

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at 7:00 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School, 135 Pickett Lane, Durham, Connecticut.

Board members present: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Mr. Hicks arrived later during the meeting.

Board members absent: Dr. Friedrich.

Administration present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools and Mrs. Neubig, Business Manager.

Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

### **The Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **Administrator Welcome**

Debra Stone, principal at Memorial School, reported that Deborah Mariani will be honored tonight as the District 13 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Stone gave the Board a brief presentation about Mrs. Mariani and summarized that she is a natural leader who loves her job. She is a literacy coach who has mastered her craft and the entire District is better for that.

### **Regional School District 13 Teacher of the Year - Deborah Mariani**

Mrs. Mariani commented that she loves her job and the educators in this District make her job easy. She works in different grade levels and sees the common thread that is woven throughout the District which is what is best for our students. Mrs. Mariani thanked the Board for the honor of being Teacher of the Year and feels that the District is filled with Teachers of the Year.

Dr. Veronesi reported that Mrs. Mariani was honored at the Bushnell on November 15 with other teachers from around the state. Mr. Moore also commented that Mrs. Mariani is not only a good coach of teachers, but is also a good coach of children, including basketball. Dr. Veronesi also explained that several years ago, there had been a lot of variability in instruction and, as a solution, the coaching model was developed. Dr. Veronesi was grateful to the Board for their support of that and to Mrs. Mariani for her outstanding work.

### **CRHS Reporters - Colleen Coogan, Demarie Del Vecchio, Daniel Turecek**

Demarie Del Vecchio reported that she will be the first student to test out the Career Center. She will be helping with the marketing for the Durham Market. They will use social media to help get the word out about the new ownership. She will meet on Thursdays with Lisa Tregoning to go over goals and to come up with ideas. She will keep a journal for the Career Center throughout the experience and will write an essay at the end.

Daniel Turecek explained that Mr. Thompson, the Career Center counselor, will take students to the Middlesex Chamber breakfast on December 20<sup>th</sup> where Governor Malloy will be speaking. They also went to the breakfast in November and heard a military officer speak about Veterans Day. The Winter Concert will also take place on December 20<sup>th</sup> in the auditorium.

They then played a video from the Washington, DC trip and the students told the Board about their favorite parts of the trip.

**Public Comment**

Melissa Booth, from Durham, commented that she had been waiting for the Utilization Committee meeting minutes which came out today and was concerned about the Board now considering going to one program. Mrs. Booth feels that many people move here because there is a choice and it is a very important part of the District. She felt that the District could save money by looking at the busing and not the programs. Mrs. Booth asked her daughter how she would feel if she was told that she could no longer go to Lyman and had to go to Brewster and her daughter said that she loved John Lyman and they get to do things that no other kids get to do. Mrs. Booth feels that her daughter has grown tremendously at John Lyman and that the HOT school means more than the integrated day program.

Janina Eddinger also heard that the District may be moving toward a K-5 or preK-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12 and she wanted to let the Board know that she moved to town because of John Lyman School. She agrees that the program at John Lyman is very special and brings kids together. Mrs. Eddinger also commented that she had emailed the Board about integrating two or more days into the school year calendar for inclement weather. She also suggested that the District uses only 180 days and doesn't move the end of school further out.

**Next Board Meeting - January 10, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School****Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to approve the agenda, as presented.*

*Mr. Yamartino then made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to add an item for discussion of the formation of a finance committee. Mr. Moore suggested that be discussed under New Business.*

*In favor of approving the agenda as amended: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

**Approval of Minutes - November 8, 2017**

*Mr. Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to approve the minutes of Board of Education meeting on November 8, 2017, as presented.*

*In favor of approving the minutes of November 8, 2017 as presented: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.*

**Superintendent Award Student Recipients - Charlotte Planeta and Alexander Stephan**

Dr. Veronesi commented that Charlotte Planeta and Alexander Stephan have several things in common. Both are genuine role models, in and out of school, and are people of integrity. Both are interested in going into the field of education. Charlotte would like to study special education at the elementary school level and would like to come back and teach at Brewster School someday. Alexander would like to study music education and ultimately teach at the high school level. Dr. Veronesi also noted that Charlotte has been a figure skater since she was four years old and credits that for teaching her the role of hard work. She is a member of DECA, on the Scholarship Committee and the National Honor Society. Alexander is in the top 10 of his class, has recently been awarded the Xerox Award for Innovation and Information Technology and the Fairfield University Book Award. He is in the band, jazz band, jazz combo, concert choir and chamber choir.

