

REGION #9 BOARD OF EDUCATION  
April 26, 2011  
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Abrams, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Macchio, Shapiro  
Administration: McPadden, McMorrان, Sullivan, Pin  
Others: five members of the community and the videographer  
Student Representative: Erin Meskers

Mr. Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm in JBHS Media Center

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2011 regular meeting as amended. Shapiro, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

Amendment: page 2, top of page, add the following to Dr. Shapiro's comment: "as opposed to the current process which starts with the administration's proposal and proceeds to cut items from that proposal."

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2011 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Student Representative, Erin Meskers, reported on upcoming student activities, including a French Student Exchange Program. Students taking French will be hosting 15 students who will shadow them for several days in school and they will take a trip to New York City. A group of Barlow students will also participate in a Leadership and Bystander program at the Weston High School. The program will focus on the topic of bullying.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Pam Sherman: Mrs. Sherman announced the Barlow spring play is "As You Like It" and she invited all to attend a performance. The play will be presented on May 20, 21 & 22.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAMS' AP ACHIEVEMENT DISTRICT HONOR ROLL FOR 2011

Mr. McMorrان reported that the College Board selected Joel Barlow High School as one of 388 high schools achieving Honor Roll status for achieving increased enrollment in AP courses while maintaining a high level of successful scores (scores of 3,4, or 5).

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON CUSTODIAL COST FOR POST PROM

The Joel Barlow Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) requested financial assistance for custodial costs in conjunction with the Post Prom event. Historically, the cost has been low and the Board has covered the cost.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education assume the custodial costs associated with the PTSA Post Prom event in keeping with past practice. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

NOTICE OF REFERENDUM DATE OF MAY 3, 2011

Mr. Lewis noted that the referendum on the annual budget is May 3, 2011. A District Meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2011.

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL FOR LAND EXCHANGE

Facilities and Fields Committee Chair Hocker reported the Committee has received and is reviewing and discussing a proposal from an owner of property adjacent to the Joel Barlow High School campus. The owner proposes an exchange of two small parcels of land. The purpose of the exchange would facilitate access to a land-

locked parcel. The landowner claims that this access would allow him to clear bush and dead trees from the property. The owner plans to leave the property undeveloped and intends to legally put a 10-year moratorium on development which entitles the owner to tax relief (this encumbrance is to impact the two adjacent pieces of property and remain in perpetuity.)

Board members discussed the proposal. At this point, the Facilities and Fields Committee is working to get further information and clarification, as well as exploring other options. The Committee recommended that no action be taken at this point. Dr. Shapiro recommended that the Committee or the Board invite the Redding/Easton Land Planner (John Hayes) to a future meeting to discuss the proposal. In addition, the Board can request an advisory opinion from the Redding Planning Commission.

#### APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR JUNE 30, 2011 AUDIT

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education appoint Blum Shapiro PC as auditors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### AGENDA ADDITION

**Motion: move to add to the agenda a discussion and action on a municipal lease proposal. Hocker, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### RESCHEDULING OF JUNE 21, 2011 REGULAR MEETING

The June 21, 2011 regular board meeting conflicts with the graduation ceremony of the Helen Keller Middle School which will be held at the high school. The recommendation was to move the meeting to June 14, 2011.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education reschedule the regular June 21, 2011 meeting to June 14, 2011. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON MUNICIPAL LEASE PROPOSAL

Director of Finance, Peggy Sullivan, presented a proposal for the lease purchase of the vehicles that will be operated by the new bus contractor, Dattco. The proposal will result in savings of approximately \$75,000 for the three districts each year (\$25k per district), the result of not paying sales tax, vehicle registrations and Bethel's (where the vehicles are housed) property taxes.

