

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 24, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on February 24, 2015.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Sirard.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Peter Jonaitis
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Peter Jonaitis
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Sirard announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Jonaitis, Raymond Peabody, Lori Unghire, David Peabody, Vin Grady, Timothy Neville, and Stacy Thurston

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tina LeBlanc

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Jeffrey Schumann, Superintendent; Mr. Christopher Drezek, Deputy Superintendent; EHS Student Representative Christine Luksic and FHS Student Representative Eric Barnes

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. Athletic Co-op Update

Mr. Newton stated he is the Chair and President for the CIAC. He reviewed the guidelines for a cooperative team and the consolidation of athletic teams. We are currently having cooperative teams for swimming with Enfield, Fermi and Somers and ice hockey with Enfield and Fermi. The application for boy's tennis with Fermi and Enfield was denied due to the participation numbers at Fermi. The CIAC is currently reviewing our application to have a cooperative football team for Enfield and Fermi.

Mr. Peabody asked about the numbers for the teams.

Mr. Bernstein stated they are looking at our current grade 10-12 numbers. No students can be cut from a cooperative team. We are looking to coop the EHS boy's tennis team with Somers since the application to coop with Fermi was denied.

Mr. Bernstein added the CIAC had some questions regarding the number of students that started on the 2014 football roster at Enfield High. We lost 25 EHS students during the football season for various reasons. The CIAC asked for the reasons and I have submitted an explanation for each athlete to them.

Mr. Neville asked about our chances for this football coop for the fall 2015 season. Mr. Bernstein stated the CIAC will make their decision for May 1st for the fall sports. He is fairly confident this coop will happen. We submitted the football coop application early because there are many components with football that need to be considered.

Mr. Neville is concerned for the younger players playing with juniors and seniors. The weight difference for a freshman and a senior is quite different. Mr. Bernstein added with the cooperative team, we will be able to reinstate freshman and junior varsity programs.

Mr. Neville stated if the CIAC approves the cooperative football team and we receive an influx of students wanting to participate, what will happen. Mr. Bernstein stated no students will be cut from a cooperative team.

Mr. Newton added the coop application presented to the CIAC committee can be approved for a 1 or 2 year cooperative team. We will be consolidating, so only a 1 year cooperative team is needed. He has asked them to rush their decision due to Enfield High needing to pull out from the Pequot League for the fall 2015. The Pequot League will need to fill the vacant spot and additional time is needed to accomplish this. We are hopeful that we will receive a decision earlier than May 1st.

Mr. Bernstein added that we have been transparent about everything with the Pequot League. They were appreciative about this information and he gave them some schools that are interested in joining their league.

Mr. Neville is very appreciative for everything you are doing for our students. This will help with the consolidation process. Currently, we have cooperative teams for girls swimming and boy's ice hockey. Mr. Bernstein stated EHS boy's tennis will coop with Somers once the application is approved.

Mr. Newton added that we are currently looking at the field hockey numbers. EHS's numbers are very low. This might be another team that we can potentially co-op. The Fermi numbers might be too high for them to co-op with just like the boys tennis numbers.

Mr. Neville added that he applauds your efforts to give our students every opportunity to participate in athletic sports.

Mr. Grady stated that Enfield has been known for our robust youth athletic programs. He wondered why we are losing students in football and ice hockey.

Mr. Bernstein stated that there are many reasons like extreme costs for ice hockey. There are fewer hockey programs in CT now. You see strong participation at parochial schools and in Fairfield County. You are seeing more cooperative ice hockey teams now.

Mr. Newton added most hockey teams north of Hartford are cooperative teams.

Mr. Grady stated a lot of students are going to prep schools. It just seems like we are losing a lot of students.

Mr. Bernstein added that ice hockey teams are becoming an elite sport. You may lose a student or two here and there. Field hockey numbers at EHS are low for returning athletes. We are not sure how many freshman students we will have. You need 11 players on the field. Fermi has around 16 returning players.

Mr. Wawer thanked them for the information and your dedicated work. He asked if the State of Connecticut has looked at the trends for high sports participation. Are they stable or influx?

Mr. Newton stated that some sports like lacrosse are growing while others are shrinking. Basketball and soccer are sports that are thriving.

