

Thompson Board of Education

Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2021

In attendance: Absent:

Kathleen Herbert
Thomas Angelo
William Witkowski
Matthew Polsky
Linda Jarmolowicz
Heather Santos
Jessica Bolte
Danielle Carlson
Valentine Iamartino

Also in attendance: Melinda Smith, Bill Birch, Heather Burns, Kim Granato, Dr. Christopher Jones, Larry Prentiss, Dr. Nate Mayo, Shannon Grauer, Michelle Giammarinaro (zoom), members of the public.

I. Call to Order

Kathleen Herbert called the meeting at 7:00pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Heather Santos led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance

III. Chairman Update

Kathleen Herbert stated that she has enjoyed being the Board of Education Chairman the past two years and she would be honored to serve again.

IV. BOE Officer Nominations

Board Chairman Nominations

Motion by Linda Jarmolowicz, seconded by Valentine Iamartino, to nominate Kathleen Herbert as Board of Education Chairman.

Motion by Thomas Angelo, seconded by Matthew Polsky, to nominate William Witkowski as Board of Education Chairman.

Hearing no more nominations, nominations are closed.

All in favor of Kathleen Herbert – Heather Santos, Linda Jarmolowicz, Kathleen Herbert, Danielle Carlson, Jessica Bolte, Valentine Iamartino, William Witkowski.

Motion – Passes.

Board Vice-Chairman Nominations

Motion by Thomas Angelo, seconded by Valentine Iamartino, to nominate William Witkowski as Board of Education Vice-Chairman.

Hearing no more nominations, nominations are closed.

All in favor of William Witkowski – Unanimous.

Motion – Passes.

Board Secretary Nominations

Motion by Linda Jarmolowicz, seconded by Jessica Bolte, to nominate Heather Santos as Board of Education Secretary.

Hearing no more nominations, nominations are closed.

All in favor of Heather Santos – Unanimous.

Motion – Passes.

Kathleen Herbert stated that she is going to reactivate the sub-committees. The Board will be asked which committees they want to be on.

V. Citizens Comments

Brian Santos stated that solar in Thompson is long overdue and he would like to see the Board move the project forward.

VI. Student Spotlight/TMHS Liaison Report

Spotlight: Tourtellotte Student Spotlight of the Month of December is Tara Heffernan.

Liaison Report: Current Events:

- 12/1 TMHS Music Winter Concert
- 12/6: 2nd Installment of Pathway Speaker Series: Daniel Bennett of D.B.C Solutions
- 12/7: *Ending the Silence Assembly* at TMHS, sponsored by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
- 12/7: Student Council Meeting 7:00pm
- 12/8 TSLT In-Service
- 12/9: TMHS students take the ASVAB
- Auditions for Beauty and the Beast
- Gingerbread House Competition
- 12/16: TSLT members take “in school field trip” to Ryscavage to work on their Voice4Change proposals
- 12/16: 4 pm: Students from the TMHS Tri-M Music National Honor Society carol at Gladys Green
- 12/16-12/22: Spirit Week at TMHS culminating in an “Ugly Sweater” Parade and classroom activities
- 12/20: Students receive training to become Peer Point Tutors for second semester

Student Voice Forums:

A student wrote that they wished they were able to use headphones in the classroom, stating that headphones would result in better focus & being able to ignore distractions. Students agree, repeating that headphones increase their productivity and limit classroom distractions. In a vote, 15 student council members agreed with the student voice form. Dr. Mayo expressed that he is firm on the school policy of no headphone use.

Several students voiced concern that some of their classrooms have been quite cold this month. Dr. Mayo reported that he has raised the issue with Mr. Birch and he is looking into the situation.

A student wrote in questioning the current bathroom policy, which limits bathroom use to one person per bathroom at a time. The student expressed frustration about how this created long bathroom lines which can take away valuable class time from students. Although Student Council members agreed with this student voice form, Dr. Mayo is firm on his bathroom policy, noting multiple recent incidents in the bathroom. Dr. Mayo says that it is necessary to restrict & monitor bathroom use for the time being. He also adds that bathroom sign-in logs are being saved and referenced during meetings with students and parents, adding to the usefulness of the bathroom monitoring.

Discussion was held regarding bathroom use in the high school. The topic will be discussed at a future policy meeting.

VII. Approval of Minutes – November 8, 2021 Regular Meeting

Motion by Linda Jarmolowicz, seconded by Danielle Carlson, to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

VIII. Sub-Committee Update

Thomas Angelo gave an update on the Tourtellotte Trust.

IX. Superintendent Report

a. Employee Dental Program

Melinda Smith stated that last year, the district's health provider was changed to the state plan, and now she would like the dental plan to be revisited for a possible change to a state plan.

Kim Quigley, who is the health care consultant, gave a presentation to the Board on the comparison between the current dental plan and enhancements to the complete network program offered by Anthem.

Motion by Thomas Angelo, seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to change to the complete dental network as presented.

Motion – Passes. William Witkowski abstained.

b. CT Green Bank Solar Presentation

Mackey Dykes and Emily Basham from CT Green Bank Solar gave a presentation on the solar program for Thompson which included a site analysis, project development, competitive partners, and an execution plan for a ground mount project. The Building Committee has approved this project to move forward to the Board of Education.

Motion by William Witkowski, seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to approve the solar project to move to the next step.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

c. Enrollment Report

The December 1st enrollment is at 930 students. Melinda Smith has requested an enrollment projection report from NESDEC which she will share with the Board once received.

d. COVID Update

Melinda Smith stated that the COVID plan will be revised this week. It needs to be revised every six months, sent to parents and posted on the website. After the break, we will hold public forum for parents to ask questions about changes to the plan. Shannon Grauer updated the Board on the number of positive COVID cases in the district.

e. Sub-Pay Discussion

Melinda Smith stated that an analysis was conducted by the Human Resource Director to compare sub rates of pay between Thompson and area schools. The Substitute Rate Comparison chart will be shared with the Board in January.

X. Administrator Reports

The principals and directors gave updates on events happening in their schools or departments.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. New Business

a. Approval – Leave of Absence

This has been left up to the Superintendent's discretion.

XIII. Correspondence

Thomas Angelo received a phone call from a parent regarding school security and school protocols. This will be discussed at the next Board meeting. The parent has been advised to send their remarks in writing to the Chairman and Superintendent.

XIV. Citizens' Comments

None.

XV. Adjournment

Motion by Linda Jarmolowicz, seconded by Jessica Bolte, to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

Minutes Submitted: Danielle M. Pederson, Recording Secretary