

December 1, 2015

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on December 1, 2015, in the middle school library. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Genna, Mrs. Coddling, Mr. Atchinson, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Otto, Board of Finance, and Mr. Voccio, Board of Selectman. Also present Dr. Berry, Superintendent. Members of the teaching staff and public were in the audience.

Absent:

1. Call to Order

Mrs. Lyons called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Motion to move agenda item #7 to this point in the meeting  
(Atchinson / Coddling)  
Unanimous vote to approve

New Meeting Schedule for 2016

The meeting schedule for the Board of Education meetings in 2016 will continue to be the fourth Wednesday of each month. The November 2016 meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, and the December 2016 meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to approve the 2016 Board of Education meeting schedule.  
(Coddling / Genna)  
Unanimous vote to approve

CABE Express

Mrs. Genna explained that there is a \$375.00 yearly fee payable to CABE, which allows the Board of Education members to attend all their workshops and trainings (with the exception of the conventions) for a year.

Motion to join the CABE Express program  
(Coddling / Atchinson)  
Unanimous vote to approve

Election of Officers

Dr. Berry handed out the paper ballots and explained the voting procedure.

Dr. Berry asked for a nomination for chairperson.

Mrs. Coddington nominated Mrs. Genna for chairperson.  
Second by Mr. Anderson  
Mrs. Johnson nominated Mr. Atchinson for chairperson  
Second by Mrs. Lyons

Four votes for Mrs. Genna. Two votes for Mr. Atchinson.

Mrs. Genna is elected chairperson.

Dr. Berry asked for a nomination for vice-chairperson.

Mrs. Genna nominated Mrs. Coddington for vice-chairperson.  
Second by Mr. Atchinson

Mrs. Coddington is elected vice-chairperson

Dr. Berry asked for a nomination for secretary.

Mr. Anderson nominated Mrs. Johnson for secretary.  
Mrs. Johnson declined.

Mrs. Genna nominated Mr. Atchinson for secretary.  
Second by Mrs. Lyons.

Mr. Atchinson is elected secretary.

Dr. Berry turned the meeting over to Mrs. Genna, the chairperson of the Board of Education.

2. Comments by:

- a. BEA – none
- b. Local 1303-AFSCME – none
- c. PTO – none
- d. PAC (Parent Advisory Committee) – Anne Marie Sallum spoke on behalf of the Parent Advisory Committee. Their goal is to increase and improve communication between the parents and the school. She informed that the new parent pick-up procedure has been successful and the feedback from parents and staff has been positive. She thanked middle school and elementary school staff for helping on the first day of the new procedure, and informed that dismissal is usually complete by 3:25 or 3:30 every day. She thanked Mrs. McCallum, Mrs. Congdon-Marr and Mrs. Therrien for their help as well.

She also stated that there was an anonymous survey handed out at parent conferences concerning communication between parent and

school for each individual grade letter. The committee is working on the final results of the survey and will present the results to the teachers tomorrow and will then send the results home to the parents.

In January there will be a district wide climate survey.

The Parent Advisory Committee would like to supply feedback regarding bus issues when forming a bus contract committee.

They are also discussing the state mandates regarding students missing recess.

e. Public –

Jill Cote, a parent of three children, 2 presently enrolled at the Brooklyn Elementary School, asked the Board of Education members to consider hiring an on-site social worker at the elementary school. She expressed her concern for the need after witnessing students at the elementary school who were unable to successfully navigate their school day. She expressed concern for the physical and emotional well being of the students in crisis as well as the student body and the teachers and staff alike. She urged the Board of Education to prioritize the need for an on-site school social worker, which could potentially eliminate the need for costly student outplacements.

3. Minutes of

- Board Meeting held on October 28, 2015

Change spellings to Carolan and Arends

Motion to approve minutes as amended

(Coddling / Anderson)

Unanimous vote to approve

4. Administrative Reports:

a. Elementary School Principal

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

b. Middle School Principal

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

c. Assistant Principal

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

d. Special Education Director

- Special Education Enrollment

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

e. Director of Property Services

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

Mr. Atchinson mentioned the smell in the front office at the elementary school. He stated that a company has come in and inspected, however, the smell continues. He stated that he has heard rumors that it could be black mold, or fiberglass thrown in the air. He asked if there was a report from the company who did an inspection.

Mr. Anderson stated that he would speak to Mr. Tusia about going out the elementary school at some point this week to try to determine the problem.

f. Superintendent

- Payment of Bills

Dr. Berry presented the list of bills to be paid to the Board of Education members. She informed that the financial department has not yet received a bill for tuition from Killingly High School despite numerous attempts and requests from the business office.

Mrs. Coddington stated this issue should be discussed and considered when looking at the Killingly High School contract with the Brooklyn School District.

Dr. Berry informed that this has been an ongoing problem for years. The Brooklyn School financial department has urged Killingly High School to send bills monthly. However, Killingly High School does not use any specific billing routine.

Motion to pay bills as presented  
(Lyons / Johnson)  
Unanimous vote to approve

- Enrollment Report

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

- Bus Contract

Dr. Berry recommended that the Board of Education members seek out bids. She asked Mrs. Genna, chairperson, to appoint a committee to begin gathering information for a new bus contract.

Mrs. Lyons and Mr. Anderson volunteered to be on the Bus Contract Committee.

