and would strongly encourage the Board to adopt this bipartisan model as our practice going forward. It was truly indicative of how I think we want to operate with each other as we proceed into the new term.

We were very lucky to have had many highly-qualified candidates who were willing to step forward for this role, and I'd like to thank them for doing so. Your willingness to serve your community is commendable, and I think I can speak for John, Don, and Todd when I say that we genuinely enjoyed each conversation.

Finally, I am very excited to welcome Doria Linnetz to the Board. Doria's personal qualifications are exceptional - she is highly educated and has 20 years of professional experience working in Human Resources. She's the parent of two students in the District. She has served Newtown in other volunteer capacities, including on the Board of Directors of Everwonder and on the

Community Center Commission. She is smart, thoughtful, sees situations from multiple perspectives, and unafraid to ask (and answer) tough questions.

And just as important as her individual qualifications is how she will complement this team. When the new term begins tomorrow, our Board will benefit from the perspectives of two former Newtown teachers (in John and Don), 2 people who are lawyers by trade (in Todd and Shannon), 1 scientist in Chris Gilson, and now someone in Doria with an extensive background in HR and talent development. Her skill set will be highly complementary and will be a huge asset to the Board, which oversees the management of the largest workforce in Newtown. And this will be an incredibly well-rounded group that I'm very proud to be a part of.

So thank you again to my colleagues for their partnership, thank you to all of our applicants, and congratulations Doria.”

Mr. Vouros welcomed Mrs. Linnetz to a world of diverse personalities whose thoughts and actions will challenge her to do what is best for all students. He welcomed her to question what she does not understand and bring to the table creativity and academic rigor as she applies her HR corporate skillset to education.

Mr. Ramsey welcomed Mrs. Linnetz and appreciates her focus on staff retention type issues and her desire to be a nonpartisan problem solving member of the Board.

Vote: 2 ayes Motion passes unanimously.

Ms. Zukowski welcomed Mrs. Linnetz to the Board and wished her well.

Mrs. Linnetz thanked everyone for this honor and privilege, looks forward to working with this team, and thanked them for trusting her with this responsibility.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to adjourn the meeting Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 4 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary