

**COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION
APPROVED MINUTES
MEETING OF THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010**

Members Present: Cheryl Trudon, Vice Chairman
Mary Ann Emanuele, Secretary
John Barrett
Jennifer Beausoleil
Mary Kortmann
Mark Malcolm

Also Present: Nicole Bernier, Student BOE Representative

Administrators Present: Donna Bernard, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Gregg Blackstone, Business Manager

Also present were David Petrone, Capt. Nathan Hale School Principal; Michele Mullaly, Coventry High School Principal; Marybeth Moyer, Coventry Grammar School Principal; Troy Hopkins, G. H. Robertson School Principal; Barbara Trinks, Director of Pupil and Staff Support Services; Members of the American Legion; a community member; several CHS students. The Chronicle Newspaper was represented.

All motions are directed to the Coventry Board of Education.

I. CALL TO ORDER

By: C. Trudon at 7:35 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Annex

II. SALUTE THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by C. Trudon.

III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

There were none.

IV. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Student and Staff Recognition: American Legion Post #52 – CHS Students and Buglers Lynda Chamberlain and Katherine McGowan and CHS Band Teacher Ned Smith and the CHS Band Students

Dr. Bernard introduced Commander Rodrigues of Post 52, who gave a brief overview of the recognitions and introduced other members of the post. Lynda Chamberlain and Katherine McGowan and Ned Smith were recognized and commended.

B. Information: Standards-Based Report Cards (K-5) Evaluation Process – Ms. Moyer and Mr. Hopkins

Mr. Hopkins and Ms. Moyer spoke about the feedback received from parents on the pilot report card program for grades K-5. They reviewed the results of the survey, which was sent home to parents. They continued to discuss the evaluation plan and subsequent phases.

The Board discussed parent comments, the survey results in general, and the new letters used in grading vs the traditional A – F.

M. Emanuele said she would like to see some feedback from some children themselves.

M. Malcolm thanked the administrators and Dr. Bernard for bringing the information to the Board so quickly.

VI. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

C. Trudon said she is getting feedback from Board members and staff and would like input on eliminating the December 23 meeting. The Board talked about eliminating the meeting, knowing that the January 13 meeting would have a full agenda.

MOTION: To cancel the December 23 meeting.

By: J. Beausoleil Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes 5-0-1 (J. Barrett abstains)

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. VOTE: Approve Minutes of November 10, 2010

MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of November 10, 2010

By: J. Beausoleil Seconded: M. Emanuele

M. Emanuele asked that the duplicate words “to before” in the motion on page 2 be eliminated.

C. Trudon asked for the following changes:

Page 4, fourth paragraph, third sentence: the word “are” be added after “we.”

Page 4, sixth paragraph, third sentence: the word “teach” should be “teacher.”

Page 4, sixth paragraph, fifth sentence: “GRA” should be “DRA.”

Page 4, sixth paragraph, third sentence from the bottom: should begin “A comment that one of my...”

J. Beausoleil asked for the following changes:

Page 5, last paragraph, second sentence: “standard” should be “standards.”

Page 7, first full paragraph, last sentence: the word “internet” be added before “technology.”

Page 9, fourth full paragraph, fifth sentence to read: “J. Beausoleil answered she was trying, as he had made his point so many times.” J. Barrett objected to that change.

The Board asked that the tape be reviewed; the approval of the minutes was tabled to the next meeting.

B. VOTE: Approve Minutes of November 23, 2010

MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of November 23, 2010

By: M. Kortmann Seconded: M. Malcolm

Result: Motion passes 5-0-1 (C. Trudon abstains)

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and possible VOTE: Approve of 2011-2012 Coventry Public Schools Calendar

MOTION: To approve the 2011-2012 Coventry Public Schools Calendar as presented.