The ER9 school districts would sign a financing agreement with a bank to purchase the buses and commit to lease payments for five years, the term of the Dattco transportation contract. Title to the vehicles would be in the name of the school districts. Two additional agreements would be put in place, 1) a contract to purchase vehicles and 2) an agreement related to equipment, insurance & lease. Dattco would commit to maintain and clean the vehicles, maintain the records required by the state, and maintain insurance coverage on each of the vehicles, naming the Boards as additional insured parties and loss payees. Dattco will indemnify the Board of any losses incurred. (At the end of the five year lease, Dattco would buy the buses from ER9).

Mr. Hocker reported the Financial Advisory Committee reviewed the proposal and recommended unanimously to approve the proposal subject to working out the legal aspects.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize the administration to pursue a municipal lease transaction for school transportation vehicles as proposed, subject to legal documentation. Hocker, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Head of School: Mr. McMorran provided a written report. He announced award winners for the National Latin Exam. Mr. McMorran reported that two administrators and four teachers from a Kentucky high school will visit

Joel Barlow High School next week to observe and study the programs and schedules. A planned 50-year alumni reunion is planned for June 11, 2011. Several hundred participants are planning to attend the picnic on that day.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction:

Mrs. McPadden provided a written report. She highlighted the work of the ER9 Curriculum Alignment Steering Committee and the ER9 Professional Growth & Evaluation Committee. The grade eight teachers met with Jonathan Budd and Jack Powers at JBHS to discuss the progress made this year with the full implementation of grade eight writing portfolio initiative. Mrs. McPadden, along with Mr. McMorrان and Mrs. Kaplan (Helen Keller Middle School Asst. Principal), attended a conference at Quinnipiac University focused on teacher evaluation and performance pay. The conference was informative and information will be shared with the ER9 Administrative Council.

Director of Finance & Operation: Mrs. Sullivan provided the Health Insurance Analysis. The average claims & admin. costs are averaging \$155,000 and the budgeted amount is \$154,000. The Central Office claims & admin. costs are averaging \$8,600 with a budgeted amount of \$9,000. The year-to-date expenses are tracking as expected with the exception of Unemployment Compensation. The total costs for snow plowing was \$64,000, with a budgeted amount of \$17,000. The Transfer Report was also reviewed.

**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

Mr. Logie reported on the work on the Curriculum Committee, which included a mid-year review of the AP program, first semester grades by subject, test score trend, and projected enrollment. AP exams will begin next week through mid-May (and students pay \$85 for each exam they take).

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Karvelis reported that the Committee hosted a successful breakfast for Realtors of Easton, Redding and surrounding towns. About 30 Realtors attended the breakfast and showed a good deal of interest in the school. The committee is exploring other types of outreach opportunities.

Another topic of discussion has been the web sites of the three districts and central office. The current website provider is discontinuing its services and the Committee is exploring other vendor options. More information will be available for the May meeting.

**SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Mr. Karvelis reported the process is moving toward completion. A final candidate has been identified and site visits are being planned.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mrs. Gombos asked for an update on students preparing for graduation. Mr. McMorrان noted all students in danger of not completing the requirements are being monitored. Significant communication between the parents of the students and the Guidance Department has taken place. Mrs. Gombos asked Mr. McMorrان to personally contact each parent to assure the communication process is complete.

The graduation ceremony is scheduled for June 20, 2011 at 5:00 pm at the O'Neill Center in Danbury.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: Mr. D'Agostino invited all to attend the John Read Middle School drama production planned for May 5-7.

Barbara Bloom, Redding; Mrs. Bloom commented that her son, a graduate of Joel Barlow High School, is in agreement that the current high school website is in need of improvement, and should be made more user friendly. She was pleased to see that enhancements are planned for the website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Lewis announced that he and several board members (Ms. Gombos, Ms. Abrams, and Mr. Logie) attended the Easton Town Meeting discussion on the proposed budget (the Easton town budget which includes Easton's share of the central office and Region 9 budgets). He invited board members to attend a "Brown Bag Lunch" with Redding First Selectman Ketcham on May 4.

Mr. Lewis urged that all to vote on the budget referendum on Tuesday May 3, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move to adjourn the meeting. Karvelis, Gombos.Approved.Unanimous.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Logie, Board Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday