

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Unapproved Minutes of Thursday, November 14, 2019
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil
Mary Kortmann
Eugene Marchand
William Oros
Barbara Paré
Christina Williams
Robert Williams

Also Present:

Nicholas Cabral, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

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

Audience members present: several community members; Dorothy Grady, Justice of the Peace; CAPSS Superintendent Student Award Winners - CNH Grade 8 Students Naomi-Lynn Sanders and Owen Dieterle and CHS Seniors Ava Kuhnly and Dylan Patrick; Beth Pratt, Food Services Director; Pat Cox, Athletic Director; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; and parents and students.

I. Call to Order - Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Petrone called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

Dr. Petrone led the salute to the flag.

III. Swearing in of Board of Education Members

Ms. Grady sworn in all members of the Board of the Education.

IV. Election of Board Officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary

Dr. Petrone gave a brief review of the procedures for the officer elections.

Dr. Petrone asked for nominations for Chairman.

MOTION: To nominate C. Williams as Chairman

By: B. Paré (no second needed)

MOTION: To nominate J. Beausoleil for Chairman

By: W. Oros (no second needed)

Discussion:

W. Oros read a statement behind his reasoning for nominating J. Beausoleil. He emphasized the importance of experience and having a seasoned leader. He said the leadership job is very complicated and he believes in bipartisan working relationships. He said when the Board members begin their terms they have been working without hidden agendas and not as republicans or democrats.

B. Paré reviewed her reasoning behind supporting C. Williams. B. Paré talked about the town vote and that it is the will of the people that the republicans have the position of Chair and Vice-Chair. B. Paré continued that C. Williams has 17 years of experience in leadership and management. She said C. Williams has a personal stake in the school system with children still in the system. She said she is speaking for the will of the people who voted.

There were no other nominations at this time. Dr. Petrone asked for a roll call vote, which was as follows:

B. Pare voted for C. Williams
R. Williams voted for C. Williams
C. Williams voted for C. Williams
W. Oros voted for J. Beausoleil
J. Beausoleil voted for J. Beausoleil
M. Kortmann voted for J. Beausoleil
E. Marchand voted for J. Beausoleil

Dr. Petrone asked if anyone wanted to change their vote. There were no changes.

Result: The vote was 4-3, in favor of J. Beausoleil; J. Beausoleil was elected Chairman.

J. Beausoleil asked for nominations for the Vice-Chairman.

MOTION: To nominate C. Williams for Vice-Chair
By: B. Pare (no second needed)

MOTION: To nominate W. Oros for Vice-Chair
By: E. Marchand (no second needed)

Discussion:

B. Pare said she stands by her previous statement and added that it is the will of the voters that she is representing.

E. Marchand said it has been his honor and pleasure to work side by side with W. Oros for the past 8 years. He said he respects his past experience working as a school administrator. He said all of his work and decisions have been for the betterment of the students. He added he would be proud to serve with W. Oros as Vice-Chair.

There were no more nominations. J. Beausoleil asked for a roll call vote, which was as follows:

B. Pare voted for C. Williams
R. Williams voted for C. Williams
C. Williams voted for C. Williams
W. Oros voted for W. Oros
J. Beausoleil voted for W. Oros
M. Kortmann voted for W. Oros
E. Marchand voted for W. Oros

Result: The vote was 4-3, in favor of W. Oros; W. Oros was elected Vice-Chairman.

J. Beausoleil asked for nominations for Secretary.

MOTION: To nominate B. Paré for Secretary

By: M. Kortmann (no second needed)

B. Pare respectfully declined the nomination.

MOTION: To nominate R. Williams for Secretary

By: M. Kortmann (no second needed)

Williams respectfully declined the nomination

MOTION: To nominate E. Marchand for Secretary

By: W. Oros (no second needed)

J. Beausoleil asked for the roll call vote, which was as follows:

B. Pare abstained

R. Williams abstained

C. Williams abstained

W. Oros voted for E. Marchand

J. Beausoleil voted for E. Marchand

M. Kortmann voted for E. Marchand

E. Marchand voted for E. Marchand

Result: The vote was 4-0-3, in favor of E. Marchand; E. Marchand was elected Secretary.

V. Audience of Citizens

Cindy Prescott, Ripley Hill Road, she said she finds this election to be a joke. She said the people of Coventry spoke and the Republican Party took the majority and the Chair positions belong to the republicans, not the democrats. She said the Board needs to listen to the people.

Richard Williams, 508 Wrights Mill Road, said he was disappointed. He said the republicans won the election. He said these people are willing to give their time and are willing to serve. He said you are not letting the will of the people be heard. He said none of these new people are going to do anything to harm the school system.

Kevin Icart, while he does not currently live in town he works in the system and his parents live in town, said he wished there was more civility here. He said hearing the comments about Mr. Oros has enraged him and he is disgusted. He said Mr. Oros is a kind man and has given a lot to the community and the schools.

Dana Williams, Ripley Hill Road, said C. Williams, his daughter-in-law, is more than ample and qualified for the position. She has a great education and a great will to serve the students of Coventry. He said the republicans won the elections and now you want to hand it over to the democrats and he thinks that is wrong.

Angela Rejam, 122 Judd Road, said she is a parent in town and a registered republican. She said she wanted to thank Bill Oros for standing up for the J. Beausoleil. She said she does not look at anyone on the Board as a democrat or a republican. She said she looks for experience and potential. She said she sees someone who she trusts in J. Beausoleil. She said C. Williams has a lot of enthusiasm but she thinks it would be wise to learn from the current Chair. She said this Board of Education should not be determined by republican or democrat. She said what is best for the district and children should be done. She said this is not about any party but about the children.

John French, 392 Pucker Street, said we are not cowards because we are here and speaking out. He said, speaking as a former Board of Education member, who served for 7 years in another town, it

will take time for the new members to learn. He said, the rule is to leave your political party outside of the Board room. He disagreed with how the officer elections were made. He added that the town voted and the republicans should have the lead.

Emma Eaton, 41 Sean Circle and PTO president, said she has had the pleasure of working with the Board on a number of different items. She recognizes that the republicans won the majority on the Board of Education. She said there is nothing written that says you are owed any specific positions because of that. She noted that J. Beausoleil won the most overall votes of anyone on the Board. She added that J. Beausoleil has the experience as the Chair and Coventry residents respect her as the Chair. She noted her disappointment in the things being said tonight by those in the audience. She said the parents of this town expect this group to work as a team.

Frank Infante, 767 Merrow Road a Board member for four years, said the people on the Board are fantastic. He said the republicans who were newly elected are quick learners and everyone should give them a chance.

Melody, single mom living homeless in Chaplin, said she appreciates everything the Board has done for the students. She said she came tonight to see her daughter get an award and she has five children who are in the schools and she did not appreciate having to watch all of this political stuff and she would like to see the Board work on the things they are supposed to work on.

Pam Infante, 767 Merrow Road, talked about transparency and honesty. She asked that the Board please be up front with your party. She said honesty and transparency is what the town needs.

Kathleen Breitenwischer, 61 Barbara Drive a republican, said she is very happy with this outcome and that J. Beausoleil was the most popular vote getter in the town and she deserves the Chair position. She said she did not like that certain members refused the lower officer positions. She thanked everyone for their service. She said we are all neighbors and we should not be talking about our neighbors like this. She said we don't let our children act this way. She said the Board should work as a group, civility is important, and it is all about our children - it is not about parties.

VI. Report of Superintendent

Dr. Petrone again welcomed everyone and reviewed items taking place around the district and state.

W. Oros commented on the Veterans Ceremony and said it was wonderfully done.

A. Recognition: CAPSS Superintendent Student Award Winners: CNH Grade 8 Students Naomi-Lynn Saunders and Owen Dieterle; and CHS Seniors: Ava Kuhnly and Dylan Patrick

Dr. Petrone said this award is a big deal. He introduced Ms. DeJulius who spoke positively about both Miss Saunders and Mr. Dieterle.

Dr. Petrone introduced Mr. Blake who also spoke positively about both Miss. Kuhnly and Mr. Patrick.

There were congratulations by all.

J. Beausoleil said one of the favorite parts of Board meetings is seeing the student accomplishments. She noted the Board's pride. R. Williams said they are doing a great job and to keep it up.

B. Pare congratulated the students and thanked them for their hard work.

C. Williams told the students that one person can always make a difference.

B. Recognition: Joseph Blake, CHS Principal - CAS High School Principal of the Year

Dr. Petrone congratulated Mr. Blake for receiving the 2019 High School Principal of the Year award from the Connecticut Association of Schools.

E. Marchand said he is so impressed with the attention the students receive from teachers and administrators. He said it is obvious that Mr. Blake cares and administrators caring has much to do with the success of our schools.

Mr. Blake thanked the Board members and his fellow administrators. He said this doesn't happen without the support of the community.

Mr. Cabral said he was on the student panel that was interviewed by CAS and he was proud to participate.

There were congratulations from all.

C. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Mr. Cabral welcomed all of the new members to the Board. He said it is college application time at the high school, which is very exciting.

D. Information: Department Updates

1. Food Service

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. Pratt who shared the fall department update for Food Services. (This presentation is available on the district's website.)

E Marchand asked about the half cup fruit that is provided. Ms. Pratt said, the students have to take it so the district is compliant with the law.

C. Williams asked what happens with the food that is left over. Ms. Pratt some of it is collected by the 18-21 year old program and donated to the Coventry Food Pantry.

R. Williams asked about leftover food that is not donated. Mr. Trudelle commented that they are working on different ways to compost on site.

2. Athletics

Dr. Petrone introduced Mr. Cox the Athletic Director. Mr. Cox shared the Athletics Department fall update. (That presentation is available on the district's website.)

M. Kortmann asked about the emergency security plan when on the fields. Mr. Cox said this plan has been implemented this year. Dr. Petrone said this was worked out cooperatively with the police department.

E. Marchand commented on the excellent student athletic participation at CHS.

C. Williams asked what the goals were for the department. Mr. Cox said he looks forward to seeing the emergency action/security plan fully activated and he would like to see the student participation rate rise even more.

E. Marchand said there is something for everyone.

Dr. Petrone noted there are all different kinds of clubs, beyond sports, that are available to students.

C. Williams asked about the fee to play. Mr. Cox said in Coventry it is a low \$40 transportation fee. He said other area districts have a much higher fee. He said our fee does not keep any students from playing; he and the administration make sure of that.

VII. Report of Chairman

J. Beausoleil welcomed everyone to the table.

A. Committee and Liaison Assignments

J. Beausoleil asked that members take some time to consider serving on the committees to which they would be assigned. She read the following assignments.

1. Expulsion Committee

C. Williams (Chair), E. Marchand, R. Williams

2. Fiscal Committee

W. Oros (Chair), M. Kortmann, B. Paré

3. Grievance Committee

R. Williams (Chair), M. Kortmann, C. Williams

4. Policy Committee

W. Oros (Chair), E. Marchand, B. Paré

5. Residency Committee

C. Williams (Chair), M. Kortmann, B. Paré

6. Transportation Committee

B. Paré (Chair), E. Marchand, R. Williams

7. Curriculum Committee - Liaison

W. Oros

8. E. O. Smith Representative

C. Williams

9. District Technology Committee Liaison

W. Oros

10. EASTCONN Representative

C. Williams

11. Athletic Advisory Representative

E. Marchand

12. Wellness Committee Representative

B. Pare

13. Cable Advisory Representative (Town)

C. Williams

14. Ad Hoc Water Supply Study Committee (Town)

R. Williams

15. Building and Energy Efficiency Committee (Town)

M. Kortmann

16. CHS Walls Code Compliance Building Committee (Town)

E. Marchand

IX. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of October 30, 2019

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 30, 2019

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: 4-0-3 (B. Paré, C. Williams, R. Williams abstained)

X. New Business

A. VOTE: Approve the Board of Education Meeting Dates for 2020

J. Beausoleil reviewed the dates for 2020.

C. Williams asked if it would be worth it to add dates into the summer. J. Beausoleil said summer schedules do make it difficult and often meetings have had to be cancelled. E. Marchand said he feels confident, if they are needed, they could be scheduled. J. Beausoleil agreed.

MOTION: To approve the Board of Education meeting dates as presented for 2020

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XI. Possible VOTE: Executive Session (Bargaining Unit Negotiations)

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussions related to bargaining unit negotiations with the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations present at 9:02 p.m.

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XII. Open Session - The Board will return to Open Session for a possible VOTE on the Agreement Between the Coventry Board of Education and the Education Association of Coventry 2020-2024

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 9:45 p.m.

MOTION: To approve the negotiated Agreement between the Coventry Board of Education and the Education Association of Coventry 2020-2024

By: M. Kortmann

Seconded: R. Williams

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XIII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

By: W. Oros

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: _____