

**EAST LYME BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**East Lyme, Connecticut**

**Monday, April 28, 2014**

**Regular Public Meeting: 7:00 p.m.**

Room B101 (INTV Room) - East Lyme High School

FILED IN EAST LYME  
CONNECTICUT

May 1, 2014 AT 11:30 AM/PM  
*Fesley Blair*  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Board Members Present: Tim Hagen (Chair), Al Littlefield (Secretary), Joe Arcarese, Jill Carini, Candice Carlson, Rob Kupis, Marlene Nickerson, Pam Rowe, Barbara Senges

Board Members Absent: Jaime Barr Shelburn

Administrators Present: Brian Reas (Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Personnel), Dr. Karen Costello (Administrator for Program Improvement), Linda Anania (Flanders Elementary School Principal), Dr. David Miko (Lillie B. Haynes Principal), Melissa DeLoreto (Niantic Center School Principal), Dr. Jason Bitgood (MS Assistant Principal), Mike Susi (East Lyme High School Principal), Don Meltabarger (East Lyme Public Schools Finance and Facilities Director), Robyn McKenney (East Lyme Public Schools Technology Director)

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Tim Hagen.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Chair Tim Hagen

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Carol Russell, 4 Bramble Bush Drive, Niantic, provided a written statement to the Board and agrees the abrupt closure of NCS is wrong.
2. Olivia Facchini, 76 Corey Lane, Niantic; Carly Rowe, 18 Hopkins Drive, Niantic; and Hannah Gellar, 11 Chapman Drive, Niantic; three-season, 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletes, spoke in support of freshman sports and other activities and the importance of these programs, especially to incoming freshman students.
3. Gil Gallant, ELTA President, urged the Board not to consider cutting any certified staff at all, to not hire administrative staff, and to do the best we can with what we have regarding supervision evaluation.
4. Karen Twitchell, ELTA Supervision Evaluation Co-Chair and East Lyme Middle School teacher, spoke of the extreme demands put on the district by state mandates and hopes for more flexibility in the supervision evaluation plan so administrative positions won't be needed. Cutting programs is not in the best interest of students.
5. Rocco Tricarico, 17 Rose Lane, Niantic, echoed two previous speakers and urged the Board not to spend funds on administrative staff while cutting certified staff and programs. He spoke of the importance of keeping programs intact and urged the Board to make the right decision.
6. Diane Swan, 7 No. Beechwood Road, Niantic and a Niantic Center School teacher and parent, asked for updated information regarding the process for the elementary facilities study and urged the Board to vote in open forum, Board member by Board member, school by school, when making final decision. She also volunteered to serve on the ELPS Elementary Facilities Design Committee.
7. Becky Lillie, 14 South Trail, Niantic, stated it is important that all three elementary schools are on the table and are evaluated fairly and encouraged the Board to think out of the box for cost savings and revenue options other than staff and program cuts. She encouraged student input for other cost saving ideas.
8. Sonja Mazzulli, 183 North Bridebrook Road, Niantic, asked the Board not to cut teachers and is concerned whether the Gateway Project will result in an increase in student enrollment.
9. Tara Dowling, 19 Pleasant Drive Extension, Niantic, noted that all Niantic students do not attend Niantic Center School and asked the Board to consider redistricting before considering closing Niantic Center School.
10. Stephen Fennell, 59 Carriage Hill Drive, Niantic spoke in support of High School sports programs.

11. Bill Derry, 212 Pennsylvania Avenue, Niantic, hopes the work of the Alignment Research Committee is transparent and encouraged the Board to do what is best for kids. He spoke of the “whole child” and the benefits of providing extra -curricular opportunities to our children.
12. Brittany Callaghan, 97 Scott Road, Niantic, East Lyme High School student, spoke in support of freshman sports and how they have helped with the transitioning of students from middle to high school.
13. Kolleen Callaghan, 97 Scott Road, Niantic, spoke of the benefits and opportunities freshman sport programs provide to students and how students need these opportunities to reach their full potential. She discourages “pay to play” as it does not provide equal opportunity for all students.
14. Randee Siegal, 65 Black Point Road, Niantic expressed concerns regarding the lack of information and transparency by the Board of Finance.
15. Karen Rak, 27 Black Point Road, Niantic, suggested the public get involved in the budget process well before the budget is publicized and congratulated the Board of Education and the Board of Finance on the transparency of the budget process. She advised the Board to think outside the box as far as how things are funded and suggested that any cut be at the administrative level.
16. Maia Vargas, 18 Pontiac Drive, Niantic, spoke of the importance to keep the sense of community and student connection and to ask the Board if it had considered not complying with the supervision evaluation state mandate.
17. Kyle Taylor, 18 King James Drive, Niantic spoke of the opportunities provided by the extracurricular programs and how participation relates to academics. He advised the Board not to cut the programs.
18. John Arnold, 99 Sleepy Hollow Road, Niantic, expressed concerns that down the road, East Lyme will be living off its legacy going forward and advised the Board to make cuts at the administrative level and to do what is best for kids and not cut student programs.
19. Jennifer Foltz, Corey Lane, Niantic, spoke of the importance of keeping small class sizes and stated IEPs are well met in regular classrooms.
20. Isabel Georgian, 27 Bayview Road, Niantic, parent and elementary teacher, stressed the importance of spending individual time with students and keeping class sizes small. She also spoke of the importance of sports program and students being part of a team.
21. Naomi Cordero, 184 West Main Street, Niantic, asked the Board to solicit solutions related to budget concerns from community members.
22. Dawn Rhodes, 26 North Road, Niantic, stated she moved to East Lyme for the schools and encouraged the Board to look at suggestions and to cut administration before cutting programs for kids.
23. Elise Mathews, 47 Green Cliff Drive, Niantic stated she moved to East Lyme for the schools and encouraged the Board to look carefully outside of the box and to cut administrative positions before student programs.

There was no objection to modifying the agenda to flip Instruction with Finance.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved approval of minutes of the Board of Education April 7, 2014 Regular Meeting as presented; Candice Carlson seconded.

**VOTE PRO:** Tim Hagen, Al Littlefield, Candice Carlson, Jill Carini, Rob Kupis, Marlene Nickerson, Pam Rowe, Barbara Senges

**ABSTAIN:** Joe Arcarese

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION:** Marlene Nickerson moved approval of minutes of the Board of Education April 21, 2014 Special Meeting as presented; Candice Carlson seconded.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## V. SPECIAL REPORTS

- A. Students' Representative – Abbey Robbins
- Juniors and Seniors are prepping for SAT exams.
  - Update on recent fundraisers: Key Club badminton tournament and New London walk fundraiser for homeless shelter.
  - Junior prom tickets are on sale.
  - Hypnotist fundraiser tickets are on sale.
- B. Selectmen's Representative – Kevin Seery
- Town Meeting - Monday, May 12, 2014 at East Lyme High School
  - Town Referendum - Thursday, May 22, 2014 at the East Lyme Community Center
  - Successful vote to allow golf cart use in some beach communities
  - Parents were urged to contact state officials regarding state unfunded mandates
  - Update on the Gateway Project with residential rental properties and some affordable and some upscale residences
- C. Salem Board of Education
- D. Town Building Committee Representative
- E. Other Reporters

## VI. CONSENT AGENDA – None

## VII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

### A. Finance/Facilities/Community

1. Discussion re: Presentation of the Alignment Research Ad hoc Committee Findings Report
  - Committee Chair Joe Arcarese presented the findings of the Alignment Research Ad hoc Committee to the full Board for discussion.
  - The committee's charge was to conduct a preliminary investigation to examine the rationale and implications in considering realignment of the East Lyme elementary school boundaries.
  - The committee held three meetings and will present a PowerPoint presentation in May.
  - Committee Chair Joe Arcarese presented a summary of the draft findings of the Alignment Research Ad hoc Committee to the full Board for discussion:
    - Movement of the fifth grade back to elementary schools where State funding was provided to the town for the middle school building project and if fifth grade is moved, the town may be required to reimburse the State.
    - Redistricting would affect approximately 400 students and would require staffing adjustments.
    - Changing geographic school boundaries would not guarantee equality in class sizes between the elementary schools.
    - Initial Committee Recommendation: Not to have any student movement at this time. Wait for East Lyme Public School Elementary Facilities Committee process to continue before anything more regarding redistricting or school alignment is done.
  - Additional Committee Charge: Examine concept of flexing the need basis for having children go to a different school including changed to policies, student-to-teacher ratio and administrative overhead, as development of a plan to create equity among all elementary schools.

2. Discussion re: Board of Education's 2014-2015 Budget Reduction of \$550,000 as Directed by the Board of Finance

Following the Board of Finance reaffirmation of the \$550,000 reduction in the BOE budget, as well as feedback from many community members and board members, Assistant Superintendent Brian Reas stated the administrative team has been developing an alternate budget reduction proposal for full Board consideration.

The alternate proposal includes a sharp reduction in the support for required teacher evaluation system, far fewer staff reductions, and limited reductions in student sports and activities that will not involve the elimination of any programs.

