

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 9, 2011
Westbrook High School Library

I. CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of August 09, 2011 was called to order by Matthew Alaimo, Chair at 7:00 p.m. in the Westbrook High School Library

Members Present: Matthew Alaimo, Myrn Keryc, Maureen Westbrook, Sally Greaves, Lee Bridgewater, Delia Adorno, Joseph Campbell

Absent: Marti White, Pat Labbadia III

Also Present: Superintendent Patricia Charles, Administrators: Robert Hale, Katherine Bishop, Cori DiMaggio; Sp. Ed. Director Jeffrey Newton; PTO Rep: Lisa Winch; Noel Bishop, First Selectman

II. PLEDGE

III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT- None

IV. BOARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – Dr. Charles welcomed Cori DiMaggio and Jeff Newton and commended them for their work thus far in their new positions.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

VI. FINANCIALS

- A. Approval of the payment of bills: Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mrs. Bridgewater to pay bills in the amount of \$36,114.97. **Vote unanimous**
Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mrs. Adorno to pay bills in the amount of \$104,863.37. **Vote unanimous.**
- B. Approval of the expenditures ending July 31, 2011: Moved by Mrs. Bridgewater and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to approve encumbrances for the period ending July 31, 2011. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. **HR Budget Sense Module Update** – Mrs. Wysocki reported to the board on the Human Resource module of the financial software. The program will be able to track attendance and provide reports, track tenure, years of service, etc.
- 1. **Payment Approval Process** – Dr. Charles talked about the change in the Town Treasurer's office in regard to the hours of availability. There is a change in how the duties and schedule will be carried out by the Treasurer and her deputies. Mrs. Butterworth will only be available on Thursdays after 5 PM to process deposits and sign checks. It is the Town's understanding that the Board of Education processes payroll bi-weekly and need checks signed on a Wednesday to meet the Thursday payroll. Mrs. Butterworth is willing to accommodate this schedule.

Regarding the signing of the A/P checks, the Treasurer would prefer the BOE change to a bi-weekly or even a weekly schedule for payables since accumulating all the checks for a month creates a difficult workload. "Spikes" in the Town's cash-flow due to our current BOE procedure cause additional transfers of investment funds to cover the large expenses. A more even distribution of anticipated need leads to better investment decisions and better wellbeing for Westbrook's finances.

Mrs. Wysocki supports a change in BOE practice. A bi-weekly schedule would allow the WPS business office to process the payables checks in the week between payroll weeks. Preparing checks more frequently will improve organization while preventing accidental misplacement. It will provide a balanced workflow and improve efficiency. With the new financial software, Mrs. Wysocki is able to e-mail the Board the check listings directly out of the software prior to Thursday night. Dr. Charles proposed that if there is a question on any item, that Mrs. Wysocki hold the payment until all issues were resolved. Concerns were expressed by Mr. Alaimo, specifically that we would be compromising the Board's budget oversight process to accommodate the town. Mrs. Westbrook questioned if the board is over-engaging in the bill paying process. In conclusion of the conversation, Mr. Alaimo requested a survey of other boards of education through CAFE and CASBO on their procedures. The discussion will continue at the September meeting.

- D. **Ganim Insurance Report** – Mrs. Wysocki said the loss ratio has risen to 96.58.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting** of June 14, 2011
- B. **Approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting** of June 30, 2011
- C. **Policy Second Reading – Policy 6172.6 Distance Education Virtual Online Courses**
- D. **Policy Second Reading – Policy 5131.81 Electronic Devices**

Moved by Mrs. Bridgewater and seconded by Mrs. Adorno to approve items A through D of the Consent Agenda.
Vote unanimous.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Field Trip Request(s)** – Dr. Charles presented the WHS Music Department request for permission to go to Washington DC on March 15-18, 2012. Approximately 80 students will travel by coach bus. Three teachers and 5 parents will attend. The cost of the trip is approximately \$600. The purpose of the trip is to expose music students to high level performances by world class ensembles. Mrs. Allen, Music Teacher, was present and spoke about the plans to perform at the National Cathedral if all goes well and that Mr. Gearhardt is looking into performances by the military bands. Dr. Charles recommended the Board approve the request for WHS music students to travel to Washington DC March 15-18, 2012. Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook. **Vote unanimous.**

