

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2003**

**Unapproved Minutes**

**Members Present:** Nadine Bell  
Raffaella Coler  
Tina Lionetti  
Charles McMonigle  
Anne Schmidt  
Frank Szeps (Chairman)  
Marinella Tirillo  
Catherine Vargas  
Jennifer Viggiano-Grosse

**Members Absent:** None

A meeting of the Board of Education was held on Thursday, March 20, 2003, in the Council Room of the Rocky Hill Town Hall. Chairman Szeps called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Schmidt, to accept the minutes of the February 6, 2003, Board of Education meeting, and the minutes of the January 21, 2003, and January 30, 2003, budget workshops as presented, and the minutes of the January 28, 2003, budget workshop as corrected.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

On Page 11 of the January 28 minutes, fifth paragraph, first line, change “she agreed with” to “she did not agree with”.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

High school students performed a short musical skit promoting the upcoming madrigal musical performance under the direction of Claire Burnett.

Carla Unwin and Peter Parrotta, representing the Rocky Hill Education Foundation, unveiled their new logo and presented an award to Katrina Dukleva, a senior in the art program at Rocky Hill High School, who designed the logo. Ms. Dukleva was presented with a \$500 book award. Dr. Vautour noted the annual student art exhibit at the library, displaying students' work from the middle school and high school. The artwork will be on display until May 1.

Dr. Vautour noted correspondence awarding Marlene Grover the National Music Foundation Award. She has received a \$500 award to purchase support for her program at Moser School. The Superintendent read a letter from Rose Ficocelli, whose daughter is on the basketball team. Ms. Ficocelli thanked and commended the coaches.

Griswold Middle School was the recipient of the annual Beane Brodhagen Award from the NELMS for its outstanding disciplinary unit on volunteerism.

Mrs. Boutillier reported on the donation of fourteen computers received from a parent, Joseph Casparino. The computers are compatible with the ones in place at the high school, and allow for the creation of a mini-computer lab.

A thank you note was received from Alicia Meziarz for the flowers sent in memory of her father.

Dr. Vautour commented that in light of the current world crisis, he, the Town Manager, Fire Chief and Police Chief would be meeting to review the procedures already in place and to discuss anything else that school administration should be doing.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**RHTA Liaison Committee**

Mrs. Crawford had no report.

**Student Representatives**

There were no student reports this evening.

**Meeting Open to the Public**

There was no one from the public wishing to address the Board on any item not on this evening's agenda.

**1. Consent Calendar**

The March 20 consent calendar included the resignation of the following teachers: Diane DeLuzio, Romina Italia, LuAnne McDonald and Judy Wilcox.

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mr. McMonigle, to accept the consent calendar of March 20, 2003.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**2. Personnel and Negotiations**

No report.

**3. Policy**

Chairman Szeps noted the Policy Committee was to work on a policy concerning the naming of facilities. The subject needed to be discussed at a meeting in order to finalize the language in the document concerning naming facilities. Mrs. Lionetti was in favor of scheduling a meeting with the Policy Committee. Mrs. Tirillo questioned why the topic was being brought up at this time when it has been left as unfinished business for over a year. Chairman Szeps' concern was that the topic had come up with the Town Council. His recommendation was to have a policy in place and that the Board of Education be prepared to address the issue.

Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse was concerned about the timing of the subject. She did not have a problem with naming the school parking lot after Mrs. Raffa. The Board did not pay to put that parking lot in. If the Board of Education does not pay to maintain the facility, she questioned why it was up to the Board to name the facility. Chairman Szeps noted that would be the intent of the policy. Mrs. Tirillo recommended that there be more discussion, since it had only been discussed briefly at a Policy Committee meeting.

#### **4. Finance**

Mrs. Schmidt reported on the Finance Committee's meeting held this morning to discuss the preparation and presentation of the Board's budget for the upcoming Town Council hearing. Dr. Vautour was asked to prepare material from the initial budget presentations and review them with the Finance Committee prior to April 2, which is the date of the Board's presentation to the Town Council.

The early indications are that the budget requests would be significantly cut. The Finance Committee explored areas of possible reductions to be consideration. Areas raised for consideration by the entire Board would include the elimination of new courses at the high school, elimination of all non-required memberships in professional organizations, elimination of all field trips (which would include all funds for away band competitions), elimination of all curriculum writing, and a cap on Project Choice participation. Mrs. Schmidt explained that Choice is the response to the Sheff vs. O'Neill court case, allowing Hartford students to attend suburban schools. Should that occur, the funds projected for tuition for GHMAS and the School for the Performing Arts would be reduced because the district takes in tuition from CHOICE that is turned over for tuition for the GHMAS and School for the Performing Arts students.

