

Board of Education Meeting
July 21, 2015

Call to Order

Board Chair Gee called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Suffield High School Media Center. Present: Board members Natalie Semyanko, Jeanne Gee, Susi Keane, Matt Service, George Beiter, John Richter, Michelle Zawawi, Lori D'Ostuni, Michael Sepko, Superintendent Karen Berasi and Business Manager Bill Hoff.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition

None

Public Comment

None

Communications

Board Chair Gee said she received a letter from Dianna Wentzell, State Commissioner of Education, officially acknowledging Karen Berasi as the Suffield Superintendent of Schools and congratulating her on her new position.

Board Chair Gee said McAlister Library has donated books no longer in use to Kent Memorial Library. The Kent Memorial Library director sent a letter thanking McAlister for the donation.

Approval of Minutes

Semyanko moved, Richter seconded the motion to approve the June 16, 2015 Board of Education meeting minutes. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Beiter moved, Richter seconded the motion to approve the June 25, 2015 special Board of Education meeting minutes. Board member D'Ostuni wanted to amend the minutes to make minor editorial changes to the last paragraph of the minutes. Sepko, Richter, Semyanko, Gee, Service, Keane, and D'Ostuni voted in favor of the amended minutes. Beiter and Zawawi abstained. The motion carried 7-0-2.

Consent Agenda

None

Discussion/Action Items

- Authorized Signature Change – Child Nutrition Program
Mr. Hoff said two administrators in the district need to have the authority to sign nutrition documents. Currently the former superintendent and the business manager are authorized, so we need to submit a new form to add Superintendent Berasi as an authorized signatory. **MOTION #15-48:** D'Ostuni moved to approve adding Karen Berasi as an authorized signatory for the Child Nutrition Program. Sepko seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- June 30, 2015 Fiscal Year Close-out and Budget Transfers

Mr. Hoff reviewed the end of year financial report. He noted the year-end surplus was \$291.00 after year-end expenditures were made and the transferring of \$152,509 in salaries expense to the Open Choice grant. He said the Board needs to authorize the budget transfers.

MOTION #15-49: D'Ostuni moved that the Board of Education authorize the administration to process transfers of appropriations to balance the year-end budget. Semyanko seconded the motion. Board member Beiter said the money should have been spent more methodically. Board Chair Gee said the budget subcommittee should have met before the June 16 Board meeting. It was an oversight, and she takes full responsibility. Board members asked for clarification on the budget transfers and how that affects next year's budget. The Board discussed ways of improving the budget process and monthly financial reporting. Mr. Hoff added administration will review internal processes to improve budget projections. Board Chair Gee called for a vote. All members voted in favor of the motion except Beiter, who voted against. The motion carried 8-1.

- Food Service Organizational Structure Change

Mr. Hoff explained the change in structure will help to manage work load and supervision of the food service workers in each school. The new structure will have a lead food service worker at each school. Varying number of cooks and food service workers will be in each school, and there will be one substitute/admin position to cover absences and help the director with administrative duties when coverage is not needed. He reviewed the pay rates of each position. The changes were reviewed with the union and they are supportive of the change. Mr. Hoff noted improved management and organizational structure of the food service operation could potentially increase participation and revenue.

MOTION #15-50: Zawawi moved to approve the new food service position of Lead Person with a pay rate of \$15.91 per hour, and the new position of Substitute/Admin with a pay rate of \$12.63 per hour for Step 1 and \$13.27 per hour for Step 2. Keane seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- School Lunch Price Increase Recommendation

Mr. Hoff said school lunch prices have remained the same since at least 2008. He compared Suffield's school lunch prices with other districts. His recommendation is to increase lunch prices by 15 cents. He did not think the increase would affect participation very much. The projected revenue is approximately \$17,000. Board member Sepko said the fact that prices have not increase since 2008 should be communicated to families. Board members discussed the implications of raising lunch prices and the food service program as a whole. Board members asked for data on the number of families using the electronic pay feature to pay for their children's lunch.

MOTION #15-51: Beiter moved that school lunch prices be set at \$2.65 for Spaulding and McAlister schools and \$2.90 for the regular lunch and \$3.15 for the premium lunch at Suffield Middle School and Suffield High School. Zawawi seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Berasi said the process for hiring an Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Services is underway. She said there is a great pool of

applicants for both positions. She has hired Connie Horvath to serve as interim Director of Special Education until the Director position is filled.

- Ms. Berasi stated professional development (PD) is one of the district's goals and she will be giving periodic updates to the Board on professional development occurring in the district. A PD session was held on July 20 with her cabinet relative to organizational health. Professional development sessions will also occur on August 17 and August 18 with the leadership team, and that session will focus on teacher evaluation.
- Chair's Report
 - Board Chair Gee congratulated Steve Moccio, Gina Olearczyk, and Brendan Canny on orchestrating and executing a terrific graduation ceremony.
 - She attended a meeting at Town Hall relative to a grant the Town received to record and stream all town board and commission meetings. There will be more meetings and she would like other Board members and Rebecca Osleger to be involved in these upcoming meetings.
 - Board Chair Gee formally welcomed Karen Berasi to the district and thanked her for the work in which she has already engaged in the district.

Subcommittees Reports

None

Future Business

No new business was added.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Beiter moved, Zawawi seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting on August 18, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori D'Ostuni
Secretary