Mr. Otto urged the Board of Education to include a study of the manner in which the buses operate; should they continue with the same number of trips, should they operate with a smaller number of buses on larger trips or vice versa. He also recommended that a student census be conducted regarding the number of students who take the bus daily, and to examine the availability of bus routing software.

Mrs. Genna informed that she attended a Board of Finance meeting. She suggested discussing the use of vans or smaller vehicles for special transportation services.

Mr. Otto and Mrs. Simoneau volunteered to serve on the Bus Contract Committee.

## 5. Committee Reports

### a. Budget

Mrs. Lyons explained that the Budget Committee should consist of all the Board of Education members. The budget needs to be presented to the Board of Finance by April 1, 2016.

b. Curriculum

Committee needs to be formed

c. Capital

The Capital Committee will meet within the next two weeks. Mrs. Genna volunteered to be on the Capital / Facilities Committee.

Mr. Atchinson suggested forming a Public Relations Committee.

d. EASTCONN

Committee needs to be formed

e. High School Relations – WA

Committee needs to be formed

f. High School Relations – KHS

Committee needs to be formed

g. Recreation Committee

Committee needs to be formed

h. Board of Selectman Liaison

Committee needs to be formed

i. Board of Finance Liaison

Committee needs to be formed

Representatives from the:

PTO – none

BEA – none

BOF – none

6. Old Business

## CABE Convention – Report from Mrs. Genna

Mrs. Genna informed that she attended the CABE Convention and it was very informative and was a great weekend of training and interesting information on policy. She stated that there are new policies that the Board of Education must accept. Mrs. Genna encouraged full Board participation. She explained that new policies are presented for review one month and again a second month. She suggested that this protocol be followed until policies are adopted and up to date.

## CABE Training Date

The training date for new member orientation is December 9, 2015. Members can register on the CABE website. There is also a training day in March 2016.

On January 11, 2016, there will be a meeting at Brooklyn Middle School at 7:00 pm concerning rules and responsibilities.

On January 19, 2016, there will be a workshop with Nick Caruso to discuss the district's mission statement and objectives.

## Any other old business

None

## 7. New Business

### New Meeting Schedule for 2016

\*Discussed earlier in meeting. See above.

### CABE Express

\*Discussed earlier in meeting. See above.

### Elections of Officers

\*Discussed earlier in meeting. See above.

Any matter the chair wishes to present

## 8. Other

## Read Only - Policy 9130

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

## Read Only – A Practical Guide to Connecticut Law

The read only report was included in the Board of Education members' packets.

### 9. Public Comments

Mrs. Arends requested that three public commentaries be added to the Board of Education meeting agenda.

Mrs. Arends requested posting the Board of Education meeting packet of documents on the town and school websites.

Mrs. Brodeur inquired about how Killingly High School does its billing.

She was informed that the Killingly Vo-Ag program does its billing separately, and there is no problem with their billing protocols. The Brooklyn School District seems to be the only town having a problem getting the bills from Killingly High School.

Discussion ensued regarding problems surrounding the Killingly High School billing situation.

Mrs. Landis asked for an update on the elementary school principal situation.

Mrs. Genna informed that because this is a special meeting, the elementary school principal situation cannot be discussed at this time, however, a resolution is ongoing.

Mrs. Wimmer asked the Board of Education members if she take a group photo for the yearbook.

Mrs. Rosen expressed concern about communication at the middle school concerning the "buddy program". She stated that her 7<sup>th</sup> grade daughter has been pulled from academic classes, and has walked to the elementary school to participate in this program. She stated she would like a letter to be sent home explaining the program and asking for parent permission.

Mrs. Lyons informed her that she should contact the building administrator with her concerns regarding this communication issue.

Mrs. Bellows stated that she has an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student who is currently in the process of making a decision as to which high school to attend. She expressed concern about an earlier comment concerning discussions about Brooklyn's contract with Killingly High School as a designated high school choice.

Mrs. Rosen stated that there is one student from Brooklyn riding a bus to Norwich Tech. She suggested having students attending Norwich Free Academy ride the same bus.

Pam Bowden Nichols stated that she would like to know how much money the Board of Education has in its budget at any given time during the fiscal year. She suggested penalty language in the new contract with Killingly High School for late billing.

Mrs. Lyons informed that the voters approved the budget document.

Anne Marie Sallum stated that she started the Go Fund Me account to help offset the registration fees for new Board of Education members to attend the CABA Convention. She informed that she did not receive a phone call, she was told to take the site down. She stated that it was handled in an unprofessional manner.

Mrs. Lyons stated that someone came to her with a concern about the potential ethics violation with the Go Fund Me account. She consulted the Board's attorney who informed her that there is town language about legality of giving gifts to elected officials.

Mrs. Wimmer stated she is an elected official, and spoke to Mrs. Sallum, and suggested she contact the Ethics Board. She also spoke to Mrs. Lyons and the first selectman concerning the same. She stated that she was concerned this was a potential ethics violation, and she didn't want the new members first meeting to be an ethics investigation.

Mrs. Congdon-Marr stated that no one is questioning the ethics issue; they are questioning the lack of transparency.

Mr. Voccio suggested having the monthly Board of Education meetings in a different location. It is hard to hear in the library, and tension levels escalate. He stated that the culture of the meetings needs to change.

Mrs. Johnson left at 8:59

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:01 pm  
(Coddington / Lyons)  
Unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted

Joann M. Engel  
Recording Secretary