Another area of consideration would be a reduction of several staff positions, including teaching and support personnel, consideration of the reintroduction and possible increase of fees related to pay for participation in athletics, consideration of the elimination of the middle school athletic program, and consideration of the reduction of athletic teams at the high school, using the concept of last team in/ first team out.

Mrs. Schmidt stated that Dr. Vautour has been instructed by the Finance Committee to prepare an impact analysis of doing any or all of the previously mentioned items. The expectation is that after the Finance Committee reviews the information with input being solicited from the full Board, it will be incorporated into Dr. Vautour's presentation on April 2. The Finance Committee is anticipating a meeting next week. Mrs. Schmidt

asked the members to attend if they were able; if they could not, she asked them to call her so she could incorporate their input.

Chairman Szeps added that the Finance Committee was open to the public. Dr. Vautour said he would copy Mrs. Schmidt's statement for all Board members and send it to them in the morning. Mrs. Coler asked if the meeting could be held in the afternoon instead of 8:15 a.m. in order to accommodate more peoples' schedules; Mrs. Schmidt asked that the Finance Committee members be polled to see what their availability was, and if possible she would schedule the meeting later in the day.

Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse noted the Name and Claim It web site, and noted that the Board of Education's name was listed on the site as one that the State owes money to. Mr. Turansky said he filed a claim for the money. It was a check that was returned to the Board of Education on May 4, 1994. A transaction was conducted with Turner Broadcasting Systems for cable access on TV. The check for \$74.85 would be returned to the Board, and Mr. Turansky would turn in over to the General Fund.

## **5. Curriculum**

Mrs. Bell reported that in the elementary schools, the staff from Stevens, Moser and West Hill have collaborated on the new science programs, highlighting what was and what was not working. Mr. Pear, Mr. Watson, Mrs. Boutillier and the science supervisors met with the K-6 science coordinator from Newington to talk about how they implemented the science program.

All four math department heads have been conducting the curriculum review. They will report to the Committee in May, and they were setting the goals for the remaining three years of the review process.

## **6. Professional Development**

No report.

## **7. Facilities**

Mrs. Lionetti reported that the Facilities Committee met to discuss review of the field use policy. School use activities would have first use of the fields. The topic was referred to

the Policy Committee. Because of the severe winter, fieldwork on the high school fields will be postponed following the end of the soccer and football seasons.

High school storage proposals were discussed, including the possibility of moving the stored items to the Town garage. The committee agreed that was an inadequate solution, and the subject would be discussed with the Liaison Committee.

**8. Technology**

No report.

**9. Transportation/Accommodations**

No report.

**10. Liaison Committee**

No report.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**11. Education Foundation Award**

The award was given during an earlier portion of the meeting.

**12. Physical Education Presentation**

Mrs. Boutilier introduced members of the Physical Education Department, who presented an overview of the physical education curriculum. They presented a synopsis of the program at each level of education. Physical education is presented to all students every year. At the elementary level four certified physical educators teach students for 45

minutes two times a week; there are 3.6 educators at the middle school, providing physical education in 43-minute classes on alternate days (90 classes), and four physical educators, certified in health as well, who provide 43 minutes of instruction twice a week. High school students receive one credit for physical education.

The physical education staff explained how the physical education program supports the Board of Education goals to all students, including Unified Sports and Adaptive P.E. They described the content area of the program and student expectations. State standards have been developed and are followed. Each of the standards was reviewed for the different levels of education. Wide varieties of activities are provided.

Students are assigned a grade for their Physical Education performance based on certain criteria, such as: participation, effort, preparation, behavior/sportsmanship, skills test, fitness journals and calendars, study guides, quizzes/tests, and written assignments. The staff stressed that a variety of methods are used to assess the students and to issue grades.

The indices of effectiveness were reviewed. Teachers highlighted technology used in the classrooms, field trips and enrichment opportunities, awards and recognitions. Recommendations for improvement were discussed. Class sizes and classroom space were issues. Participation rate in Rocky Hill is high, compared to other districts.

Mrs. Boutilier reviewed the program strengths, pointing out the current shift in focus to lifetime skills and activities. Enrichment activities are offered for all athletic abilities at all levels. There is more communication among department heads due to the addition of a subject area coordinator for grades one to twelve.

Mrs. Boutilier pointed out the need for updates to the department philosophy and curriculum, development of additional assessment tools, space problems at the middle school and high school, class size problems, health instruction impact, and limited technology availability.

Mrs. Boutilier recommended the Board continue to support curriculum development, explore space options for the middle and high school, explore class size issues, explore time issues in the high school, acquire additional technology and continue to support the position of subject area supervisor.

Mrs. Bell commented on the rubrics being used for skills assessment. The teachers noted the use of rubrics was new in the physical education area. They are age appropriate and used to help assess students given the variety of skill levels. As the child performs each

exercise identified by the rubric, they would get a numerical score. The rubrics are part of units.

Mrs. Schmidt noted that the physical education instructor would teach rules and sportsmanship in the course of teaching a particular sport. She asked how the teams were selected; she was told the teachers choose the teams, giving each child an opportunity to be the captain. There are three different levels of skill involved. Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse asked how disabled children, who have been mainstreamed, participate in the gym classes; Ms. Gregg pointed out that the other children do not think of children with handicaps or having motor problems as being any different. They are sensitive to those children. There is a spot for each child in the physical education program.

Mrs. Tirillo believed physical education was a very important part of a child's life.

### **13. Non-Renewals**

Dr. Vautour explained that each year a list of non-tenured teachers employed by the Rocky Hill Board of Education is prepared. He recommended that the Board non-renew the contracts to the teachers listed on the March 20, 2003, memorandum. The non-renewal was a precautionary measure. Under state statutes, the teachers must be notified by April 1. They will each be given a letter tomorrow, and it will be explained that the non-renewals are not reflective of their performance.

**Moved by Mrs. Tirillo, seconded by Mrs. Lionetti, to non-renew the contracts for the non-tenured teachers listed in the March 20, 2003, memorandum to the Board of Education from the Superintendent of Schools.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

### **14. CMT Follow-up**

The Superintendent requested that this item be tabled until the next meeting. Staff was doing work in order to provide more complete information.

**Moved by Mrs. Viggiano-Gross, seconded by Mrs. Lionetti, to table the CMT follow-up discussion.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**15. Enrollment Report**

Dr. Vautour reviewed the enrollment report. No staff adjustments are being recommended. The report is submitted twice annually to give the Board an idea of how the district is able to maintain the classroom guidelines.

**16. Evaluation of School Lunch Program**

Mr. Turansky reported that every five years the State Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition is required to audit the district. The consultant evaluated Stevens School, and prepared a favorable report. Mr. Turansky discussed the application process for the state school lunch program. After the application review process is completed, the office is required to compile and maintain a list of children eligible for free and reduced lunches. The list is communicated to the kitchen staff, and those children may not be identified.

The district has a master list of eligible students updated in a timely manner; the claims processing is accurate, and identification of students is prevented. Parents who are entitled to qualify for the program must submit documentation. The district's system was excellent, and records were well maintained. On-site monitoring is required each year, using a checklist at each school site.

The consultant reviewed the nutritional calculations on the menu and noted that the written menu was well designed. Standardized recipes were maintained. The food service staff had great rapport with student and faculty. They took great pride with the meals they served that day. The consultant ate lunch at the school the day she visited, and commented that the lunch looked beautiful and delicious. There was a nice variety of foods available for the students. Nutritional education was promoted.

The only problems the consultant found were that a social security number was incorrect on one of the applications, and on one day the summary of all lunches served at Moser was off by two meals.

**17. Budget Calendar**

The budget review schedule has been revised to: April 2, 2003 – Public hearing at 7:00 p.m.; May 12, 2003, Budget Workshop/BOE; May 19, 2003 – Budget Adoption.

**18. Executive Session**

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to go into executive session at 8:40 p.m. to discuss a matter related to student discipline and personnel, with Dr. Vautour and Mr. Murphy in attendance as well as the Board of Education.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to come out of executive session. (9:29 p.m.)**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Mrs. Coler, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to approve agreement concerning student discipline.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Mrs. Vargas, seconded by Mrs. Lionetti, to adjourn the meeting. (9:32 p.m.)**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie W. O'Neill  
Recording Secretary

Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_