

Columbia Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2011
7:30 P.M.
Horace W. Porter School Library Media Center

Board Members Present: Chairman Lauren Perrotti-Verboven; Vice-Chair Lisa Jurovaty;
William Mulcahy; Nelson Petrone; John Schroder; James Thorn; Paula
Belekewicz

Administration Present: Francine Coss, Superintendent

Staff Present: Marian Lowry

Citizens Present: Heather Lake from The Chronicle; Leslie Poulos; Diane Schatz;
Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo; Lucy Drabek; Bernard Drabek;
Louise Nowak

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman L. Perrotti-Verboven called the August 15, 2011 regular meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

- III. **Action items (Consent)**
 - **Approval of July 5, 2011 Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes:** J. Thorn **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the July 5, 2011 Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes as presented. J. Schroder **SECONDED**. **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**
 - **2010/2011 End-of-the-Year Budget Transfers:** F. Coss distributed the documents to the Board for review. She explained how the transfers were made. The snow plowing budget increased to accommodate the new addition to the parking area. N. Petrone **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the 2010/2011 End-of-the-Year Budget Transfers as presented. J. Thorn **SECONDED**. **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**
 - **Columbia Board of Education Mission Statement:** L. Perrotti-Verboven said this mission statement has been worked on for a long time with a lot of effort put into it. It is meant to be used as a guide in the Board's decisions. L. Jurovaty **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Columbia Board of Education Mission Statement. J. Schroder **SECONDED**. **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**
 - **Columbia PTO Meadow Farms Fundraising:** This fundraiser involves the sale of food and has to be approved by the BOE. P. Belekewicz **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Columbia PTO Meadow Farms Fundraiser. W. Schroder **SECONDED**. **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**

IV. Comments from the Audience (Bylaws of the Board #9300):

Time Allotted for public participation -30 minutes, time allotted for an individual speaker -3 minutes

Lucy Drabek of 209 Route 87 read email correspondence from her to Superintendent Coss dated August 15, 2011 regarding the 20 minute lunch periods into the record. She disagrees with this reduction of time for the students to have lunch. L. Perrotti-Verboven said this issue has been researched by Principal Trask and only affects the upper grades. F. Coss reported that there will be four lunch waves which reduces the number of students per wave but also reduces the length of the lunch wave and an entire grade level is taken out of each lunch wave. Discussion followed. The teachers' contract calls for a thirty minute lunch. Passing time to and from lunch is not part of the lunch period. L. Perrotti-Verboven agrees that the silent lunch was disturbing and should only be used as a last resort. L. Perrotti-Verboven said the noise level during the lunch periods is high and would like more information from Ms. Trask regarding what surrounding schools do regarding length and management of lunch waves. L. Jurovaty stated that L. Drabek has a lot of good points and the administration is trying to incorporate movement into the classroom as well as during lunch.

Bernard Drabek of 209 Route 87 commented that time should be taken away from homeroom. L. Jurovaty said a separate class for reading has been added. B. Drabek said the first lunch wave at 10:45 is too early. Time can not added to the end of the day due to teachers contract. L. Jurovaty said it is a tough balance. She said the administration develops the structure of the hours during the school day. L. Perrotti-Verboven said the BOE can give their opinion to the administration. She said the BOE will stay on top of this issue. Discussion followed on how snacks are handled in the classroom. F. Coss will bring these questions to Ms. Trask. L. Perrotti-Verboven appreciates the feedback and input from the audience.

V. Correspondence/Communications

- Superintendent Coss to Director of Finance, Mrs. Ciurylo – 2011/2012 Co-Curricular & Extra Curricular Staff Listing:
- Thomas D. Melkus, General manager, Nutmeg Companies, Inc. to Superintendent Coss – HVAC Maintenance/Service Contract: F. Coss said the Administration received a termination of service notice from Thomas D. Melkus, General manager, Nutmeg Companies, Inc. due to a change in business affiliation. Facility Manager Michael Sylvester has secured a contact with New England Mechanical and no interruption of maintenance and repair service was experienced by the Columbia School System.
- Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) Determination for the 2011 Annual Performance Report (APR): F. Coss commented on the content of the report and said the school did very well.

VI. Presentation

- CT Mastery Test Performance Data – Mrs. Francine Coss, Superintendent: F. Coss said a formal presentation will be made to the Board at the September meeting. She gave an informal overview presentation of the data. Overall she is pleased with the grade performances. One of the biggest reasons for the improvement was due to teacher work. F. Coss said the teachers have access to student performance information on the State testing website and have used all resources made available to them over the summer.

VII. Financial Review

- Payment of Bills: F. Coss reported that payments of bills for the June 30, 2011, the beginning of August 2011 and today will be presented at the September 5, 2011 BOE meeting.
- Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrances:
- Financial Update - Mrs. Francine Coss, Superintendent: F. Coss reported that \$462,282.96 of unspent funds were given back to the Town and \$380,000.00 of that total were tuition costs and \$81,000.00 were funds that were held to be prepared for expenses that were not anticipated at the end of the fiscal year. F. Coss explained that surplus funds spent were mostly from grants. Financial Director Beverly Ciurylo reported that the financial books are closed for last fiscal year unless the auditors find something that requires transfers from one fiscal year budget to the other. The Board thanked B. Ciurylo for her hard work.

VIII. Reports

- Board of Education Chairperson
 - 2011 CABE/CAPSS Convention Pre-Registration: L. Perrotti-Verboven invited anyone from the Board to attend. N. Petrone said there is training at EastCONN as well for new BOE members.
- Board of Education Subcommittees
 - Reports:
 - July 26, 2011 Policy Subcommittee Report – Mrs. Lauren Perrotti-Verboven: This meeting was dedicated to the mission statement. It was a collaborative effort.
 - July 26, 2011 Budget Subcommittee Report – Mrs. Lisa Jurovaty: L. Jurovaty reported that this meeting involved the end of the year transfer funds, safety and academic issues. L. Perrotti-Verboven thanked her for leading this group.
 - Future Meeting Dates:
 - September 6, 2011:**
 - Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. H. W. Porter School Conference Room
 - Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. H. W. Porter School Library Media Center
 - September 12, 2011:**
 - Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. H. W. Porter School Conference Room

- Facility Subcommittee Meeting immediately following Policy Subcommittee Meeting, H. W. Porter School Conference Room: Board will do a walk-through at this meeting.
- Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting, immediately following Facility Subcommittee Meeting, H. W. Porter School Conference Room

September 19, 2011:

- Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. H. W. Porter School Conference Room
- Negotiations Subcommittee Meeting immediately following Budget Subcommittee Meeting H. W. Porter School Conference Room

September 26, 2011:

- Bolton Board of Selectmen Special Meeting for Pooled Health Care Presentation by Ovation Benefits, 6:30 p.m. Bolton High School Student Center (Invitees: Columbia Board of Education; Columbia Board of Selectmen; Columbia Financial Planning and Allocation Commission; Bolton Board of Education; Bolton Board of Finance)

October 3, 2011:

- Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:00 p.m. H. W. Porter School Conference Room
- Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. H. W. Porter School Library Media Center

L. Perrotti-Verboven encouraged the BOE to attend BOS and FiPAC meetings early on in the budget process.

- Superintendent's Report
 - Summary of Pooled Health Care Investigatory Meeting with Town of Columbia, Town of Bolton, and Bolton Board of Education: F. Coss briefly explained the new law and the possibility of pooled health care. A presentation by Ovation Benefits, is scheduled for September 26, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bolton High School Student Center. This is a possible opportunity for the Town to be self-insured with quasi-management over health care benefits. There will be no reduction of benefits or premiums. There is an approximate saving in funds in the first year of \$20,000.00. The administrator of the program would have to be a current employee from one of the towns involved. N. Petrone suggested that the BOE ask Ovation if this is their recommendation. EastCONN is also considering a pooled health care offering. The EastConn collaborative would hire an administrator who would be paid from funds from each town.
 - Horace W. Porter School Hot Lunch Site Reimbursement Claims: F. Coss reported that the new software system is being set up to enable use of debit or credit cards at the school as well as online.

IX. Future Agenda Items:

- Ct Mastery Test Performance Data – Mr. Robert Parenti, Assistant Principal and District Data Coordinator
- School Improvement Plan Update – Ms. Jacqueline Middleton, Director of Student Services; Ms. Jean Trask, principal, and Mr. Robert Parenti, Assistant Principal and District Data Coordinator

X. Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks: L. Perrotti-Verboven suggested creating a short BOE guidelines handbook for new board members. M. Lowry will have a technology presentation update for the BOE at the October meeting.

XI. Adjournment: J. Thorn **MOVED** to **ADJOURN** the August 15, 2011 regular meeting at 8:48 p.m. L. Jurovaty **SECONDED**. **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald, Interim BOE Meeting Clerk