By: M. Kortmann

Seconded: M. Malcolm

J. Beausoleil said she has concerns about the month of November with so many no school days and early release days. She asked if there could be groupings or adjustments. Dr. Bernard said this is a consistent issue. She explained the challenging factors with November and some of the 'unmovable' dates. The Board discussed the issues of the month of November. J. Barrett said he is concerned with working parents and their schedules, specifically when dealing with so many early release days. The Board agreed to move the conferences to November 18, 21, 22 and the distribution of report cards will happen on November 14.

J. Barrett noted the same concern for April in addition to November. The Board discussed the month of April.

The Board decided to move the end of the third marking period to March 26, to move the April conferences to April 3, 4, and 5, and to move the report card distribution to April 2.

The administrators noted their concern regarding these changes, and there could be impact at the site level for which they haven't had a chance to review.

The Board agreed to table the item to January 13 in order to gain staff input on these changes.

B. Information: Chairman Farewell Comments and Board of Education Member Vacancy Procedures

C. Trudon noted the procedures that will be used to fill the vacancy. Letters of interest will be received in the Superintendent's Office until Monday, January 3, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. The appointment of the new member will happen at the meeting on January 13 and in addition the Chairman will be elected that evening.

The Board discussed the parliamentary procedures for filing a vacancy and asked for clarification of the voting procedures and possible ballot voting. Dr. Bernard said she would get legal opinion on these items.

M. Emanuele read a letter received from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, which is attached to these minutes. In addition, M. Emanuele went on to make the following statement: "I will remember Larry Pietrantonio as a role model. Larry would probably be the first to scoff at that characterization. But that's what he was – to the children of the Coventry Public Schools he served so long and to the adults of this community. Larry loved Coventry. He believed in a good education as preparation for life. But he didn't just sit around and say 'I love Coventry' 'Education is important' in his deep baritone. He lived those words. He gave us example by action not words. He gave us example by giving of his time, talents, and treasure over countless hours and many years. When next you think 'someone needs to do something about...' remember Larry Pietrantonio, he did something about... I pray god will continue to hold Larry, his family, and friends, especially Hannah, Emma, and Molly in the palm of his hand. I also pray god will hold this Board in his hands as we grieve our loss and continue the work that needs to

be done for Coventry, the Coventry Public Schools and the people of this community. It's the best tribute we can give Larry. Good-bye Mr. Chairman."

M. Kortmann read the following statement: "Larry's younger daughter, Molly, and my younger son were in the same year in school. Ever since they were in kindergarten Larry and his wife Hannah were active in school affairs. From PTO meetings in the CGS library, to working to get the school building project passed, to being a member of the Board of Education, Larry was always my go to guy. Whenever I had a question about why the schools were doing something or not doing something, Larry was the guy I asked, the guy with the answers. He was the one I talked to about being on the Board of Education, long before I decided to run. He was my mentor when I finally did get on the Board. Larry has just always been there, whenever there were education issues or activities. The town has benefited greatly from Larry's contributions and the community will miss his guidance and enthusiasm. I personally will miss him greatly."

Dr. Bernard recounted her relationship with Chairman Pietrantonio and noted his advocacy and support for the students and the schools. She said the PTO and parent groups may be looking to planting a tree in his memory.

C. Trudon said Larry was a great example as a member of the Board and as a Chairman. She noted her working relationship with him before she started to serve on the Board and how he had been there supporting the schools out there in the community. She added, she hoped the Board would honor Larry in how they filled the vacancy.

M. Malcolm said Larry was a solid person for Coventry. He noted the wonderful eulogies from the service and how much he learned about him. He said they may not have agreed on how to get to "an end game," but they agreed completely on what the "end game" should be. In addition, M. Malcolm added how selfless Larry was and how he did not want to burden others. He finished by saying he was a good leader.

J. Barrett noted that he knew Larry Pietrantonio more outside of politics than in politics. He said Larry was a very generous man and that he was always willing to help. He said he would miss the man, as the man, and would miss his infectious smile.

XI. REPORT OF BOARD MEMBERS

A. Information: E. O. Smith Liaison Report – J. Barrett

J. Barrett said he attended the E. O. Smith meeting on December 2. He noted that Coventry is second to Windham in attendance at E. O. Smith and second to all of the schools in Region 19 in attendance. He reported on several items related to the programs at E. O. Smith, including that there is a trout farm on campus. He added that there were Coventry students who placed in competitions at the Big E. He added that E. O. Smith would like to come and do a presentation to the Board this year.

C. Trudon asked if information on testing and graduation results of Coventry students could be made available to the Board. J. Barrett said the information would best be requested by the Superintendent's Office.

The Board discussed the vo-agricultural programs and other items related to E. O. Smith.

B. Information: Policy Committee Report – Meeting of November 15, 2010 – J. Beausoleil

J. Beausoleil noted that the Committee met in November and will meet again in December. She noted the Use of Facilities Policy and the Student Activity Fund Policy as topics discussed.

M. Malcolm asked when items would come to the Board for discussion. J. Beausoleil said probably at least one or two on January 13.

C. Information: Fiscal Committee Report – Meeting of November 10, 2010 – M. Kortmann and Mr. Blackstone

Mr. Blackstone noted the items discussed at the Fiscal meeting. M. Kortmann said “unemployment” and “legal” look to be in good shape and she noted that time was spent discussing the position statement and how it looks. C. Trudon said lots of time has been spent on new reports and it is all good information. M. Malcolm said a lot of value has been added with this new information and “real business thought” has been put into these reports.

Dr. Bernard noted that the first joint Town Finance and BOE Fiscal meeting was held, with the next one scheduled for January 10, which is the audit report.

D. Information: CABE/CAPSS Convention Report – J. Beausoleil and M. Kortmann

J. Beausoleil noted that this conference is an excellent source of information. She commented on the workshops she attended. M. Kortmann added comments on what she had heard and benefited from at the conference. The conversation focused on technology and the advancements being made and how, what’s happening in the classroom will have to adapt. J. Beausoleil noted school budgets and how funding will change with the increase in charter and magnet schools.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

By: J. Barrett

Seconded: M. Malcolm

Result: Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberlee Michaud
Board Clerk

January 13, 2011
Approved



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

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Donald Blevins
President
Waterford

November 29, 2010

Lydia Tedone
First Vice President
Simsbury

Ms. Cheryl Trudon, Vice Chairman
Coventry Public Schools
14 Joshua Lane
Coventry, CT 06238

Richard Murray
Vice President
for Government Relations
Killingly

John Prins
Vice President
for Professional Development
Branford

Dear Chairman Trudon, Members of the Coventry Board of Education and Community:

Stephen Wright
Secretary/Treasurer
Trumbull

It was with great sorrow we read that your Chair, Larry Pietrantonio, passed away this weekend. It is clear from the obituary in *The Hartford Courant* that he was a great supporter of the schools and public education and that he had served many years on the school board as both a member and as Chair. It is obvious that he was a fixture in Coventry Public Education and I am sure he will be missed greatly.

J. Callender Heminway
Immediate Past President
Granby

Mark Allaben
Area 3 Director
Hebron

Mary Broderick
Secretary-Treasurer, NSBA
East Lyme

On behalf of The Connecticut Association of Boards of Educations, Board of Directors and Staff, as well as our members throughout the state, please accept are deepest sympathies for this untimely passing. If there is anything we can do to help make the transition or any other activities occur more smoothly than otherwise, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Robert Rader
Executive Director

Patrice A. McCarthy
Deputy Director
and General Counsel

Bonnie B. Carney
Senior Staff Associate
for Publications

Nicholas D. Caruso, Jr.
Senior Staff Associate
for Field Services

Again, the Coventry Board of Education, staff and the community is in our thoughts.

Sheila McKay
Senior Staff Associate
for Government Relations

Sincerely yours

Robert Rader
Executive Director

Kelly Balsler Moyher
Senior Staff Attorney

Vincent A. Mustaro
Senior Staff Associate
for Policy Service

Lisa M. Steimer
Senior Staff Associate
for Professional Development

pc: Donna Bernard, Superintendent
Coventry Public Schools

Teresa Costa
Coordinator of Finance
and Administration

