

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 21, 2012

A regular meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Wednesday, March 21, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Library-Media Center.

Present: Mr. Simone, Chairperson; Ms. Carr; Ms. Fabbri; Ms. Rosser; Messrs. Bongiorno, Falcetti, Katzin, Shuhi and Waugh.

Also present: Dr. Wheeler; Mr. Buccitelli; Mr. Zaremski; Ms. Della Volpe; Ms. Longobucco; Ms. Murphy; the public and the press.

MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Ms. Carr: to add to the agenda as item Vd1 a discussion of student tuition request.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Mr. Simone announced that a public hearing request (Policy #1130) has been received by the Board and the hearing will be held on Monday, March 26th at 7:00 p.m.

Approve Minutes

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting March 7, 2012 and Special Meeting March 14, 2012 with the following corrections: on page 3005, CMT's should be CMTs; Alex should be Alec; change under Old Business "Copying is 1/10th less than" to Copying is 1/10th of the cost of printing"; on page 3006, capitalize "state", change "date" to data manager; and change "than" to "then"; and on page 3008 in the second motion, include "Mr. Katzin" as voting in the affirmative.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Approve Payment of Invoices

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the payment of invoices for 2011-2012 budget as required.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. Mr. Simone abstained.

Out of State Field Trip

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Bongiorno: to approve the out of state field trip for 3rd graders to Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA on 5/7/12 and 5/8/12.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to approve the out of state field trip for the 7th graders to NYC on June 7th.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Public Comment and Correspondence

- a. STPC – Ms. Fabbri reported: last fundraiser (frozen desserts) occurring now through March 30th.

PTO - Ms. Moore reported: 30 days to the Joanne McCormick road race; Son event at LIS; and K-6 book fairs soon for summer reading choices.

- b. LHS Student Council – Joe Wihbey reported on the high school student council activities.

- c. Public Comment-

- Kathy Neller commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Aline Libassi commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- J.P. Morgan commented on staffing cuts and technology program in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Melinda Minello commented on staffing cuts and technology program in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Robin Rosenfield commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Jeff Legender commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Julie Bruni commented on staffing cuts and technology program in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Melanie O’Leary read a letter from the 1st grade teachers regarding staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
Melanie O’Leary commented on her experience with the supplemental skills program.

- Katie Sullivan commented on compensation for and responsibilities of LA coordinators.
- Tom Batiste commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Mary Lou Kugler commented on how she moved to Litchfield for the school system; and staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Mr. Kugler commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Jodi Ann Tenny commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.
- Eileen McKenna commented on staffing cuts in the Board adopted 2012-2013 budget.

d. Correspondence –

- A letter from Stephen Malo regarding staffing cuts.
- A letter from Stacy Morgan regarding staffing cuts.
- A petition for a hearing scheduled for Monday.
- A letter from Mr. and Mrs. Craig Goulet for a tuition request.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to approve a tuition waiver for \$2,483 equal to property taxes for Mr. and Mrs. Craig Goulets' daughter.

MOTION withdrawn by Ms. Carr and second with drawn by Mr. Waugh.

MOTION made by Mr. Katzin and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to approve a waiver for tuition from April 1st to the end of the school year for Mr. & Mrs. Goulets' daughter.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Administrators' Reports –

- Ms. Longobucco reported: CMT make ups; thanks to 3rd graders and teachers who worked hard during CMTs; and second trimester ended; assessments completed and report cards to go out.
- Ms. Della Volpe reported: Tom Banas from Region 15 has been hired as long term substitute vice-principal; replacement for social studies position in the high school has been found.

Superintendent's Report

D. Wheeler reported:

Board hired Sherri Turner as Center School principal effective July 1, 2012.

- LEF Palooza fundraiser to be held Saturday, March 24, 2012.
- Two LHS seniors are recipients of the CT Association of Schools Arts award, Danielle Karwowski and Chad Fagan, will attend the awards ceremony at the Aqua Turf in April.
- Negotiations with AFSME have started.

Old Business

- a. 2012 – 2013 Budget – Town hearing scheduled for April 25th at 7 p.m.

Board members discussed: changes in budget not a fiscal reason but a shift in priorities for some members; need to consider comments made by staff and public; staff have greater understanding than Board; need to wait for Public hearing; end of year funds are not guaranteed; are preliminary numbers for technology phases; phase 3 based on success of phases 1 and 2; school technology group has done due diligence; computers more a communication medium to deliver information; computers don't instruct and don't enlighten; need to see benefit of what the money put into technology is; put teachers back; take administration position out; trade teachers for technology that has no proven results; K-6 take everything away with the cuts; Phase 1 gives more money to upper grades; foundation years affected more; and not sure how high school technology will be implemented.

New Business

- a. Cable Television Access – Mr. Simonin presented on cable television access. Seven towns linked to Cablevision; members of town appointed as representatives; video system connection; free services available; not taking advantage of services; educational channels available; FCC requirements; Internet system fiber available; 30,000 people are serviced; Torrington and Thomaston's use; and get equipment operational.

Board members discussed the following: cable expenses; requests needed; fiber at school; public TV; DPUC could give money.

- b. High School Graduation date – Ms. Della Volpe requested June 19th.

MOTION made by Mr. Shuhi and seconded by Mr. Falcetti: to approve the high school graduation date for June 19, 2012.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Receipt of and Action Upon Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools concerning the Institution of Teacher Non Renewals Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 10-151 – Dr. Wheeler presented the following:

In my capacity as Superintendent of Schools, I recommend that the Board of Education non-renew the teaching contract of Elizabeth Bailey, Brooke Hazen, Kim Roe, Amy Thivierge, Randi Zanesky, Krista Beyer, Jennifer Digliani, Rebecca Duquette, Heidi Lechich, Melissa Malia, Mark Obolewicz, Adam Piechowski, Caitlin Van Stone, Shoshana Armington, David Constant, Ernesto Davila, Mary Lou Hunchak, John Kassay, Diana Melandez, Peter Perkins, Kerri Petti, Michael Roy, Patricia Smaldone, Debra Staffiere at the end of the 2011-2012 school year in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151, and that the Board accept, adopt, and ratify my determination that these contracts be non-renewed.

I am making this recommendation for the following reasons, any one or all of which I view to be sufficient basis for the commended action: Budgetary concerns, fiscal problems, student enrollment status, concern about State financial aid , staff reorganization, administrative recommendation, classroom performance, and other due and sufficient cause.

You should know that the above-named teachers have been advised prior to this meeting that I intended to make this recommendations; and, if the Board takes action, the teacher has the right under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151 to request the reasons for the Board's action to non-renew his/her contract of employment and that further, depending upon those reasons, may be entitled to a due-process hearing to consider the Board's decision to non-renew the contract of employment.

I also recommend that I be authorized and instructed to communicate notice of this action in writing to the affected parties and to respond for the Board to any appropriate requests which may be forthcoming from the teacher or his/her representative as provided in the Teacher Tenure Law.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Ms. Fabbri: to move that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 10-151, the Litchfield Board of Education non-renew the teacher contracts of Elizabeth Bailey, Brooke Hazen, Kim Roe, Amy Thivierge, Randi Zanesky, Krista Beyer, Jennifer Digliani, Rebecca Duquette, Heidi Lechich, Melissa Malia, Mark Obolewicz, Adam Piechowski, Caitlin Van Stone, Shoshana Armington, David Constant, Ernesto Davila, Mary Lou Hunchak, John Kassay, Diana Melandez, Peter Perkins, Kerri Petti, Michael Roy, Patricia Smaldone, Debra Staffiere at the end of the 2011-2012 school year as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools and ratify, adopt and accept the Superintendent's determination that the contract be non-renewed.

Further move that the Superintendent of Schools be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing to the above-named teachers and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board of Education to any requests for a hearing, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the above-named teachers

and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statute 10-151; and further move that the Superintendent be directed that any response to a request of a hearing, if a hearing is required by law, indicate that such hearing is to be before the Board of Education.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Committee Reports

Facilities and Technology - Mr. Bongiorno reported that the committee met and the groomer for the fields is in; floor tiles in two rooms at C.S. found to have asbestos, will abate it in the summer; budget numbers for infrastructure; draft for Phase 1 and 2; CMT testing survey; presentation on Smart Boards by Center School students; write grant for more Smart Boards.

Finance - Mr. Shuhi reported that the committee met on February 27th and created a list for the Board; lengthy discussion with the Board of Finance; will take to public hearing on the April 25th; and next meeting is cancelled due to the hearing scheduled on the same date.

Policy - Ms. Carr reported the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 15th.

MOTION made by Ms. Carr and seconded by Mr. Waugh: to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

MOTION carried. All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Falcetti, Secretary
Joanne Bertrand, Recording Secretary