Mr. Peabody stated that ice hockey is a big expense for many families. He would like to see the demographics for the cooperative football team once it is completed. Injuries for the younger football players are a huge concern for many parents. They are playing against larger players and can get seriously injured. He has spoken to several parents and coaches about the football cooperative team and they are in favor of this. What are your plans for the ancillary aspect for the co-op team?

Mr. Bernstein stated we have been discussing logistics. Any interested coach will need to apply for the position and they will be interviewed by a committee. In preparation for the consolidation, both football head coaches had the two teams practice together once a week in the fall. They would travel back and forth between the two schools. This was a positive step and the booster clubs are going to work together to make the program the best that it can be.

Mr. Peabody asked how the bands are doing with this. Mr. Bernstein stated we are looking at the safety concerns due to low participation numbers for the student athletes. The bands will need to be addressed at another time. In the past when the two schools played on Thanksgiving, both bands played at half time and it worked out fine.

Mr. Peabody added that when he was in high school there were two bands and they worked together and everything worked out nicely. He just wanted to know if we were going to incorporate all groups.

Mr. Newton stated that we are not looking at co-curricular programs at this time.

Mr. Jonaitis asked how many students are enrolled at EHS and FHS. Mr. Longey stated 710 and Mr. Newton stated 890.

Mr. Jonaitis asked why is the boys and girls swimming and volleyball held in different seasons?

Mr. Newton stated from the CIAC standpoint, the swimming participation is different and they run separate State tournaments in separate seasons. It is also a facilities concern. Usually swim meets are extremely long and if they were combined it would be impossible.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about volleyball. Mr. Bernstein stated they are held in opposite seasons for similar reasons and we also have a lot of 3 season athletes at our high schools.

Chairman Sirard stated our existing cooperative teams are for ice hockey and girls swimming. The new proposed cooperative teams will be for football, EHS boy's tennis with Somers and possibly EHS field hockey.

Mr. Bernstein added the other teams we are watching closely are for the FHS and EHS wrestling teams. Fall sports have deadlines of May 1st, Winter sports deadline is September 15th and Spring sports deadline are January 15th. We have time for the coaches to check on participation numbers for next year's teams.

Mr. Grady asked if the cooperative teams will disappear when we consolidate. Mr. Bernstein believes we would still coop for girls swimming and ice hockey based on past participation numbers.

Chairman Sirard thanked them for the information.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representatives Report – as presented
- b. Special Recognition – as presented

Dr. Schumann recognized EHS Student Representative Christine Luksic for being nominated by the Enfield Rotary as a student of the month. He also showed Board members a picture she made called "Forest Fire" from her portfolio art class with Mr. Fahey.

Dr. Schumann also recognized both FHS Student Representative Thomas Vose and FHS Student Alternate Representative Eric Barnes for their participation with Buzz Robotics. They have just finished the assembly of the robot for recycled rush.

Dr. Schumann added the competitions will be held in Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut.

- c. Budget Presentation – as presented
- d. Grants Update – as presented
- e. Personnel Report – as presented

Mr. Neville would like to request that the March 12th meeting with Town Council be taped for public viewing. A lot of work has gone into our budget and he would like the public to see this if they are unable to attend.

Dr. Schumann will bring this up at the next Governance meeting with the Mayor and Town Manager.

Chairman Sirard congratulated both Christine Luksic and Eric Barnes for their outstanding work.

Mr. Peabody asked if we included any of the budget detail in the budget presentation that was requested by the Board. You were sent an e-mail with this information.

Dr. Schumann stated that both he and Chairman Sirard have not gone over the budget presentation together yet.

Mr. Neville stated in the past, they have put together a comprehensive presentation and include these items during the presentation to the Town Council.

Chairman Sirard added that when we present the budget to the Town Council, we add additional items or addendums that will explain items.

Mr. Peabody stated that his question specifically was have the details in the budget book been updated to include specific information about buildings, class sizes, certified staff broken down by teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, etc. These items have been requested for quite some time. He would like to know if this information will be added.

Dr. Schumann stated the budget book that was presented to the Town Council was the exact booklet the Board received with the Board's column added. This format was approved by the Mayor at a Governance Council meeting in the fall. We submitted what the Board approved.

Mr. Peabody is looking for the details for each building on each page broken down.

Chairman Sirard stated per the Town Charter, we are obligated to present the budget in the approved format that the Town Manager approves and requests. That format will be submitted as approved to the Town Manager. The addendum you are discussing will be included in the presentation to the Town Council. This is the only why we can do this and still be in compliance with the Town Charter.

