

Region #9 Board of Education
Regular Meeting
January 20, 2004
Minutes

Present: Bonfanti, Coppinger (7:42pm), Eichhorn, Gmelin, Gombos, Harris, Pemberton, Shapiro
Administrators: Fossbender, Jokubaitis, McLiverty, Voss
Student representative: Gray
Others: ten members of the public
Media: Redding Pilot

Dr. Shapiro called the January 20, 2004, regular meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. in the Music Room of the Joel Barlow High School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of December 8, 2003, Special Meeting

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

2. Minutes of December 16, 2003, Regular Meeting

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

3. Minutes of December 23, 2003, Joint Boards of Education meeting

Move to approve. Gombos, Bonfanti. Approved. 4.89-0-3.11. Gmelin, Pemberton & Harris abstained.

4. Minutes of December 23, 2003, Special Meeting

Move to approve as corrected. Gombos, Harris. 5.78-0-2.22. Pemberton & Gmelin abstained.

Correction: page 1, motion appointing Mr. Bonfanti, appointed to the Building Committee. Mrs. Gombos also noted that the use of the work *forensic* in the motion was a misuse of the word, and *audit* would be a more appropriate word.

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: move to scramble the agenda. Eichhorn, Pemberton. Approved. Unanimous.

Mr. Coppinger arrived (7:42pm)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Kubick, Redding: question regarding the financial status of the building project, specifically what the expenses to date totaled and what was left to complete the project. Dr. Shapiro responded that the information would be available later in the meeting.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Student Council Representative, Ari Gray, reported on student activities.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Jokubaitis reported on the following:

1. Dr. Allen Fossbender was appointed Superintendent of Schools for Easton and Redding, and would be transitioning to that position between now and April 1, 2004.
2. Dr. Betty Sternberg, new Commissioner of Education announced a reorganization plan for the Connecticut State Department of Education.
3. The principal selection process was outlined.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. McLiverty provided copies of the pre-audit Budget Summary Report. He suggested board members review the document and a discussion would be scheduled for the next meeting. He also reviewed the current Budget Object Summary report with the board. He called attention to the Custodial Payment for Building Project and the Electric account. The increase in the electric account may be due to the increase in size of the building, but also the result of the electricity used during the building project. These accounts will need further review.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mrs. Gombos reported on the first meetings of the Financial Oversight Committee. She reported that the Committee reviewed bids for a financial audit of the building project and recommended a contract with Kostin Ruffkess & Company LLC to perform the audit. Kostin Ruffkess & Company is the Board of Education auditor as well as the auditor for the towns of Easton & Redding. The bid for the audit is \$8,000.

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education approve a financial accounting of the Barlow building project by Kostin Ruffkess & Company LLC for an amount not to exceed \$8,000. Gombos, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

The Committee focused on a review of health insurance and the proposed budget that will be presented at the next meeting.

Mrs. Gombos provided a written Overall Construction Budget as of 1/9/04. The document reported that of the original budget of \$33,066,768, \$27,170,014 has been spent, leaving a balance of \$5,896,754 to complete the project.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Macaluso reported the Committee has reorganized member responsibilities to be more effective. Mr. Bonfanti is the daily liaison on the project and will continue in that role until all contracts are in place. Work is progressing. Banton Construction has provided a cleaner work place with partitions to provide added safety. The best estimate of costs to complete the project (and this number will change as new information becomes available),

\$5,903,167, to complete work

\$ 330,458, for work completed to date, but not yet paid

\$ 102,876, for FF&E

\$ 250,200, Project Development

\$ 300,000, Contingency

for a total of \$6,886,701.

Banton Construction will function under a construction management contract, acting as an advisor and advocate for the owner (Region #9).

Negotiations with Kaestle Boos Architects are complete in principal. The agreement clarifies the fees for the remainder of the contract.

Dr. Fossbender commended the members of the Building Committee, Mr. Calabro and Mr. Czudak for their work on and dedication to the building project.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education recess to executive session for a discussion of negotiations. Coppinger, Eichhorn. Approved. Unanimous.

The administrators, Mr. Macaluso and Mr. Hirst were invited to be present.

The meeting recessed at 8:26 pm

RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 8:55 pm

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education approve in principal the recommendations of the Building Committee and authorize the Building Committee to complete negotiations with Banton as directed. Eichhorn, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Mrs. Gombos reported the Committee discussed the driving forces for the proposed budget: salaries, health insurance and debt. She added that members of both the Easton and Redding boards of finance attended the meetings and participated in the discussions of the budgets. Mr. Bonfanti suggested the Board of Education give the administration direction on the kind of increase that would be acceptable. Mr. Jokubaitis stated the administration would present a continuation budget, adjusted for inflation and enrollment, and alternatives for improvements, reinstatements and new items. The budget will be presented at the February meeting.

Mrs. Gmelin will make a presentation regarding the Region #9 budget planning process at a Redding League of Women Voters meeting on Sunday, January 25, 2004. She previewed her presentation for the board.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dr. Fossbender provided a report on 2002-2003 Standardized Test results and college placements.

SECOND READING OF POLICY #5125—STUDENT RECORDS

Motion: Move that the Region #9 Board of Education approve Policy 5125 for a second and final reading. Harris, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

REVIEW OF BOARD AD HOC COMMITTEES AND LIAISON WITH OTHER BOARDS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Dr. Shapiro clarified the difference between ad hoc committees and standing committees. The ad hoc committees are directed to a specific issue and standing committees have ongoing,

continuous responsibilities. A long discussion on the committees followed. Board members discussed the establishment of a standing committee or ad hoc committee on communications.

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education establish an ad hoc committee for communications as outlined in the draft description dated January 14, 2004. Gombos, Pemberton. Approved. 6-2. Voting for: Gombos, Pemberton, Shapiro, Eichhorn, Bonfanti, Coppinger. Voting against: Harris, Gmelin.

Mrs. Pemberton and Mrs. Eichhorn expressed an interest in serving on the ad hoc committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank DeSalvo, Redding: questioned the board on what they would do now that it is known that the building project will need additional funding. Dr. Shapiro responded that the Building Committee is looking for cost savings and doing some value engineering on the remaining work. The Building Committee with the administration may discuss scope reduction if necessary. Mrs. Gmelin added that it is not the intent of the Board of Education to go back to the communities for additional funding.

Christina Kearney, Redding: recognized the contributions of Fran Scharf to the building project. Mrs. Kearney commended Mrs. Scharf for her efforts above and beyond the call of duty. Mrs. Eichhorn responded that the board did acknowledge Mrs. Scharf for her valuable contribution at its last meeting, but it was not recorded in the Redding Pilot.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: That the Region #9 Board of Education recess to executive session for a discussion of security and personnel. Eichhorn, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous. Mr. Jokubaitis, Dr. Fossbender, Mr. Calabro, and Redding Police Chief Fuchs were asked to be present for the discussion of security.

The meeting recessed at 11:20 pm

RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 12:35 pm.

No action was taken on items discussed in executive session

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Eichhorn, Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday