

THOMPSON BOARD OF EDUCATION

Via Zoom Online Meeting Portal

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 12, 2021

7:00pm

In attendance:

Kathleen Herbert
Thomas Angelo
Shawn Brissette
Danielle Carlson
Donna Godzik
Jody Houghton
Linda Jarmolowicz
William Witkowski

Absent:

Valentine Iamartino

Also in attendance: Melinda Smith, Bill Birch, Heather Burns, Robert Gentes, Shannon Grauer, Christopher Jones, Steve Knowlton, Megan Parrette, Ian Polun, Larry Prentiss, members of the community, and parents.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Kathleen Herbert called the meeting to order at 7:09pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Zaynep Acun led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Chairman Update

Kathleen Herbert stated that the Board of Finance meetings are now on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The annual Town meeting is going to be held on May 3rd.

IV. Citizens' Comments

Jessica Bolte stated that teachers and students do benefit from the early release Fridays and she hopes the Board of Education members agree to continue the early release Fridays for the rest of the school year.

V. Student Spotlight/Report

High School BOE Liaison Report

Ongoing Events:

- Music Mentoring Program
- Baseball, Softball, and Boys & Girls track have begun practicing for the season.

Upcoming Events:

- April 16 -TSLT Eighth Grade Conference
- April 19-23 - April Break
- April 27 - School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
- May 3 - Student Council Meeting
- May 4 - AP Calculus Exam
- May 4 - Integrity Plus Awards Ceremony
- May 6 - AP US History Exam
- May 19 - AP US Government Exam

Cole Coderre introduced Shane Yurkevivius as Student Spotlight of the Month of March.

VI. Approval of Minutes

a. March 8, 2021 – Regular Meeting

Motion by Jody Houghton, seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to accept the minutes of the March 8, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

Motion – Passes. Jody Houghton and Bill Witkowski abstained.

VII. Sub-Committee Update

a. Policy Sub-Committee Meeting Update

Kathleen Herbert stated that the Policy Sub-Committee met recently to discuss the Naming Policy. She stated that rooms inside the schools will not be named after people. There will be plaques made in honor of people nominated and possibly hung in the ballerina foyer as a dedication area. A nomination form will be available for those who want to nominate someone.

Melinda Smith stated that the National Honor Society display case is going to be updated and moved to a better location in the high school.

VIII. Superintendent Report

a. Introduction of New Thompson Middle School Principal

Melinda Smith introduced Kim Granato as the new Principal of Thompson Middle School in light of Principal Knowlton's retirement. Ms. Granato thanked the Board of Education and Melinda Smith for the opportunity.

b. Enrollment Update

Melinda Smith stated that the April 1st enrollment is at 942 students. Currently, there are 167 students distance learning which is down from the beginning of the school year.

c. COVID-19 Update

Shannon Grauer stated that everyone who chose to be immunized through the school will be fully vaccinated as of April 13th. There have been positive COVID-19 cases in Thompson, but there has not been a broad effect in the school at this time. Spring sports have begun in the high school.

Melinda Smith stated that the district is working to have a vaccination clinic for students ages 16 and up.

d. Early Release Fridays/Parent/Teacher Surveys

Melinda Smith stated that a survey went out to teachers and parents regarding if early releases on Fridays should continue. Survey results showed that parents and teachers do want to continue early releases on Fridays for the rest of the school year.

e. ESSER II Grant Update

Melinda Smith shared her ESSER II Grant Funding Application with the Board. Discussion was held.

f. After School Program Grant Update

Melinda Smith gave an update on the After School Program Grant that she is currently working on.

g. Teacher Layoff Notices

Melinda Smith stated that the school attorney recommended to not give out lay-off letters to non-tenure teachers this year due to current circumstances, and also due to the fact that no teaching positions are going to be eliminated if the school budget gets cut.

IX. Administrator Reports

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

X. Old Business

XI. New Business

a. Healthy Food Certification Approval

Motion by Kathleen Herbert, seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to approve the board of education to allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

b. Naming Policy/Alumni & Personnel Exemplary Service Recognition
Tabled.

c. Teacher Layoff Approval

Motion by Jody Houghton, seconded by Shawn Brissette, to pass on the procedure of laying off non-tenure teachers this year.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

d. Half-Day Fridays Approval

Motion by Bill Witkowski, seconded by Donna Godzik, to approve early releases on Fridays for the remainder of the school year.

Motion – Passes. Shawn Brissette abstained.

e. Trust Appropriation for 65 Main Street Approval

Motion by Shawn Brissette, seconded by Donna Godzik, to approve the Tourtellotte Trust appropriation up to \$120,000 for restoration of 65 Main Street.

Motion – Fails. No yes votes. Thomas Angelo abstained.

XII. Correspondence

a. *Thank You Letter from Thompson Recreation*

Recreation Director, Leslie Munshower, provided a letter to the Board of Education, thanking the district for including the Recreation Before & After School Childcare staff in the COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

b. *Putnam Rotary Club Donation*

The Putnam Rotary Club donated \$875.00 to the school district to help in providing a special thanks and gesture of appreciation to the school staff. Melinda Smith stated that the donation will be put toward a food truck festival for the staff, in partnership with the MRFES and TMS PTO's.

XIII. Citizens' Comments

None.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Thomas Angelo, seconded by Donna Godzik, to adjourn the meeting at 9:28pm.

Motion – Passes. Unanimously.

Minutes submitted by: Danielle Pederson, Recording Secretary