Mr. Peabody is asking about the content not the format. Chairman Sirard stated that information will be included as an addendum when we present the budget to the Town Council. It may not be attached to the booklet but it will be an addendum.

Mr. Neville stated that when he and Mr. Peabody submitted the memo, we were looking to add value by adding a cover letter. Dr. Schumann had discussed the information we were looking for at the last meeting as an addendum. This would include information about grants, class sizes and value added. We would be more than happy to put together the addendum for you if needed.

Mr. Peabody agreed with Mr. Neville.

Chairman Sirard stated the addendum will be included in the budget presentation.

8. AUDIENCES

Joan Larson & Bev Harrison, Enfield Together Coalition & Enfield Residents: Ms. Lawson congratulated both student representatives for their dedicated hard work. It is nice to see our youth doing such wonderful things.

Ms. Lawson recently attended a CADCA (Community Anti Drug Coalition of American) meeting in Washington, DC with Jean Haughey, SRO Rick Gutska, SRO Joe Fillmore and Bev Harrison. She distributed information about the program and what they are doing in Enfield. Their mission is to strengthen the capacity of community coalitions to create and maintain safe, healthy and drug free communities globally. This information will help us to prevent underage drinking and drug use with our youth in Enfield. There are medication drop boxes at the EPD to help get prescription drugs off the streets. We will hold an informational meeting on March 4th in Council Chambers at 6:00 PM that is open to the public about prescription drug and over the counter drug abuse. Flyers will be going home with students about this.

Ms. Harrison stated that she loved attending the conference. We heard from many experts about substance abuse. Our coalition is going to start the discussion about recreational marijuana use. We will be sending out postcards to families for 6 months. Most medical Doctors do not recommend marijuana use. We want to keep recreational marijuana use out of Connecticut. Thank you.

Chairman Sirard thanked them for everything they do for our youth.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Jonaitis stated that the Journal Inquirer reported the vote for the Board's budget incorrectly. It was not unanimously approved. He did not vote in favor of the budget for the record. He asked the JI to correct this and is not sure if they did. The Hartford Courant reported the information correctly.

Mr. Peabody attended the Nathan Hale PTO meeting. They are doing a great job for the students. He participated in the First Reader Trivia Night that was held at Mount Carmel. It was a lot of fun and they raised a lot of money for a worthy cause. He urged everyone to attend the Fermi Jazz Festival.

Mr. Peabody is not happy that the content that was discussed previously was not included in the budget report. He appreciates the amount of work that went into the budget. He appreciates the impact assessment Board members received from Dr. Schumann.

Mr. Peabody hopes that the efforts that have gone into the cooperative football team will be the same for when the bands consolidate.

Mrs. Unghire attended the CREC Council meeting. They are looking for an Executive Director to replace Dr. Douglas. The CAFE Day of the Hill will be held on March 25th. She also congratulated both Christine and Eric for all of their hard work. Mrs. Unghire wished the Robotics Team a happy 20th anniversary and wished them good luck with their upcoming competitions.

Mr. Wawer thanked the parents that sent e-mails to the Board and Town Council about the guards in our schools.

Mr. Wawer stated that we are not receiving any help from legislators with our budget. We have received increases with mandates, sped costs and magnet school costs. We need our legislators to help us and hope they will listen to us and file bills about this.

Mr. Grady stated that he also attended the First Readers Trivia Night. It was a well attended event and the program will continue to run with the proceeds they made. It was a fun night and encouraged everyone to attend this event next year.

Mr. Grady also thanked the parents and grandparents for their e-mails and comments about the SSO program in our schools.

Mr. Grady asked what the task for the Buzz robot is this year. FHS Student Representative Eric Barnes stated the robot must stack items. Mr. Grady would like them to modify the robot so the robot can shovel and clear off some of the roofs.

Mr. Neville stated the First Readers Trivia Night was a good time while raising funds for this great program. He would like to see the Board sponsor a team next year. He congratulated both Student Representatives for jobs well done. He would like to know where the meets will be held for upcoming Robotics Competitions.

Mr. Neville attended a couple of the school security public comment sessions. A lot of the same people are attending these meetings, especially parochial parents. He would like to see more public school parents attend these meetings. Our decision has not been made yet and we need to hear from you.

Mr. Neville stated the State will need to find another \$60 million dollars from the budget. He asked about the legislators attending a Board meeting. Dr. Schumann stated they are planning to attend the March 10th Board meeting.

Mrs. Thurston stated a retraction was placed in the Journal Inquirer about the Board's budget vote.

Mrs. Thurston congratulated both student representatives for their hard work and dedication. She also attended the First Readers Trivia event. It was a lot of fun and everyone had a good time.

Chairman Sirard congratulated Buzz Robotics for their 20th anniversary. He is a big fan of the robotics team. You all deserve a lot of congratulations for everything you have accomplished over the past twenty years. You continue to represent us very well.

Chairman Sirard personally congratulated EHS Student Representative Christine Luksic for her art work. It is always nice when one of our own are recognized for something you love to do.

Chairman Sirard congratulated the First Readers for another successful event. Recognizing our students for reading their first book is an important milestone. He was unable to attend this year's event. He would like to see the Board sponsor a table next year. This event is always a lot of fun and nothing beats reading a book.

Chairman Sirard thanked the parents and guardians for sending us e-mails about the school security guards. We need to hear from you. If you can't attend the next public community session, please e-mail the Town Council and Board members with your views.

Chairman Sirard stated the budget process continues. If the numbers from the State hold true, they will need to make up the \$60 million dollars from somewhere. He does not believe this amount will be divided evenly between all of the 169 towns. We are already being flat funded. This shortage will affect us deeply and we will need to be prepared for this. He urged parents and taxpayers to attend the upcoming budget meetings. We need to hear from you and want you to send us e-mails. If you wait until the end of the budget process, it will be too late.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Approve FY2015-16 School Calendar

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Peabody that the Enfield Board of Education approves the FY2015-16 school calendar as presented.

Discussion:

Mr. Jonaitis stated that he will vote against the calendar because he does not like the 10 half day professional learning days. He believes we are inconveniencing families with these half day early releases. We could remedy this by making some of these full day professional learning days.

Mr. Neville stated that parents will still be affected if we have a full day or half day professional learning day.

Mr. Jonaitis stated that a lot of parents are picking up their children afterschool and doing this for a half day dismissal is a major inconvenience for many parents.

Mr. Wawer asked if the 2015-16 calendar will conform with the uniform school calendar State mandate. Dr. Schumann stated no we will not be in compliance with the mandate and are not required to do this until the 2016-17 school year.

A vote by **roll-call 7-1-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis in dissent.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of Continuing Education Certificate of Authority

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Wawer that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Continuing Education Certificate of Authority as presented and authorize the Superintendent to endorse it.

Discussion:

Mr. Neville asked if the students will receive credit for the courses they will take at Asnuntuck?

What kinds of programs can they participate in? Dr. Schumann stated that he is not sure and will find out about this. Mr. Drezek was involved with this and he would know the answers.

Mr. Neville asked if there will be any costs associated with this that we should be aware of. Dr. Schumann stated there are no costs for the Board. They just need the Board to approve the certificate of authority.

A vote by **roll-call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Action if any, regarding Collective Bargaining

Chairman Sirard stated this item will be addressed after the Executive Session.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Building Committee

Mr. Neville reported the Building Committee will meet on Thursday, February 26th. He will forward the comprehensive FF&E pdf files to all Board members to view. It is interesting to look at the different kinds of equipment we will be purchasing. He will update the Board at the next meeting after our next Building Committee meeting. The construction is progressing and they are all working very hard especially with the extreme weather conditions they have encountered during this project.

Chairman Sirard added the construction process has changed greatly over the past 20 years. The temperature changes affect the curing process and they will make adjustments as needed. These guys are working hard and deserve a lot of credit for the work they are doing.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2015 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-1** passed with Mr. Wawer abstaining.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

16. AUDIENCES - None

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Wawer that the Enfield Board of Education enters into Executive Session for Matter(s) Related to Collective Bargaining and Matter(s) Related to Personnel.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-1-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis in dissent.

The Board remained in Council Chambers for the Executive Session at 8:17 PM. No Board action occurred while in Executive Session.

Open Session:

The Board ended the Executive Session at 8:35 PM.

Item #11:

b. Action if any, regarding Collective Bargaining

Mr. Peabody moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Tentative Agreement with the Enfield Teacher's Association as presented.

A vote by **roll-call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston to adjourn the Regular Meeting of February 24, 2015.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Vincent M. Grady
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary