

**Thomaston Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Thomaston Town Hall, Meeting Room One
February 9, 2009
7:00 p.m.**



Minutes

Present: Deborah April, Laurie Barrett, Joanne Gilland, Holly Herbert,
Steve Catania,**Lucy Santopietro

Absent: Laura Rieley, Cheryl Roberts, Beth Yaffe

Also Present: Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Susan Laone;
Board Clerk, Patricia George; High School Principal, James Wenker; High School
Vice Principal, John Perrucci; Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson;
Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio; and Student Board
Representative, Nick Guertin

I. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

Chairperson, Laurie Barrett established a quorum and called to order the
Regular Meeting of the Thomaston Board of Education at 7:02 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Student Representative, Nick Guertin, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Holly Herbert to
approve/accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated January 12, 2009
- Budget Subcommittee Meeting dated January 12, 2009
- Special Meeting of the Board of Education dated January 13, 2009
- Budget Subcommittee Meeting dated January 20, 2009

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Holly Herbert to
approve/accept the noted minutes as presented. Steve Catania abstains
from Regular Meeting dated January 12, 2009. Motion carried
unanimously.

***Revision**

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Joanne Gilland to
approve/accept the revision of the Board of Education minutes dated
Wednesday, December 10, 2008 as presented. Motion carried
unanimously.

V. Student Presentation:

Music teachers, Ms. Lindsay Krin, Mr. Timothy Brandt and Mr. Aaron Bunel,
along with

music students in the district, provided the Board with several musical collections.

VI. Public Participation:

Mr. Scott Archibald
51 Grove Street
Thomaston, CT 06787

In the next teacher contract negotiations, Mr. Archibald would like the Board to consider extending the day 10 or 12 minutes or 1 to 2 minutes per class period to increase the teacher/student contact time. He feels this would bring Thomaston more in line with the state average when compared to other schools.

** Board Member, Lucy Santopietro, arrived at 7:26 p.m.

Mr. Salvatore Santa Maria
115 Carter Road
Thomaston, CT 06787

Mr. Santa Maria brought forth his concerns regarding the unions not offering any concessions, scheduled large salary increases and cuts to the athletic budget.

Mr. David Colavecchio
52 Lynnrich West
Thomaston, CT 06787

Mr. Colavecchio echoed Mr. Santa Maria's sentiments with regards to the sports budget. He also offered his support for the teachers in the district.

Anthony Durso
1301 Old Northfield Road
Thomaston, CT 06787

Mr. Durso admires those who took a pay freeze.

VII. Communications:

A. New Hires:

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept new hires as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Resignations: no report

C. Athletics:

Tennis Courts/Letter from Marty Egan, Recreation Director

Courts are not usable, bordering on a safety issue. Athletic Director, Bill Ryan, is in the process of securing a viable option.

D. Transfers: no report

E. Leaves of Absence:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept leaves of absence as presented.

Further Discussion: Amanda Serenson would, under normal circumstances, be returning March 2, 2009 from her leave of absence. Considering the needs of the student she would be working with upon her return, the request for a leave extension is based on the educational purposes of the student. Superintendent Mitchell feels that transitioning the student from the long-term sub to Ms. Serenson would be disruptive to his/her learning process. Therefore, Superintendent Mitchell asked that the extension be granted.

Motion carried unanimously.

F. Field Trips: no report

G. Correspondence: as presented

H. 2009/2010 Calendar

Superintendent Mitchell noted her concerns regarding the extension of the school year when a February vacation is incorporated into the school calendar. The vacation, coupled with “no school” days due to inclement weather, extends the school year late into June. She felt the district would be better served with the omission of the February vacation for the new school year.

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the revised 2009/2010 calendar (excludes February 2010 vacation) as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Superintendent’s Report

A. Employee of the Month: Cindy Bird

Superintendent Mitchell deferred to Principal, Paul Johnson to provide a few words on Ms. Bird’s behalf. Mr. Johnson noted that he is pleased to have Cindy on his staff and to bring her name forward as employee of the month. He also made mention of the display work she creates for open houses.

B. Student of the Month: Paige Sanford

Superintendent Mitchell had the pleasure of introducing Paige Sanford at a recent Rotary luncheon. She noted that Paige is “charming and accomplished” and has received many awards. Paige also teaches Black Rock students Spanish for a ½ hour every Tuesday.

IX. Business Manager’s Report:

A. Travel Reimbursement

Sue Laone indicated to the Board that the travel reimbursement information provided is not policy but merely guidelines that the district plans to follow for conferences, including overnight stays. It indicates what items will or will not be reimbursed. Informational piece only.

X. Administrators' Reports:

A. Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson

- In his Principal's report, Mr. Johnson noted nine items on behalf of the Technology committee that needed to be brought to the Board's attention.
- Mr. Johnson wanted to acknowledge the new children's librarian, Mr. Steven Fowler, who has been visiting Black Rock School.
- Mr. Johnson also wanted to acknowledge the technology committee members for their "early morning" dedication to the committee.

B. Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer

Written report, as presented

C. High School Principal, James Wenker

Written report, as presented

D. Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio

Written report, as presented

XI. Student Representatives' Reports:

Student Representative, Nick Guertin, stated that the students are currently participating in Spirit Week at the high school with the culmination being a student vs. faculty basketball game scheduled for Friday. Nick also stated that the National Honor Society is currently in the beginning stages of arranging tutors for students who are in danger of failing.

XII. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Budget:

Expenditures and Transfers:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Steve Catania to approve/accept the budget expenditures and transfers as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2009/2010 Budget Presentation:

Business Manager, Sue Laone, presented the 2009/2010 budget proposal to the Board which noted an overall increase of 3.35% (less severance included). Increases were noted in salaries, employee benefits, and property with the largest percentage increase in tuition. The tuition increase relates directly to a DCF placement, which the Board of Education has no control over. Percentage decreases in purchased services, supplies, dues and fees, and capital were also highlighted.

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the proposed 2009/2010 budget as presented. A vote of three (no) two (yes) was cast in favor of the budget. Motion denied.

Deborah April (yes)
Lucy Santopietro (yes)
Steve Catania (no)
Holly Herbert (no)
Joanne Gilland (no)

Those Board members who cast a “no” vote asked for an a Special meeting to consider alternate budget reductions.

B. Curriculum/Instruction:

Paula Banas, was invited to the Board meeting to share the work that has done in the district as it relates to Math and data analysis with grades K-6.

C. Maintenance/Facilities:

No Report

D. Technology:

Mr. Johnson highlighted several items from his written report regarding computer purchases, SASI support, the telephone system, the change over to HD television cable and the need for expanded bandwidth to name a few.

E. Personnel:

No Report

F. Transportation:

No report

G. Athletics:

No report

H. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee:

No report

I. Policy:

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Steve Catania to approve/accept the FMLA Policy 4152.6 and Communicable Disease Updates 5141.22 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Government Relations:

No report

K. Affiliations:

CABE Legislative Breakfast: Information, as presented.

XIII. Old Business:

- A. Call Back/Rehire Policy tabled from January 12, 2009 Board Meeting for further discussion. It was the consensus of the Board not to implement a policy regarding the rehiring/call back of “non- union” staff members.
- B. P.A.T.H.S. – Out of District Tuition Students
On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the P.A.T.H.S. policy as presented with the following tuition as of 2/03/2009:
 - Full Year: \$11,000
 - Half Year: \$ 5,500

Motion carried unanimously.

XIV. New Business:

None

XV: Items for Future Agendas:

None

XVI. Executive Session:

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to enter into executive session at 9:11 p.m. to discuss personnel issues relating to the Superintendent’s evaluation. Motion carried unanimously.

The following parties entered into Executive Session:

Board Members:

Deborah April
Laurie Barrett
Joanne Gilland
Holly Herbert
Steve Catania
Lucy Santopietro

Superintendent Mitchell

XVII. Adjournment:

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 10:15 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.