

January 25, 2012

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on January 25, 2012 in the middle school library. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio, Attorney Kelly, Mr. Rossi, and Mr. Ives, Board of Finance. Also present were: Dr. Berry, Superintendent; Mr. Yanku and Ms. Rotella, Middle School and Elementary School Principals, respectively. Members of the teaching staff and public were also in the audience.

Absent: Andrew Dionne, Board of Selectman; and Joan Trivella, Board of Education

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio at 7:06. Meeting began with an introduction of Joann Engel, the secretary taking the minutes.

2. Transportation Contract (2012-2016) – Bid Opening

Dr. Berry reviewed the bid process and stated that bid requests were sent to eight companies and two companies submitted bids. Bids were reviewed from First Student and M & J Bus Company. Dr. Berry reported that First Student's bid was lower for both the two- year old buses and the five-year old buses. Discussion ensued. Motion made by Mae Lyons to accept the First Student transportation bid for buses no older than five years. Second by Attorney Jim Kelly. Unanimous vote to approve.

3. Public Comments / Comments by Representatives of:

- a. BEA – none
- b. Local 1303 – AFSCME – none
- c. PTO – Linda Congdon-Marr mentioned that the Storyteller Reading program was doing well. Fran Rotella mentioned possibly having some celebrity storytellers as guest readers for elementary students.
- d. Public – Rick Ives informed the board that there was a meeting scheduled on February 15, 2012 at 7:00 pm at the Cliff Green Center to go over audit results. He mentioned that Board of Education representatives were wanted at said meeting.

4. Minutes of Board Meeting held on December 21, 2011: *Action Needed*

Motion made by Mae Lyon to accept minutes from December 21, 2011. Second by Sheila Johnson. Discussion ensued. Bob Rossi voiced a concern from Joan Trivella. Joan did not vote on the C.A.B.E. issue at the December meeting. A discussion on how her non-vote should be interpreted. Members came to the conclusion that each board member is an individual member of C.A.B.E. Attorney Kelly said that board issues should go through the board and individual issues could be addressed directly with C.A.B.E. Jo Ann Girardi-Voccio agreed. Bob Rossi said that he would like to contact C.A.B.E. with any questions about his responsibilities as a new member. Sheila Johnson agreed.

Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio detailed concerns she had about changes to the meeting minutes of the December 21, 2011. She stated that the minutes should read, "Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio presented meeting norms that were accepted by the board", and the discussion portion of the minutes be moved to a separate paragraph. A discussion ensued. A motion was made by Jo Ann Girardi-Voccio to amend the minutes of the December 21, 2011 meeting. Second by Mae Lyons. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

Sheila Johnson made a motion to accept the amended minutes. Second by Mae Lyons. Unanimous vote to approve.

Attorney Kelly made a motion to correct the typographical error in the minutes from the December 21, 2011 meeting. Second by Bob Rossi. Unanimous vote to approve.

5. Correspondence

Dr. Berry presented a letter from EASTCONN regarding the state required 6-month asbestos inspection and the 3 year asbestos inspection of the Brooklyn School buildings. The report detailed that there were no major problems or dangerous areas of concern regarding asbestos. Discussion ensued.

6. Administrative Reports

Alan Yanku presented his principal's report and discussed common core standards. A discussion followed. Bob Rossi questioned what other resources were anticipated. Al Yanku mentioned more training for staff. Dr. Berry added that costs for professional development would increase. Members wanted to know if technology pertained to common core standards. Al Yanku stated that teachers are expected to incorporate technology into instruction when possible. A discussion of the importance of technology and the effectiveness/obsolescence of our hardware ensued. Bob Rossi asked if there was an outline concerning the common core guidelines. The answer was yes. He also asked if there was training with surrounding towns. The answer was yes.

Fran Rotella gave her elementary school report. She passed out the DIBELS testing report, which was followed by an explanation of the results. Considerable improvements were noted. She also noted the value of the sequential reading program with the use of the Storytown Reading Program.

Dr. Berry recognized the generous donor of the new reading program, Harcourt Storytown.

Mae Lyons recommended a thank you letter to the benefactor when we have more information on the testing results in May.

A discussion of the winter sports teams and their current records were discussed. The ERR report was discussed.

The Safe School Climate Plan was discussed and questions were raised surrounding the use of the word “verified” in its language and its interpretation. Sheila Johnson made a motion to accept the bullying policy with reservations as to its terminology. Second by Bob Rossi. Unanimous vote to accept.

The capital projects report was presented and it was noted that the carpeting costs were over budget but the total costs for all of the 2011 projects were under budget.

Dr. Berry stated that she met with Richard Snedeker, a planner with the State Bureau of School Facilities on Monday, January 23rd to review Brooklyn’s Capital Project at the Brooklyn Middle School. A meeting with the State Bureau of School Facilities to review the final plans for this project will be held on March 27, 2012.

Dr. Berry stated she would continue with a two hour delayed opening on days of inclement weather to accommodate Woodstock Academy.

Dr. Berry requests the Board of Education develop a schedule for preparations of the 2012-2013 budget. In addition, she commented on the information from Woodstock Academy, which will impact Brooklyn’s budget.

The Woodstock Academy tuition will increase 2% if Brooklyn’s enrollment at the academy is no less than 257 students for 2012-2013; the Brooklyn freshmen enrollment at Woodstock Academy will be 46 or lower according to Dr. Berry. Discussion followed.

Dr. Berry presented the following reports:

- Enrollment as of January 25, 2012
- Special Education Enrollment
- Proposed Calendar for 2012-2013

Potential changes to the calendar were discussed. November 6, 2012 will be a professional development day for staff. February 19, 2013 will remain a

professional development day. March 28, 2013 will be a regular school day. June 12, 2013 will remain the last day of school.

Mae Lyons made a motion to accept the calendar as amended. Second by Bob Rossi. Unanimous vote to accept.

- State Department of Education Re-organization Plan
- Cafeteria Report
- Financial Report – January 25th 2011-2012 Budget

Dr. Berry explained the issue surrounding lack of copy paper at both buildings. She assured the members that there is plenty of paper. Staples has generously donated many cases of 8 ½ x 14 and 11 x 17 paper. She would like this paper to be used first. Thus, saving money.

Building principals were excused from the meeting. (9:30 pm)

Before leaving, Al Yanku stated that Mr. Bergenn would like to start Spanish club, which he directs on a volunteer basis.

7. Public Comments

Diane Wimmer expressed concerns regarding Election Day being a regular school day. She is concerned with the safety of students and how traffic moves in and out of the parking lot when students are at recess.

8. Committee Reports

Sheila Johnson presented the EASTCONN report. She stated that small towns in Eastern Connecticut will suffer from loss of funding if state funding is reduced. Discussion of funding and legislation ensued.

Joan Trivella attended the Woodstock meeting, and Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio presented her report.

A discussion regarding policy took place. The members made a decision to adjust the updated policies accordingly.

The next curriculum meeting will be February 13 at 3:45 pm.

9. Old Business

Sheila Johnson made a motion to approve the goals set on October 13, 2011. Second by Bob Rossi. Unanimous vote to accept.

10. New Business

Attorney Kelly will work on bylaws.

Discussion regarding sending honor roll students at the high school level letters of recognition. Possible ideas were suggested. Further discussion will take place before any action is taken. Members will revisit this idea next month.

11. Other

Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio stated that Joan Trivella would like to move the March meeting date because she is unable to attend. Member decided to keep the meeting date due to timing of the budget reports. March 28, 2012 meeting date will remain.

Members discussed meeting in executive session in February to discuss Dr. Berry's evaluation. The members will then email their thoughts, which will be presented to Dr. Berry at the March meeting.

Bob Rossi mentioned the importance of recognizing faculty and staff who do extraordinary work. Discussion followed.

12. Public Comments

Linda Congdon-Marr gave her opinion on how high school students who made the honor roll receive recognition. It should be considered, when deciding how to recognize the students, that it should be done in a manner in which the parents of the students are made aware as well as the student himself.

Bob Rossi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 pm. Second by Mae Lyons. Unanimous vote to accept.

Joann Engel
January 26, 2012