Dr. Veronesi recognized both students as a true credit to their parents and a fine example of District 13 individuals and citizens. Both students were recently recognized at a luncheon at the Saybrook Point Inn.

Mrs. Boyle asked where the students were looking to go to college and Charlotte Planeta said she wanted to stay close and the farthest she had applied was the University of New Hampshire. Her number one choice would be Salve Regina. Alexander Stephan is also looking at schools on the East Coast and his number one choice would probably be Boston University.

### **Communications**

Mr. Moore reported that he had spoken to Laura Francis today and the Planning and Zoning meeting tonight in Middletown has been moved to the Zoning Board of Appeals on January 4, 2018 and the full Planning and Zoning meeting on January 10, 2018. He will prepare a letter from the Board and send a draft to the Board members.

Mr. Yamartino commented that people have asked him about getting flyers from Park and Rec and Dr. Veronesi stated that she contacted Sherry Hill, from Park and Rec in Durham, and she said she would reach out to Hannah Malcolm, Park and Rec in Middlefield. The District has really tried to make the shift from sending flyers home and have the information on the website. The information is also posted on both towns' websites as well. Dr. Veronesi suggested that she ask the principals to include a reminder on their newsletters.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **A. Policy Committee - November 14, 2017**

Mr. Moore stated that Mr. Hicks was not here, but there were several policies for the Board to read. Dr. Veronesi also suggested that the Board members review the Policy Committee minutes to see the discussion that was held.

Dr. Taylor asked if this was the general trend that the District has third parties write their policy or if they are dictated by the state and then the Board effectively rubber stamps them. Mrs. Boyle stated that she has been on the Policy Committee in the past and the policies are normally received from Shipman and Goodwin, then they may be tweaked and approved by the Board. Dr. Veronesi also explained that that is how Boards of Education get their policies and that is nothing new.

Dr. Taylor wondered if these types of policies needed to come to the full Board and if these could possibly be done at the committee or Superintendent level. Mr. Yamartino explained that there had been full discussion on each of these policies. Dr. Veronesi stated that policy is one of the major roles of the Board of Education.

Mr. Augur asked if there is a state law that the policies be passed or if they are offered as a standard. Mrs. Boyle commented that everything needs to be brought as a policy so that the Board is aware of it. Dr. Veronesi also commented that if the Policy Committee met on a more frequent basis, it would seem less daunting.

Dr. Taylor felt that these policies were not specific to our District, but Mr. Yamartino stated that part of the Social Media policy is the District's position on crowd-funding. Mrs. Boyle also reported that the committee had reviewed every single policy about three or four years ago.

*Mrs. Boyle made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to enter the following policies into the record and to move them to second read at the January 10, 2018 meeting: Employment Checks, Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Children or Sexual Assault of Students by School Employees, Chemical Health Policy for Student Athletes, Homeless Children and Youth, Confidentiality and Access to Education Records, Restraint and Seclusion and Social Media.*

*In favor of entering the policies into the record and moving them to second read at the January 10, 2018 meeting: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

Mr. Moore mentioned that the Policy Committee also discussed putting non-Board members on committees and read parts of that suggested policy to the Board. They will continue discussion at the next Policy meeting on January 9, 2018.

#### **B. Student Achievement Committee - November 29, 2017**

Mrs. Petrella reported that they discussed the STEAM camps which have been very successful and that the Curriculum Coordinator will look at existing curriculum to try to come up with ways of continuing that integration throughout the learning process. This could, in fact, have budget impacts including space, consumables and furniture.

