

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Unapproved Minutes of Thursday, June 14, 2018
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairman
Eugene Marchand, Vice-Chairman
Frank Infante
Mary Kortmann
William Oros

Board Member Absent:

Peter Larson

Also Present:

Ben Urbanski, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Audience members in attendance: Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Beth Giller, GHR Principal; Families and Students in support of the Future Problem Solvers; the CHS Golf Team, and the CHS Girls Tennis Team and their coaches, Adam Apicella and Warren Harrington; GHR Teachers Margo Vachon, Lauren Jordan, Nicole Prasser, Nora Jones, and Lynn Bernier; Laura Boates, CEP Teacher; CNH Teachers Audra Leach and Maggie McInerney; Board candidates, Kelly Sobol and Daniel Uriano; several community members; the Chronicle Newspaper was represented.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

Matthew O'Brien, Jr., 3400 Main Street, Chairman of the Coventry RTC, read a statement on behalf of James Houlberg. That statement is attached to these minutes.

Julie Blanchard, 763 Wrights Mill Road, Town Council member, was present in support of James Houlberg taking the vacant seat left by Mary Minor.

Audience of citizens was closed.

MOTION: To move the CHS Athletics Recognition to before the item to Fill the Unexpired Term of Mary Minor

By: W. Oros

Seconded: E. Marchand

Result: Motion passes unanimously

IV. Recognition: CHS Athletics - Golf Team and Girls Tennis Team - NCCC Season Champions

Dr. Petrone congratulated both the Golf Team and the Girls Tennis Team, as both won the NCCC Season Championships.

Coach Apicella spoke on behalf of the Tennis Team and noted how great everyone did and what a great season they had. Team members introduced themselves. There was congratulations from the Board and audience.

Coach Herrington spoke on behalf of the Golf Team and reviewed the winning statistics. He introduced the team members who were present. There were congratulations from the Board and audience.

J. Beausoleil said these accomplishments are very impressive.

MOTION: To move the recognition of the Coventry Future Problem Solvers to before the item to Fill the Unexpired Term of Mary Minor

By: W. Oros

Seconded: E. Marchand

Result: Motion passes unanimously

V. Recognition: Coventry's Future Problem Solvers with Laura Boates

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. Boates who talked about the FPS program and noted how the different teams placed at Internationals. She thanked all for the continued support of the program.

J. Beausoleil noted how incredible this program is. She added, students don't have to do this, they want to.

There were congratulations from the Board and audience.

VI. Information and VOTE: Fill the Unexpired Term of Mary Minor

J. Beausoleil reviewed the procedures that are in place, legally and due to past practice. She said the first step is for candidates to pick a number, so there is an order for each to make a statement. She continued reviewing the remaining steps for the evening.

VI.A. Statements by Candidates

Mr. Oros chose number one on behalf of James Houlberg.

Mr. Uriano chose number two, making Ms. Sobol number three.

Mr. Oros reviewed the letter of intent and resume provided by James Houlberg, who was unable to attend the meeting tonight.

Mr. Uriano made a statement, including that he is a former social studies teacher. He said he is registered with one party, but does not think we should be going with one party or the other, but we should have more of an open mind. He continued and reviewed his background. He noted his education and said his background is as an educator and currently he is an Athletic Director. He said he can offer a multitude of perspectives based on his background.

The Board asked various questions, including the following:

W. Oros asked what Mr. Uriano would consider to be the requirements of a successful school board member. Mr. Uriano said a key is having an understanding of the community.

E. Marchand asked, from Mr. Uriano's perspective, what the major issue the Board of Education is facing and what could he offer as a solution. Mr. Uriano said the high school curricular does not match the world's problems.

W. Oros asked what the role and responsibility of the Board member is. Mr. Uriano said to support the Superintendent and administration and develop policy.

M. Kortmann asked what party Mr. Uriano is affiliated with. Mr. Uriano said he is a registered democrat.

J. Beausoleil asked if he had ever been to a Coventry Board of Education meeting. He said no.

J. Beausoleil asked if he was familiar with Roberts Rules of Order, he said yes.

J. Beausoleil asked if board members have power outside of the Board meetings, he said no.

J. Beausoleil asked if he had an understanding of the time commitment of a Board member. He said he has a full understanding.

F. Infante asked about his attitude regarding a student's path after graduation and if he thinks college is important. Mr. Uriano says he puts stock and value into a good education but it should not be the only option we are talking to kids about.

Ms. Sobol made a statement, including that she has been a Coventry resident for 10 years. She said she is a manager of a Starbucks. She said she is a mother of two Coventry students and she is here for the kids and it is so important for them to have an advocate at the table. She added that no matter the party we are a member of, we need to work together and she expanded on that line of thought.

The Board asked a variety of questions, including the following:

E. Marchand noted that the current Board has been totally non-partisan. He said he appreciated both of the speakers for bringing that up. He asked, from Ms. Sobol's perspective as a parent, what is the most pressing issue that this Board is facing and what would you contribute. Ms. Sobol said much of time the budget is at the focus and trying to do everything you need to do with the money available seems to be the key issue. She added that getting parents to participate is another item.

W. Oros asked about the role and responsibility of a Board member. Ms. Sobol said it is about being a civil leader. She said you are in a position to speak on behalf of the town. W. Oros asked if you are willing to make the time commitment. Ms. Sobol said she realizes the time commitment.

J. Beausoleil asked if board members have power outside of the Board meeting, she said no.

She said she would look forward to learning about Robert Rules of Order.

J. Beausoleil asked if she had heard the term FOI. She said yes.

Mr. Urbanski asked what she sees is the extent of the Student Board of Education Representative role. She said she thinks it is a great opportunity for student to be included. She said, Ben has done a great job and she would like to continue to hear even more from the student representative.

VI.B. Nominations and VOTE

J. Beausoleil asked for nominations.

(There were no other nominations for Secretary.)

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VI.E. Fill Committee Vacancies: Grievance Committee, Policy Committee, and Residency Committee

J. Beausoleil reviewed the committee vacancies and asked that K. Sobol sit on each. She agreed.

VII. Report of Superintendent

Dr. Petrone reviewed all of the happenings going on around the district and at the state level.

VII.A. Recognition: Kevin Icart, Videographer

Dr. Petrone introduced Kevin Icart, the videographer. J. Beausoleil said it is important to recognize staff, and she wanted to note the work Kevin does behind the scenes. Mr. Icart thanked the Board for the opportunity.

VII.B. Recognition: GHR Teachers, Margo Vachon, Lauren Jordan, Nicole Prasser, Nora Jones, and Lynn Bernier - CT Reading Association Grant Awards

Dr. Petrone talked about the grants received through the CT Reading Association (CRA) and introduced the staff who were recognized at the CRA banquet for receiving these awards. Dr. Giller said a few words of recognition of these staff members.

J. Beausoleil said it is so important to be a good reader and she appreciates the work these teachers do to form that foundation for our students.

K. Sobol said how incredible the work is that the teachers do.

There was appreciation from the Board and audience.

VII.C. Information: Trout in the Classroom Update with Audra Leach and Maggie McNerney, CNH Teachers

Dr. Petrone reviewed how the funds were received for this program, which was by a grant through Northrop Grumman, J. Beausoleil's employer.

Ms. Leach and Ms. McNerney shared a presentation on how the Trout in the Classroom progressed, which included the release of the trout. They talked about the NGSS standards and how the standards were covered through this project.

Dr. Petrone and the Board thanked Ms. Leach and Ms. McNerney for their work on the project.

VII.D. Recognition: Ben Urbanski, Student BOE Representative

Dr. Petrone noted it is Ben's last meeting. He said it is the first time a student has served for two years in this position. He said how much Ben will be missed, not only at the Board meetings, but at the schools - he is at all of the events. He thanked him for his service.

E. Marchand said Ben has taken the tradition up another notch up. J. Beausoleil said Ben's input would be missed.

Mr. Urbanski thanked the Board and Dr. Petrone for the opportunity to serve. He said he has learned a lot and he is glad to have been a part of the process.

K. Sobol asked what his favorite part was. Ben said the policy and contract parts were interesting.

VII.E. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Mr. Urbanski reviewed the many events happening at the schools this time of year.

VII.F. Information: 2017-2018 Administrators' Goal Achievement Updates

VII.F.1. G. H. Robertson School

Dr. Petrone introduced Dr. Giller who shared the GHR goal update presentation for the 2017-18 school year. The entire report is available on the district's website.

E. Marchand asked for clarification about the attendance of student led conferences. Dr. Giller said all students held the conferences, even if it was not with a parent.

W. Oros asked how next year will look. Dr. Giller said they will be looking at different ways to see if it is possible to include more things.

K. Sobol talked about her experience with student led conferences as a parent.

Dr. Petrone talked about how the process will evolve and that they are looking to reorganize what the conferences in general will look like.

VII.F.2. Capt. Nathan Hale School

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. DeJulius who shared the CNH goal update presentation for the 2017-18 school year. The entire report is available on the district's website.

VII.F.3. Teaching and Learning

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. Mullaly who shared the goal update presentation for Teaching and Learning for the 2017-18 school year. The entire report is available on the district's website.

VIII. VOTE: Consent Agenda

VIII.A. Accept the resignation of William Riordan, CGS Para-educator

VIII.B. Accept resignation of Deborah Tomkunas, Cafeteria Worker

MOTION: Approve the consent agenda as presented

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

IX. Report of Chairman

J. Beausoleil welcomed K. Sobol and noted how excited the Board is to have her as a member.

J. Beausoleil echoed the comments the Superintendent made about the senior awards night. She said there is such a commitment from the community to our students.

J. Beausoleil said volunteers are always needed for Project Graduation and those interested should contact CHS.

XI. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

XI.A. Approve Minutes of May 31, 2018

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 31, 2018

By: M. Kortmann

Seconded: F. Infante

Result: Motion passes 4-0-2 (W. Oros and K. Sobol abstain)

MOTION: To approve the Agreement between the Coventry Board of Education and the Custodians 2018-2021

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: F. Infante

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XVI. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:41 p.m.

By: K. Sobol

Seconded: F. Infante

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: _____

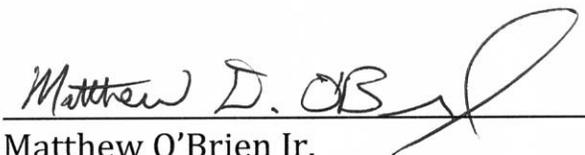
June 14th, 2018

First of all, I'd like to thank Mary Minor for her service as Secretary of the Board of Education and for volunteering time from her busy schedule to take on this important responsibility. I will greatly miss her involvement in helping to make Coventry schools a special place for our students. We are grateful for her, and wish her and her family the very best as they move on to the next exciting chapter of their lives.

Tonight, I'm speaking on behalf Mr. Jim Houlberg to fill the vacant Board of Education seat for the remainder of the current term. Jim regrets not being able to attend tonight. He is serving our nation in the Army, and is away at training in New York at Fort Drum. I spoke with him last night, and he expects to return shortly. The RTC vetted several candidates, and determined that Jim Houlberg is the best fit for this role, and has the skills and experience necessary to represent the citizens of Coventry.

Jim has lived in Coventry for 11 years, he is married and has four children. Jim has been in the CT Army National guard for 24 years and works full time in Windsor Locks. He is very familiar with government budgeting and has a background in math and accounting. Specifically- his career expertise is in government budgeting, procurement, and accounting. He also works part-time as a Tax Accountant in his family business. As a financial advisor myself, I can attest to Jim's attention to detail, and accuracy in everything he does. Jim is committed to Coventry and loves the community. He's repeatedly expressed interest in finding a way to continue to serve the community after he retires from the National Guard in less than 2 months, and believes that he would be a positive supporting board member, and I wholeheartedly agree. Children and education are both very important to him, as well as insuring that every child receives a quality education, and that we get the most out of every dollar that we spend for their benefit. Jim served on the Town Council for a brief period between August and November last year, and learned a substantial amount about Coventry town government. He was an asset to the council. He wishes like to volunteer his time and talents to fill this important position for the remainder of this term.

Submitted Respectfully,



Matthew O'Brien Jr.
Chairman of the Coventry RTC