Moved by Mrs. Keryc and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to add to VIII. New Business, Item D: Music With a Message. **Vote Unanimous.**

- B. **2011-2012 Board Meeting Calendar** – Dr. Charles explained that the second Tuesday in April for the board meeting conflicts with school vacation in the calendar. After discussion, the board agreed to change the April meeting to April 3, 2012 and the November meeting to November 1, 2011 (which will become a special meeting) in order to avoid conflict with Election Day. Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Adorno. **Vote unanimous.**
- C. **Superintendent Goals 2011-2012** – Dr. Charles presented goals for the 2011-2012 school year. Some highlights include focusing on individual needs of students through PLC's, new assessment software (STAR); Budget Sense (financial and human resource software); mentoring of new administrators, Technology Plan, and School Climate.
- D. **Music With A Message** - Mr. Alaimo mentioned a group he observed while in Wisconsin that performed "Music With A Message". He suggested researching the possibility of the group coming to Westbrook. Dr. Charles agreed that she would pursue the idea.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. **Superintendent Comments** – Dr. Charles mentioned that Mr. Savage is arranging for the Army Band to perform in our gymnasium. Dr. Charles said that plans for Convocation are underway

and that National Honor Society will be involved in a Zachary Bernier fundraiser. Employees will be able to make donations at the breakfast, submit an inspiring message to colleagues for \$2.00 or purchase T shirts and wrist bands. Breakfast will begin at 7:45 a.m. Selectman Noel Bishop and Matt Alaimo will welcome the staff at Convocation. Mrs. Charles also talked about New Teacher Orientation and a planned "Scavenger Hunt" that will help the new teachers become familiar with Westbrook.

- B. Administrator Comments** – CMT and CAPT results were shared by Mrs. Bishop, Mrs. DiMaggio and Mr. Hale. The three administrators worked together to present a more uniform and clear summary of the districts strengths and areas of weakness. Mrs. Bishop provided a handout and was pleased that Daisy Ingraham was 4th in our DRG in Grade 3 Reading and 7th in our DRG in Grade 4 reading. In Grade 3 Writing we are 6th in our DRG. Actions planned to remediate weak areas are being developed and will be the topic of the first faculty meeting with staff.

Mrs. DiMaggio presented the middle school CMT results and said that schedules have already been made to support children needing extra help. She explained that she did not want to take students out of "specials", thus there is no recess for grades 6, 7 & 8. She hopes parents will be supportive. Highlights of the CMT show Grade 5 at the top of the DRG in Writing, Grade 7 is below state in writing, but math and reading are above state. Grade 8 is 2nd in DRG in Math. In grades 5 and 6, she stated that she wants to see more growth. Grade 5 did well in Science, but Grade 8 was down in Science. Changes have been made in the Science curriculum.

Mr. Hale presented the CAPT results and was pleased that the 10th graders performed better than last year. Writing was back up to previous performance levels, but Mathematics showed a decline. Math teachers attended training this summer and changes in curriculum to align with CCSS are anticipated. Students in integrated mathematics will also move directly into Geometry before taking Algebra I to introduce them to more geometry before the end of the 10th grade year.

Mr. Jeffrey Newton, Special Services Director expressed appreciation to all who have helped him adjust to his new role. He reported that summer school went well and plans are in place to make it more cost effective for next year. He has reviewed evaluation plans for teachers. Hiring has included a school psychologist and he is in the process of hiring a school nurse and paraprofessionals.

X. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Boiler Conversion Update** – Dr. Charles reported the WHS boiler project and conversion of school boilers to gas will not occur this summer, but will happen in February. The gas lines are being installed this summer in preparation for the conversion next summer.

XI. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

- A. Policy** - Dr. Charles said the policy committee will meet on August 25.
- B. Communications Subcommittee** – A planning meeting will occur with Dr. Charles on August 11 and the first meeting of the new school year will be held on September 13. Mrs. Keryc reported on an article from the NY Times that she will share with the board entitled *Education Needs a Digital Upgrade*; and the same article refers to a book entitled *Now You See It*.
- B. Long Range Plan** – Matt Alaimo reported there was no meeting in June, but a meeting will be scheduled for September in light of the conversation with the town regarding the Capital Plan.

- XII. PUBLIC COMMENT** : Lisa Winch, PTO Representative commented on the NY Times Article mentioned by Mrs. Keryc, Item XI.B. She expressed concern as to how our students can be on the cutting edge of technology when the economy is down and budgets are being cut. She stressed that we must keep asking the questions.

XIII. PERSONNEL

- A. Resignation(s)** – Dr. Charles reported that Susan Cawley, WMS/WHS nurse, submitted a letter of resignation. Her expertise in the Wellness Initiative will be missed. Dr. Charles reported that Elizabeth Farrell, cafeteria cook since 1998, sent a letter regarding her decision to retire. Both Mrs. Cawley and Mrs. Farrell are wished the best in their new endeavors.
- B. Professional Appointments** – Dr. Charles recommended the appointment of Patricia Goad to the position of Library Media Specialist for the Westbrook Middle School, the appointment of Laura Norbut to the position of social studies teacher at the middle school, and the appointment of Nicole Archambault to the position of school psychologist at the middle and high school levels. Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to approve Dr. Charles recommendations. **Vote unanimous.**

XIV. ADJOURN: Moved by Mrs. Westbrook and seconded by Mr. Bridgewater to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Myrn Keryc, Board Secretary



Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION
Tuesday, August 9, 2011
Special Board of Education Meeting 6:00 p.m.
WHS Library

MINUTES

I. Call to Order: The special meeting of August 9, 2011 was called to order by Mrs. Keryc at 6:05 p.m.

Present: Joseph Campbell, Dee Adorno, Myrn Keryc, Sally Greaves, Lee Bridgewater, Maureen Westbrook @ 6:06 p.m.

Absent: Matthew Alaimo, Marti White, Pat Labbadia III

Also Present: Superintendent, Patricia Charles; Noel Bishop, First Selectman; Andrew Urban, Town Finance Manager; Paul Connelly and Gary Gavigan, Board of Finance; Lesley Wysocki, School Business Manager

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss, meet and confer with municipal fiscal authorities on the upcoming negotiations.

The joint meeting provided the board of education with information about the Town's fiscal status and tenor of the Town as it pertains to negotiations. It was concluded, because of the unknown with regard to state and federal funds, that it would be wise to be conservative as negotiations approach. The Board was made aware that Westbrook has one of the highest debt structures in the state.

Mr. Urban mentioned that grant funding we currently have will not be there in the future.

Mr. Gavigan stated that budgets have been structured well, but for the future, spending will focus on things that are needed.

Mr. Bishop mentioned that a property revaluation will take place this year, but the numbers won't be in until October 1 and the grand list will change.

Mrs. Greaves asked about capital projects. Mr. Urban stated that a more formalized capital plan process is needed and should realistically be five instead of ten years. Big ticket items include renovation to Daisy Ingraham School in the future.

Mr. Bishop mentioned that if an agreement is not made with regard to negotiations, the threshold is not good with an arbitrator, as the mindset and mood has changed.

There are competing interests that the Town has that are not "wish list" items, but things that are needed. Planned for purchase are a fire truck, dump truck, police vehicle, and Daisy boiler.

It was stated that the mood of the public is to be conservative.

Mrs. Keryc brought up the fact that some things cannot be controlled such as expenses for special education due to mandates. Dr. Charles stated that we do rely on federal funds for some of that and the impact would be great if the federal funds were not there.

Mr. Connelly reported that unemployment in Westbrook is 9.1%.

It was suggested that other towns be polled as to what is being offered in regard to negotiations.

Dr. Charles expressed appreciation for the input. Mr. Connelly said that he will provide Dr. Charles with the name of whoever will be representing the Town at negotiations.

Moved by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Westbrook to adjourn at 6:50 p.m. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,



Myrn Keryc, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk