

Region #9 Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2004

Present: Bonfanti, Coppinger, Gmelin, Gombos, Harris, Pemberton, Shapiro
Administrators: Fossbender, Calabro, McLiverty, Voss
Others: 20 members of the public
Media: Redding Pilot, Easton Courier

Dr. Shapiro called the June 15, 2004, regular meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. in Room B107 of the Joel Barlow High School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of May 20, 2004, Special Meeting

Move to approve. Gombos, Gmelin. Approved. 6-0-.89. Mrs. Harris abstained.

2. Minutes of May 25, 2004, Regular Meeting, as corrected

Move to approve. Gmelin, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.

Correction: Mrs. Gmelin was present for the meeting.

3. Minutes of June 1, 2004, District Meeting.

Move to approve: Gmelin Bonfanti. Approved. 2.22-0-4.67. Abstaining: Pemberton, Harris, Gombos, Shapiro, Coppinger

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Bonfanti commented on the passage of the budget referendum, but expressed concern that the Region #9 budget in Redding did not pass. He stated that the Board of Education and the administration need to recognize that fact, and in light of the expected budgetary increases for next year, begin work immediately to find ways to reduce the operating budget.

Mrs. Gmelin acknowledged that this was the last board meeting for Dr. Voss. She wished him well in his retirement and thanked him for his leadership. The other board members echoed her thanks.

Mrs. Gmelin also stated that the discussion the Board of Education would have concerning tuition rates is not a discussion of taking in students from out of the District.

Dr. Fossbender added his best wishes for Dr. Voss as he retires and specifically thanked him for his commitment to children.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Kubick, Redding: questions regarding the Falcon Pride field project, the Head of School contract availability, the Banton contract availability, and the specific building project reduction in scope. Dr. Shapiro reported most of these questions would be addressed during the meeting. She stated that the Head of School contract is being finalized and would be available to the public as soon as it is signed. While the contract with Banton Construction has not been finalized, the firm is working under signed agreements and letters of agreement negotiated with the District.

Ed Fletcher, Redding: question regarding the potential admittance of non-resident students to the high school. Dr. Shapiro stated that this would be addressed on the agenda.

Frank DeSalvo, Redding: commented on the importance of communicating issues that will impact the budget, long term and short term. He stated that while the parents and students were made aware of the recent problems with drinking water, the members of the public learned about it via the newspaper. Dr. Fossbender responded that the water issues came up after the budget referendum, and that parents and students were notified as factual information was available. He suggested that the Communication Committee discuss how to improve the methods of providing communication and notifications to members of the public.

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: Move to scramble the agenda to move Report from Financial Oversight Committee to the next item on the agenda. Bonfanti, Harris. Approved. Unanimous.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mrs. Gombos reported on the Financial Oversight Committee review of the Tuition Formula as directed by the Board of Education. The Committee recommended a Tuition Formula of the amount of the approved budget divided by the number of students enrolled in the High School on October 1, 2004. She clarified that the intent of the tuition formula is not to invite nonresident students to enroll as paying students. A contractual agreement with the certified staff allows for non-resident children of staff members to attend school as tuition paying students.

Motion: move to adopt the tuition formula for 2004-2005 based on the approved budget for 2004-2005 divided by the number of students enrolled on 10/1/04. Gombos, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

Mrs. Gombos also reported the Financial Oversight Committee completed a review of the 2002-2003 audit report submitted by Kostin Ruffkess & Company LLC and recommend that the Board of Education accept the report. Mr. McLiverty review the auditor's management letter with the board and what is being done to address the items in the letter.

Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education accept the audit for 2002-2003 prepared by Kostin Ruffkess & Company LLC. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved. Unanimous.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Macaluso, Building Committee Chair, provided an update on the project. He reviewed the current status of work in the building and on the site. As a result of value engineering and scope reduction, he noted that Fields A, B & C will not be completed as competition fields as originally planned. Field F will not be built. These field changes will be submitted to the Zoning and Conservation Commissions for review and approval in July. The servery equipment has been delayed, but the servery can function with existing equipment until the permanent equipment arrives. The schedule shows some slippage in the "art area", but the construction manager is working to minimize the delay.

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: That the agenda be scrambled to move items 8C & 9C to the next items for discussion. Gombos, Harris. Approved. Unanimous.

UPDATE FROM THE REDDING EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Kate Ebbott, President of the Redding Education Foundation, provided an update on the work of the foundation during the past year. She highlighted the number and kinds of grants that have been approved and funded. The Foundation has doubled their budget for the next year, up to \$20,000. She thanked Dr. Voss for his participation as an advisor and for his guidance and support.

Mr. Calabro, on behalf of the students and staff, expressed appreciation to the Redding Education Foundation.

PRESENTATION ON JUNIOR PORTFOLIO WRITING

Mr. Jack Powers and Mr. Jonathan Budd reported on the Junior Portfolio Writing Program.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

The Alternative Educational Experience Program was discussed. Board members discussed how the cost for participants would be determined. After a long discussion, consensus was reached.

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education approves the Alternative Educational Experience, Extended High school, with the tuition based on the existing tuition formula divided by 16 for a unit cost per course per semester. Gmelin, Coppinger. Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON ER9 SCHOOL LEADER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Dr. Voss presented the ER9 School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development Plan. Discussion followed.

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education approves the ER9 School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development Plan as presented. Gombos, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous.

PRESENTATION ON IDEA GRANTS

Mrs. Haig presented an overview of the IDEA Grants and how they are used.

NEASC REPORT

Dr. Voss reviewed the curriculum work and preparation for the NEASC visitation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Fossbender reported on the following:

1. Interviews for the Director of Curriculum position will be conducted during the week.
2. There is talk, at the federal level, of a potential reduction of funding to education.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Mr. McLiverty reported on the following:

1. Close out activities are being done in anticipation of the close of the fiscal year.

2. With regard to water problems, corrective measures are being taken and are in compliance with the consent agreement.
3. Financial Oversight Committee will work on development of policies and procedures for accounting procedures.

HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

Mr. Calabro presented a written report of student and staff achievements.

Mr. Calabro reported the Stadium Committee has formalized their group called, Falcon Price and are working on refinement of the plans for improvements, including stadium field astrograss, stands, lights and resurfacing of track. The project is being segmented into phases, with the astrograss as the first phase. The group has had discussion with the Zoning & Conservation Commissions but has not completed the formal approval process.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Shirley Melnyk, Redding: expressed concerns about the stadium improvements and the impact on traffic, noise, etc.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education recess to executive session for a discussion of contract negotiations. Gmelin, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous. The administrators were asked to be present.

The meeting recessed at 11:12 pm

RECONVENE

The meeting was reconvened in public session at 12:25 am on 6/16/04.

ACTION

Motion: The Region #9 Board of Education directs Carmody and Torrance to negotiate a settlement with Highland Seating and Warehouse Stores in the amount and conditions discussed in executive session, and empowers the Chair to sign and execute such an agreement. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: The Region #9 Board of Education direct the Chair to sign the contract for the Head of School/Assistant Superintendent as negotiated and discussed in executive session. Coppinger, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: That meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education adjourns. Gombos, Bonfanti Approved. Unanimous.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:31am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Eichhorn, Secretary
Recorded by Mary Maday