The administrative team asked the Board to discuss and come to consensus on some broad areas of concern to give the administrators some guidance as they fine tune their final recommendation to the Board.

Tim Hagen noted this is the first opportunity for Board discussion on the \$550,000 budget reduction and led the discussion as follows:

**Option #1 - Close Niantic Center School**

Dr. Lombardo and administrative team: Do not recommend this option as the East Lyme Public School Elementary Facilities Committee is working through a process to explore all of the elementary facility options presented by the East Lyme Public School Elementary Vision Committee.

**Board Consensus:** This option is not on the table.

**Option #2 – Support for Teacher Evaluation**

Dr. Lombardo and administrative team: It is impossible to fulfill existing legal mandates for teacher evaluation without administrative support and the district must be willing to accept the potential consequences of that action. The overwhelming consensus is that the students come first.

**Board Consensus:** Not in support of eliminating teaching positions to hire administrators to support state mandates. Take \$373,000 off the table and ask the Administration to come back with proposal on how we can continue with the Administrator/Teacher Evaluation Plan, monitoring progress closely and providing status updates and feedback to the Board regarding progress, while making an honest effort to do the best we can.

**Option #3 – Athletics and Activities**

Dr. Lombardo and administrative team: Feedback from the community and several Board members suggests that an “across the board” reduction is preferable to elimination of any one program. Request Board affirms direction for administrative team to take.

**Board Consensus:** A modest reduction may need to be taken across the board. Direct the administration to come back with a generic proposal as to how to equitably any reduction spread across all schools if we need to.

**Other –**

Everything else is on the table. Board members were asked to email Brian Reas with other suggested areas to examine.

*Further budget discussion will continue at the May 13 Board meeting.*

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3. Discussion re: **Proposed Unexpended Education Funds Account**

This presentation by the FFO Committee Co-Chairs was tabled to the May 13, 2014 meeting.

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**B. Instruction**

1. Discussion/Action re: **Proposed ELHS Out-of-Country Field Trip to Greece from April 8 – 18, 2015**

The Board was asked to approve a proposed East Lyme High School field trip to Greece from April 8-18, 2015. ELHS Latin teacher Cheri Meier, 3 adult chaperones and approximately 20 students will visit the archeological sites and experience the Greek culture.

**MOTION:** Marlene Nickerson moved to approve the ELHS out-of-country field trip to Greece from April 8 – 18, 2015 as presented; Rob Kupis seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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2. Discussion/Action re: **Proposed Second Reading for Textbook Adoption of Discovering French Today: FRENCH 2 Blanc and FRENCH 3 Rouge, Author/Editor: Holt McDougal, Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Copyright Date: 2013**

The French textbook was reviewed and recommended for adoption by Curriculum Council and the AAA Committee. A first reading of the Board was held on March 24, 2014.

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved to adopt the following French textbook for high school use: Discovering French Today: FRENCH 2 Blanc and FRENCH 3 Rouge, Author/Editor: Holt McDougal, Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Copyright Date: 2013 (approximate cost \$22,088.95) as presented; Jill Carini seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**C. Personnel**

1. Discussion/action re: **Proposed Selection of Superintendent Search Firm**

Barbara Senges, Chair of the Superintendent Search Firm Selection Ad hoc Committee, reported that interviews were conducted of three search firms (CABE, NESDEC, CES) and presented NESDEC as the recommended firm with Dr. Betty Osga as the search firm representative to assist the Board in the new superintendent search.

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved to accept the Superintendent Search Firm Selection Ad hoc Committee's recommendation to hire NESDEC as the firm to assist the Board in the new superintendent search and to authorize the Board Chair to enter into an agreement with NESDEC for services; Marlene Nickerson seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**D. Policy**

1. Discussion/Action re: **Second Reading of BOE Policy 6141.326 - Instruction/Electronic Resources**

No revisions have been made since the first reading on March 24, 2014.

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved to adopt new BOE Policy 6141.326 – Instruction/Electronic Resources as presented; Barbara Senges seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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2. Discussion/Action re: **Second Reading of BOE Bylaw 9300-B – Methods of Operation**

No revisions have been made since the first reading on March 24, 2014.

**MOTION:** Marlene Nickerson moved to adopt new Bylaws of the Board 9300-B – Methods of Operation as presented; Candice Carlson seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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3. Discussion/Action re: **Second Reading of BOE Bylaw 9327-B – Electronic Mail Communication**

No revisions have been made since the first reading on March 24, 2014.

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved to adopt new Bylaws of the Board 9327-B – Electronic Mail Communication as presented; Jill Carini seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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3. Discussion/Action re: **Second Reading of Bylaws of the Board 9350-B – Board of Education Hearings**

No revisions have been made since the first reading on March 24, 2014.

**MOTION:** Candice Carlson moved to adopt new Bylaws of the Board 9350-B – Board of Education Hearings as presented; Jill Carini seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**E. Other**

**VIII. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

A. Superintendent of Schools

B. Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Personnel – Brian Reas

- ELPS Stars Award Ceremony for 2014 will be held on Wednesday, April 30, 6:00 p.m. in the Frances Ewers Library, East Lyme High School

- C. Business/Facilities Director – Don Meltabarger  
Deferred to the Finance, Facilities, and Operations (FFO) Committee oral report of the 04/28 meeting

## **IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. AAA Committee – Minutes of 04/7/14
- B. FFO Committee – Oral report of 04/28/14 Meeting
- The FFO Co-Chairs will be leading a discussion of the possibility of implementing an Unexpended Funds Account (which is now allowed by State law) at the May 13 meeting.
  - FY 14 Budget Update as of 03/31/2014 -- Because of the colder spring, we are still incurring fuel expenses and have had to use approximately \$67,000 of the Instructional Resources line item. This was frozen at the beginning of the school year and would have normally been unfrozen in the January time frame. With the end of the school year approaching, there will be budget transfers to review at the next FFO meeting.
  - Revenue Accounts -- In response to a Committee request for a detailed description of the Revenue Accounts, a detail description was provided and each of the school principals walked the Committee through each Revenue Account line item and provided additional explanation.
  - FY14 Capital Project Completions -- Capital Improvement Projects completed during FY14: High School gymnasium bleachers, fire sprinklers for the High School A-wing,, and beginning May 5 the High School gymnasium floor that was damaged by a water leak will be refinished (with the cost borne by our insurance carrier). The floor should be ready in about six weeks (in time for an indoor high school graduation if so dictated by the weather).
  - High School Baseball Field -- High School Baseball Field water problem is corrected and the field was available for use on opening day of baseball season.
- C. Policy Review Committee
- D. Alignment Research Ad hoc Committee
- E. Superintendent Search Firm Selection Ad hoc Committee – The committee completed its work as if 4/28/14.

## **X. COMMUNICATIONS**

## **XI. NOTICES**

- A. Notice of the following staffing changes:
1. Appointments
  2. Reassignments
  3. Increases/Decreases
  4. Student Teachers
  5. Retirements
  6. Resignations
    - Amanda Just, 1.0 Social Studies Teacher, MS, 3/26/14
  7. Supplemental Appointments for 2013/2014
    - \*Not a member of the ELPS professional staff
- B. Notice of the following out of state field trips:
1. ELHS students to Boston, MA on May 2, 2014 to visit Boston University

## **XII. BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Board Comments
- B. Future Agenda Items
1. Report on Implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten – P. Rowe – AAA 2/24/14 and BOE May 2014
  2. SBAC Reporting – A. Littlefield – May 2014 following completion of testing
  3. Review of District's Long Range Plan – Dr. Lombardo – June 2014
  4. EL Aquatic and Fitness Center Committee Presentation – T. Hagen – May 27, 2014
  5. ELHS Swipe Card Implementation Update – M. Nickerson – Spring 2014
  6. Veterans' Day – J. Barr Shelburn – To be scheduled

7. Professional Development Committee Presentation – A. Littlefield – To be scheduled
8. Climate Survey Results Presentation – B. Reas – To be scheduled
9. Progress on Implementation of Teacher and Administrator Evaluation and Development Plan – J. Arcarese – To be scheduled
10. Elementary School Facilities – Dr. Lombardo – Ongoing
11. Review of BOE Bylaws and Policies – Dr. Lombardo – Ongoing
12. Global Education Task Force Recommendation re: Elementary Program – Dr. Lombardo – AAA Committee 2/24/14 and BOE October 2014

### **XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Bill Derry, 212 Pennsylvania Avenue, Niantic, thanked the Board for listening to the community's budget concerns and encouraged others to contact state representatives regarding state unfunded mandates. He suggested a BOF member be asked to serve on the Design Committee and congratulated the Board on its decision to hire NESDEC and Dr. Betty Osga as the firm's representative for the superintendent search. He also praised the administrators for their support.
2. Karen Rak, 27 Black Point Road, Niantic, stated the budget process starts here with the Superintendent and then the Board of Education and encouraged the Board to complete budget deliberations before the town meeting.

There was no Executive Session.

### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Pam Rowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m. Marlene Nickerson seconded.

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Albert Littlefield*  
Albert Littlefield  
Secretary, East Lyme Board of Education