

Region 9 Board of Education  
Regular Meeting minutes  
April 27, 2004

Attendance: Bonfanti, Coppinger, Eichhorn, Gmelin, Gombos, Harris, Pemberton, Shapiro  
Administration: Calabro, Fossbender, McLiverty  
Media: Easton Courier, Redding Pilot  
Staff: 2  
Public: 12

Dr. Shapiro calls the meeting to order at 7:45 PM

**Motion: Move to scramble the agenda to allow for discussion of fields earlier in the agenda (Eichhorn, Gombos) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to approve minutes of the special meeting of March 15, 2002 (Eichhorn, Gombos) Approved. Abstain: Bonfanti, Harris**

**Motion: Move to approve minutes of March 23, 2004 meeting (Gombos, Gmelin) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to approve minutes of April 8, 2004 District Hearing (Gmelin, Coppinger) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to approve minutes of April 18, 2004 Special Meeting as amended. (Coppinger, Eichhorn) Approved. Abstain: Bonfanti, Harris, Pemberton**  
**Amend: Add Gombos in attendance and add wording “of building project” after words financial review**

**Move to approve minutes of Special Meeting of April 7, 2004 (Pemberton, Gmelin) Approved. Abstain: Harris**

**Board Comments:**

Paul Coppinger raises question of wording for budget referendum with regard to each town's share of the Region 9 operating budget. Board members answer that the individual town shares do not appear in the question, only the total dollar figure for the Region.

Mrs. Harris questions budget flyer and why we didn't include “spending” numbers. Dr. Shapiro answered that we wanted to make the flyer easy for the public to understand and not “muddy” the document with what might be perceived as conflicting information.

**Public Comment:**

Mr. DeSalvo states there was a question in the letter to the Editor page of the Redding Pilot asking about the numbers to which Mrs. Harris referred.

Mrs. McNulty (Pres. of JBEA) put a letter of support for the board and for the budget, on behalf of the staff at JBHS, in the Redding Pilot, the Easton Courier, the Danbury News Times and the Connecticut Post.

Playing Field Presentation: Dr. Fossbender introduces Mr. Jay Contessa and Mrs. Cori Distler who will make a presentation on the playing fields. Ms. Goodpaster was available for questions also.

Mr. Contessa thanked the board for the opportunity to address them and acknowledges the limitations of available funds to complete the building project due to unforeseen circumstances. He referenced the extensive need for additional field space in both Easton and Redding and the prevailing “not in my backyard” attitude for additional field development. Attention turned to the Stadium field at Joel Barlow as an excellent option because of existing facilities such as parking, lights, ADA accessibility, etc. Field availability with a natural grass surface is curtailed because of “recovery” time. With the proposed turf field we can extend availability of field for almost year ‘round use. Other areas in need of work at the Stadium field are the track, lights, and out buildings. Proposal involves private funding for a \$1,200,000 renovation project which would include the change to a turf field, new lighting fixtures, repair of track and condensing of various out building into one structure with a start date of June 1, 2004 and promised completion by Sept. 1, 2004. Samples of turf were presented for inspection.

Questions from the board regarding issues of safety, accessibility by all sports, appropriateness of turf height for all sports, maintenance questions, scheduling, insurance and policy issues, recognition of financial contributors, additional possibilities for town involvement, drainage.

Answers:

- Excellent safety rating
- Field accessible to all sports
- Turf height would be 3/8” so appropriate for all “ball” sports
- With town use the town would have to acceptance part of maintenance cost, but this cost is minimal compared with a grass field.
- Schedule would always give priority to Barlow students, then town groups
- Insurance question/ policy question to be investigated by Keith
- Small plaque of recognition for contributors, no large signage
- Towns may want to investigate participation in endeavors such as this for other fields on the Barlow site
- Drainage system in tack from grass field and would tie in nicely. Turf can accept 12” of water in a 24 hour period and be “playable”
- CIAC approved

Project would be approached in three phases:

Phase #1: Turf, track repair and light repair

Phase #2: Approach planning & Zoning for permits to construct one out building and removal of multiple outbuildings

Phase #3: Approach towns to participate

This project would involve both communities with regard to fundraising

**Motion: Move to accept the offer after review by counsel and insurance underwriters for four part proposal of turf installation, light repair, stand/press box repair and track repair for the current stadium field at Joel Barlow High School (Eichhorn, Coppinger) Approved. Unanimous.**

**Student Report:**

Ari Gray introduces Katie Sampson student captain of the girls Track & Field team. Katie speaks of the disappointment of not having a home field for any Track & Field meets. This situation impacts approximately 100 students on both the boys and girls teams. They cannot host meets because we do not have a discus cage.

Mr. Bonfanti promised to investigate

Tyler Silverman (student) questions the availability of the cross country track.

Mr. Bonfanti promised to investigate

Ari Grey reports on the following dates:

May 6 ~ Class election

May 22 ~ Prom

May 26 ~ CAPSTONE presentations

May 28 ~ Senior farewell

Spring weekend hopes to sponsor Polynesian dancers

**Building Committee Report:** Mr. Bonfanti reports in absence of Joe Macaluso

A detailed area by area report of progress. A resource contention issue has arisen and we need to take care of this quickly to retain workers over the summer months. Peter gave a cost to complete report with backup financial information.

Mrs. Gmelin raised issue of going back to voters by way of a district meeting to see if the board should go out to referendum to seek extra funds to complete original project scope rather than consider a scope reduction. This was raised as an idea at First Selectmen Natalie Ketchum's "brown bag lunch" earlier in the day. Discussion ensued, with scope reduction items discussed. As value engineering is considered funds may become available to reconsider items which might have been scope deduced.

Board members were unwilling to go to a district meeting.

**Motion: The Board endorses the building committee's efforts at value engineering and reduction of original project scope to meet the budget constraints of the Joel Barlow building project and therefore will not approach the towns of Easton and Redding for additional funds (Gombos, Eichhorn)**

**Motion: Move to table above motion (Gombos, Eichhorn) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to reopen public comment (Harris, Bonfanti) Approved. Unanimous**

**Public Comment:**

Christine Kearney (Redding): As much as Mrs. Kearney believes there would be a large turnout both pro and con were we to have a district hearing to discuss a referendum for additional funds she feels it would, in the end, be counterproductive and supports the board's decision not to precede with a district hearing.

**Motion: Move to close public session: (Gombos, Harris) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to re-open tabled motion (Gombos, Eichhorn) Approved. Unanimous**

Vote on re-opened motion by Gombos seconded by Eichhorn. Approved. Unanimous

Mrs. Gombos requests figures spent to date on field work. Mr. Bonfanti will arrange for those numbers to be available.

**Financial Oversight Committee Report:**

Mrs. Gombos gives a brief report.

**Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the implementation of insurance premium cost share payments by Central Office non-certified staff as follows: 4% for the '04-'05 year, 6% for the '05-'06 year and 8% for the '06-'07 year. (Gombos, Bonfanti) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to have the Director of Finance report next in the meeting (Gombos, Gmelin) Approved. Unanimous**

Keith McLiverty reports on the financial summary included in our packet and Central Office efforts to streamline the process of reporting.

Dr. Fossbender reviews JBHS mission statement and asks for Board action in compliance with NEASC standards.

**Motion: Move to affirm the Mission Statement, Guiding Principle and School Wide Expectations as presented for Joel Barlow High School (Eichhorn, Bonfanti) Approved. Harris abstained.**

Dr. Fossbender and Ross Calabro speak about the extended high school experience, in essence a partial fifth year. Discussion and questions from the board. Concept will be tabled until next meeting and further information can be gathered with regard to involvement, cost, etc.

Discussion on regional Center for the Arts program. Three students from Easton have requested tuition and transportation to attend. Discussion and questions. Consensus from Board is that we cannot offer tuition or transportation but that the administration, through the guidance dept., should make efforts in scheduling to allow students to attend if they wish.

Dr. Fossbender announces the receipt of letter of resignation from Jay Voss, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Board members offer words of thanks and warm wishes to Jay Voss on his retirement.

**Motion: Move to accept with regret, commendation and thanks for four years of curriculum development and implementation in our district the resignation of Jay Voss (Shapiro, Eichhorn) Approved. Bonfanti votes no.**

Dr. Fossbender reports on pressing issues facing the State legislators prior to their summer break which commences at midnight May 5, 2004. In particular vote governing voice mail FOI, and ECS grant monies.

Dr. Fossbender reads proclamation from Governor John G. Rowland to Joel Barlow High School regarding excellence in number one rank on CAPT scores for class of 2005. The proclamation will also be read at the CAPT breakfast tomorrow morning.

**Public Comment:**

Christine Kearney (Redding): Thanks the board for their diligence in the budget process and urges citizens to put their faith in the elected board members.

Allie Farsun (Redding Pilot): Question regarding report by building committee with regard to stage lighting and field completion. Mr. Calabro answers.

Into executive session at 12:10 am (April 28, 2004)

Invited: Dr. Fossbender, Mr. Calabro

Return to public session: 1:01 am

**Motion on items discussed in executive session: The Board rejects all electrical bids received in the competitive bid process for the Joel Barlow building project because they exceed available funds (Gombos, Eichhorn) Approved. Unanimous**

**Motion: Move to adjourn (Coppinger, Gmelin) Approved. Unanimous**

Meeting adjourned 1:03 am (4/28/04)

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Eichhorn  
Region 9 Board of Education Secretary