



## Columbia Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes April 1, 2013

7:30 P.M.

Horace W. Porter School Cafeteria

Board Members Present: Kerry Hoffman, Sondra Montesi, Lisa Napolitano, Lauren Perrotti-Verboven-Chairman, John Schroder, James Thorn-Vice Chairman, Kathy Tolsdorf

Administration Present: Francine Coss-Superintendent

Citizens Present: Paula Shepard, Jennifer Lent, Jerry Hughes

### I. Pledge of Allegiance

### II. Reports

- **Board of Education Chairperson**

- **2013/2014 Budget Update**

At the moment, the operating budget is 0.99% over last year. All original staff requests remain in the budget. Certain line items have been reduced to make the budget "tighter". As requested by the Board of Education, services and staffing have remained intact. The Town allocation will increase by less than 1%. Ipads, Professional Services, and Repairs/Maintenance will be discussed by FiPAC on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is hoped that FiPAC will vote on the budget at that time. Chairman Sharpe has requested the total amount of available budgeted funds. Capital will be reduced by that amount.

*Board of Education member comments/discussion:*

**J. Thorn** emphasized leaving all programs in the budget.

**K. Tolsdorf** - a new budget has not been voted on.

**J. Thorn** - the programs are the same but working to reduce bottom line so no vote is necessary.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** - the budget is tight but FiPAC Chairman Mr. Sharpe asked the Board of Education to trust that the Town will provide what is needed for funding.

**K. Tolsdorf** asked how the money was found to do this.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** - health care was reduced, special education transportation changed and \$100,000 of available funds will be used.

**K. Tolsdorf** asked why the Board must go to less than 1% or 0% or negative every year.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** explained we have a tighter budget than previous years but philosophically, FiPAC sees differently than the Board of Education. She suggests leaving the increase at 0.99% and letting FiPAC make cuts.

**L. Napolitano** - the BOE deals with parents and FiPAC deals with all citizens.

**K. Tolsdorf** would like her grandchildren to be here.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** - the Town is safer when educating children.

- **MBR Discussion**

**Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven** asked if the State Board of Education Hearing is scheduled for this week.

**K. Tolsdorf** said as of this morning, there is no new date.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** said the Town states the law as ambiguous. Tim Ackert is working to have MBR completely repealed.

**J. Schroder** suggests when the BOE testifies, the Town wants a waiver based on good cause but it is based on an ambiguous law. That is not a strong case.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** - chronicled different reasoning over the years from the Town, changed from surplus to waiver for cause in just last 6 months. Mr. Sharpe said clearly at FiPAC meeting, "it was a law, we broke it". Consequences weren't as expensive as going along with the law.

**L. Napolitano** are we at a tipping point where grants are no longer paying for mandates?

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** - grants don't cover mandates.

*Discussion continued about unfunded mandates.*

**K. Tolsdorf** – FiPAC Chairman said Town will save money because of \$318,000 penalty. She doesn't want everyone thinking it is a wash.

**L. Perrotti-Verboven** appreciates Kathy Tolsdorf's work on MBR.

○ **Food Service Discussion**

The RFP has been tabled for a year. The subcommittee will include community members.

○ **E.O. Smith High School Discussion**

**Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven** spoke with an E.O. Smith Board member who would like Columbia to consider itself the fabric of E.O. Smith. Superintendents Coss and Silva will be negotiating a contract extension; with seven years into contract to open contract for another 10 years. They will give us a three year provision for selecting a replacement high school. The Chairman would like to add contract language requesting annual reporting on Columbia students attending E.O. Smith.

○ **Proposed SB#374 – An Act Requiring Behavioral Health Assessment for Children**

**L. Napolitano** has brought this to the Board's attention. There has been much chatter about it. She does not believe it will make it out of committee.

**III. Comments from the Audience (Bylaws of the Board #9300) – No comments**

Time allotted for public participation is thirty (30) minutes; time allotted for an individual speaker is three (3) minutes.

**IV. Financial Review**

- 2012-2013 Payment of Bills
- Columbia School Expenditure Report for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 as of 3/26/13
- Columbia School Grant Status Actual & Budgeted Expenses as of 3/26/13

**Chairman Perrotti-Verboven** explained these topics were discussed in detail at the earlier 6:30 p.m. Budget Subcommittee meeting.

**V. Action Items (Consent)**

*To be read by Board of Education Chairperson prior to taking action:*

A consent agenda is presented by the Chairman at the beginning of a meeting. Items may be removed from the consent agenda on the request of any one member. Items not removed may be adopted by general consent without debate. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the assembly.

- a) Approval of Payment of Bills
- b) Approval of February 20, 2013 Special Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes
- c) Approval of March 4, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes
- d) Approval of March 11, 2013 Special Meeting Minutes
- e) Approval of Policy 5113.2 Students-Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy
- f) Approval of Long-Term Music Teacher – Ms. Colleen Thompson
- g) Approval of CT's Educator Evaluation and Support System 2013/14 Submission Form
- h) Approval of 2012/13 Co-Curricular Openings:
  1. Anthony White, Boys Baseball Coach
  2. Matthew Banas – Boys Track Coach
  3. Janna Traber – TEAM Mentor

L. Perrotti-Verboven **MOVED** and K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** to take off items:

- e) Approval of Policy 5113.2 Students-Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy, and
- h) Approval of 2012/13 Co-Curricular Openings: Anthony White-Boys Baseball Coach, Matthew Banas-Boys Track Coach, Janna Traber – TEAM Mentor for further discussion.

**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

L. Perrotti-Verboven **MOVED** and K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** to approve each item as presented:

- a) Approval of Payment of Bills
- b) Approval of February 20, 2013 Special Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes
- c) Approval of March 4, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes
- d) Approval of March 11, 2013 Special Meeting Minutes
- f) Approval of Long-Term Music Teacher – Ms. Colleen Thompson
- g) Approval of CT’s Educator Evaluation and Support System 2013/14 Submission Form

**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

*L. Perrotti-Verboven feels the new policy is harsh but it is the law. As she interprets it, a doctor’s documentation is not necessary but a written notice with reason must be given. She recommends the Principal take a look at letters for tone. A letter to parents will be sent with an explanation of the state mandated requirements.*

J. Thorn **MOVED** and L. Perrotti-Verboven **SECONDED** to approve items e and h as presented:

- e) Approval of Policy 5113.2 Students-Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy, and
- h) Approval of 2012/13 Co-Curricular Openings:
  1. Anthony White-Boys Baseball Coach
  2. Matthew Banas-Boys Track Coach
  3. Janna Traber – TEAM.

**MOTION CARRIES: 6-0-1**

K. Hoffman, S. Montesi, L. Napolitano, L. Perrotti-Verboven, J. Thorn, K. Tolsdorf **VOTED FOR THE MOTION**  
J. Schroder **ABSTAINED**

## **VI. Action Item**

- a) Approval of Teacher Non-Renewal Due to Reduction in Force

J. Thorn **MOVED** and L. Napolitano **SECONDED** that the contract of employment of Kathleen Mattessich not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2012-2013 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person in writing of this action.

**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

## **VII. Correspondence/Communications**

- Revised 2012/2013 Horace W. Porter School Calendar (Revision # 2)
- First Selectman Carmen Vance to Chief Financial Officer Brian Mahoney – MBR (March 4, 2013)
- First Selectman and FiPAC Chairman to Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven & Columbia Board of Education members – MBR (March 11, 2013)
- Carmen Vance to the Columbia Board of Education – Thank You
- Ashley Lyon to Superintendent Coss – STEM Magnet School (March 6, 2013)
- Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights to Mrs. Coss (March 7, 2013)
- EASTCONN’s “I have a student...” Brochure
- Town of Columbia Annual Report for the Year Ending June 30, 2012

## **VIII. Presentation**

- Teacher Evaluation – Mrs. Kathy Tolsdorf, Board of Education Member

## **IX. Reports**

- Board of Education Chairperson
  - Fiscal Policy Meeting Update – Mrs. Kerry Hoffman  
*(The March Fiscal Policy Meeting was cancelled, the next meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2013)*
  
- Board of Education Subcommittees
  - Future Meeting Dates:
    - April 3, 2013:
      - FiPAC Special Meeting-Budget Workshop, 7:30 p.m., Columbia Town Hall
    - April 10, 2013:
      - FiPAC Special Meeting-Budget Workshop, 7:30 p.m., Columbia Town Hall
    - April 24, 2013:
      - Public Hearing & FiPAC Meeting-Time to be Determined, Horace W. Porter School Cafeteria
    - May 6, 2013:
      - Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. Horace W. Porter School Conference Room
      - Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. Horace W. Porter School Conference Room
      - Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Horace W. Porter School Conference Room
      - Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Horace W. Porter Cafeteria
  
- Superintendent's Report
  - Revised 2013-2014 Budget Timeline
  - CIRMA Workers Compensation Pool Report
  - Porter Discipline Report: Comparison Report From Alyssa Gwinell, Porter Principal
  - National Insurance Services 2013 Life Insurance Consortium Participation
  - Administrator Highlights for March 2013
  - Assistant Principal/Data Coordinator Position Status

## **X. Future Regular and Subcommittee Agenda Items (Tentative)**

## **XI. Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks**

- **L. Perrotti-Verboven** would like the Board to have a position statement regarding Windham's Magnet School. The Board has decided not become a member.
- **L. Perrotti-Verboven** would like to review the 2013 Subcommittee listing of dates.
- **L. Perrotti-Verboven** would like to provide babysitting services in collaboration with the Rec Department during the April 24<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing and May 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Town meeting.
- **J. Schroder** asked that the policy for distributing information to parents/students be carefully followed.
- **J. Schroder** and **K. Hoffman** will be on the Assistant Principal Interview Committee.

## **XII. Adjournment**

K. Hoffman **MOVED** and S. Montessi **SECONDED** to adjourn the April 1, 2013 regular meeting at 10:03 p.m.  
**MOTION CARRIES: 6-0**

Respectfully submitted,

James Thorn  
Columbia Board of Education Vice Chairman