The Committee also discussed coaches, who work with staff, and interventionists, who work with students. Mrs. Petrella noted that the fifth grade class is the first class to have had full-day kindergarten and their ability to think and persevere is much different than prior classes. She also mentioned the differences between the CMT math questions and the SBAC questions. Mrs. Petrella also stated that there will be a curriculum night in March.

Mrs. Boyle wondered how to get people to understand that the Board needs to spend more money on this new educational route and asked if it would behoove the Board to have a STEAM curriculum intro night for the taxpayers in the District, possibly by way of an adult STEAM camp.

Dr. Taylor also suggested putting Student Achievement right after the Pledge of Allegiance on the Board meeting agendas to highlight it as the number one priority of the District. Dr. Veronesi suggested that that item be called Progress Towards Strategic Coherence Goals and agreed that possibly moving Committee Reports to the top of the agenda is a good idea.

Mrs. Boyle suggested asking the Curriculum Director to attend the Board meetings every month. Dr. Veronesi stated that the Director of Organizational Development and the Director of Curriculum will present to the Board at the January meeting. Mrs. Boyle was happy to hear that, but wanted to have curriculum at every meeting and organizational development more than once a year. Dr. Veronesi will draft an agenda prototype and share it with the Board. Mr. Roraback felt that that would project more transparency. Mr. Augur also suggested that the mission statement be on the top of the agendas for the Board meeting and Dr. Taylor stated that other boards actually recite their mission statement. Mr. Yamartino also suggested that Approval of Agenda be moved to right after the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Petrella asked if the Board could get a financial breakdown of the STEAM camps. Dr. Veronesi explained that the ending balance is shown in the financials for November 30<sup>th</sup>, but they will do a more itemized breakout.

**C. Utilization Committee - November 30, 2017**

Mr. Augur reported that they had received updated information from Silver Petrucelli and they discussed the continuing challenges. Mr. Augur came up with the analogy of Dr. Veronesi walking on a tightrope with the pole that has economic challenges on one side and programmatic needs on the other. She needs to always keep looking ahead to maintain the balance.

Dr. Taylor also explained that the Utilization Committee feels that it will be tough to keep a two-program system with the financial difficulties the District faces. He also commented that there is a statewide shift to a more integrated program that is HOT-based.

**D. Educational Resources Committee - December 13, 2017**

Mr. Moore explained that the ERC met right before this meeting and talked about the audit report which will be voted on tonight. The audit report was clean and there were no material deficiencies. They also talked about the lighting system and if a savings can be gained there. They also discussed a proposal from Nick Faiella about an option to look at a field house for a lot less money. They also discussed the capital plan and a copy will be distributed to the Board members.

**Business Manager's Report**

Mrs. Neubig reviewed the financial reports from the month of November. Everything is running status quo. Beginning in January, Mrs. Neubig will present projections and budget vs. year-to-date numbers.

Mrs. Neubig explained that revenue is still under budget for building use. Tuition will be collected in January. The Special Ed Excess Cost grant has not been received yet. MTA is running on track as well.

Capital reserve is status quo and the generator project at Strong has been completed, but no invoice has been received as of yet. Mrs. Neubig anticipates a small surplus on that item.

All departments have submitted their electronic budgets and Mrs. Neubig is reviewing them line by line. She will report to the Superintendent and individual meetings with administrators will be held.

Mrs. Boyle and Mr. Yamartino thanked Mrs. Neubig for her work on the audit and the capital plan.

Mr. Hicks arrived at this time.

**Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Veronesi reported that over 60 students attended the second STEAM camp and it was more high tech, including animation, coding and engineering.

She also reported that there is a monthly staff headcount summary included in the Board packet and asked for the Board's feedback.

Dr. Veronesi also reported that the new district web-site will go live on December 20, 2017 which will also include the new ADA guidelines. This will mean that some pages will still be under construction until they are ADA compliant. She commented that Ken Pietrasko and Mary Ellen Manning have been diligently working on the new website.

Dr. Veronesi also reported that the District continues to work with a specialist from ACES on a communication plan. She also approached the Communications class at the high school and is now working with a team of students. In addition to the vehicle for communication, the content is very important as the District will be addressing some very important issues.

Dr. Veronesi feels that the most important question is how is the District planning for the educational future of its students and the best way to do that would be to make it the most dynamic experience possible. Dr. Veronesi feels that the two programs are quite similar and the future should include student choice, student voice, integration of curriculum, arts integration and democratic practices.

Dr. Veronesi has invited three people from each school to serve on a school-based committee, beginning in January. They will have two meetings per month, one of just the committee members and the second one being a meeting-in-the-round for all teachers, parents or community members who would like to attend.

Mrs. Boyle asked what the timeline would be for these decisions and suggested that people tend to go negative when they don't fully understand. Dr. Taylor felt that it would be ultimately dictated by building configuration, probably in the next year and a half. Dr. Veronesi would hope that this new committee could make some suggestions in the next six months to possibly be integrated in the 2019-2020 school year.

Mr. Moore also stated that the Selectmen gave them their projections of the reduction in state grants this morning which will be steadily reduced by 8.3 percent per year over the next 10 years. He feels this will be another driving force behind these decisions.

Mrs. Boyle feels that this is such a hot topic that the information needs to be out there for the public. She asked if the roundtable meetings could be recorded or podcast for people who cannot attend. Mr. Augur also suggested doing highlights on a video.

Mr. Yamartino also reported that he had been asked if one of the District's schools is a HOT school, are the others lower order thinking schools. He feels that if the District believes higher order thinking schools are the way we should be teaching, then the District owes that to all of the children. Dr. Veronesi also commented that people are not aware of what it means to be a HOT school and what it takes to be one.

## **New Business**

### **A. Vote to Accept the Donation of a Piano (Pursuant to Policy 3280)**

Dr. Veronesi reported that the Jamesons would like to donate a 1927 Baldwin grand piano, valued between \$5,000 and \$10,000, to the Coginchaug Regional High School Music Department.

*Mr. Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to accept the donation of a piano from Debra and Paul Jameson, as described.*

*In favor of accepting the donation of a piano from Debra and Paul Jameson: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

Dr. Veronesi will send a thank you note on behalf of the Board.

**B. Vote to Accept the 2016-2017 Audit Report**

Mr. Moore thanked Mrs. Neubig for getting this audit done and Mrs. Neubig thanked Tippi Popp for all of her help.

*Mrs. Boyle made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to accept the 2016-2017 audit report.*

*In favor of accepting the 2016-2017 audit report: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

**C. Vote to Accept Field Trip Request**

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to approve the request for the CRHS field trip to Washington, DC in November, 2018, pending approval by the Department of Homeland Security and if it is deemed to be inappropriate, the Board has the right to withdraw the field trip approval.*

*In favor of approving the request for the CRHS field trip to Washington, DC in November, 2018: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

**D. Resolution from the Boards of Selectmen to Form a Finance Committee**

Mr. Moore explained that the Boards of Selectmen have made a resolution in response to Special Act 17-2, section 156 by the state legislature. Mr. Yamartino had copies of the resolution and the public act and explained that the Middlefield Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to approve a resolution on December 4, 2017 to form a finance committee based on the section 156 of the state budget. On December 5, 2017, the Middlefield Board of Finance unanimously approved a similar resolution and on December, 11, 2017, the Durham Board of Selectmen also unanimously approved a resolution requesting this.

Mr. Yamartino read the resolution, as follows: "Resolved that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Middlefield hereby requests that the Board of Education of Regional School District 13 establish a finance committee in accordance with State of Connecticut public act 17-2, section 156, which is attached to the motion, for the purpose of providing information to the Regional Board of Education concerning local town budget issues and any assistance requested by the Regional Board of Education in the preparation of a proposed budget. It is proposed that Middlefield and Durham, as members of towns, each appoint two representatives to the aforementioned finance committee. This resolution is approved and executed this 4<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2017 by the Middlefield Board of Selectmen." He also commented that the similar resolution by the Board of Finance is attached. Mr. Moore explained that Durham's resolution is basically the same as Middlefield's.

Mr. Yamartino then read section 156 and explained that it is new and effective with the passage of the state budget. The section does state that the towns shall appoint two representatives to the finance committee. These appointments would take place at a town meeting.

Mr. Moore explained that Dr. Veronesi had checked with Anne Littlefield and her response was that the ERC serves the same purpose as a finance committee and it would not be an issue to change the name. Mrs. Boyle stated that the ERC is a year-long committee with three-year terms and the finance committee would be an annual committee that provides input to the ERC. She believes the four members of the ERC would be on the finance committee, along with two people from Durham and two from Middlefield. Mrs. Boyle does not want to see both melded into one. Mr. Hicks agreed and sees this

finance committee as an advisory committee that will advise the ERC. Mr. Hicks believes that the ERC will bring the budget forward, not the finance committee.

Dr. Taylor didn't see the necessity for this finance committee as there are already direct lines of communication between the District and the towns. He believes this to be a backdoor way of the towns telling Board of Education what they will have in their budget and believes it to be a very slippery slope. Dr. Taylor wondered what the impetus was for this to come from both towns so quickly.

Mr. Yamartino explained that while there is communication happening, he believes that the Board of Education needs more input directly from the towns. With the heavy lifting that will be coming, he believes the five members of the ERC are not enough to carry that load. Mr. Yamartino also commented that there have only been four policy meetings in the last 18 months and, at the first of those four meetings, it was proposed to bring members of the community onto subcommittees yet it is still being moved through the committee. Mr. Yamartino feels that it is imperative that the Board forms this finance committee and gives members of the communities the opportunity. He also suggested that the appointments may be more than one year as almost every appointment in the towns is for two or three years.

Mr. Yamartino also brought up the issue that townspeople serving on committees would not get a vote because they are not elected members, however the people being appointed would be elected at a town meeting. Mr. Yamartino encouraged the Board to have faith in the townspeople and allow them to serve and have a vote.

Mr. Augur felt that the joint meetings with the other boards have been great, but not as constructive as smaller meetings and he felt this would be more efficient.

Mr. Yamartino stated that, during last year's budget process, a comment had been made that there were no discussions on specific spending items. While Dr. Taylor felt it was not the Board's job to have those discussions, Mr. Yamartino explained that the ERC did not have those discussions either. He also felt that the towns would have reassurance that the budget was vetted by people who are not on the Board of Education. Mr. Yamartino relayed a story about the Board of Education in Amity and how their budgets pass on the first try since creating a finance committee.

Mr. Moore felt that this group of people would provide information, but not act on it. This committee would not vote on the budget. Dr. Taylor was concerned that this will destroy the general structure of the regional school district and the separation between it and the two towns. He felt that this would effectively take a lot of the autonomy and power away from the Board of Education from a budgetary standpoint.

Mrs. Boyle felt it would be a wonderful opportunity to have experts in the field help the Board and the taxpayers and she would be grateful to have their assistance.

Mrs. Geraci felt that it is a horrible idea and the towns should not be involved in the school district. She felt that the towns should stick to their job and the Board of Education should stick to theirs. She would only consider it if the committee did not have a vote. Mrs. Geraci felt that the towns are motivated by the taxpayers and the Board of Education is motivated by providing an exceptional education to the students and sometimes they don't go hand in hand.

Mrs. Petrella commented that the Board had just had conversation regarding communication and felt that the more the townspeople understood, the less resistance they will have. She also reminded the Board

that their autonomy doesn't pass the budget, the townspeople do. Mrs. Petrella believes it's an excellent idea to get other input on committees.

Dr. Taylor didn't understand how the process is not already transparent when the budget is published well in advance. He does not believe the budget process should be all about numbers, but about priorities. This should not be a question for an accountant.

Mrs. Geraci felt that the finance committee members will come in asking for the Board to cut \$1 million and that will be all they care about. They will want to maintain or lower the mill rate and it will be number-driven.

Mrs. Boyle appreciated the conversation and suggested that the Board try it and if it doesn't work out, they tell the towns that it didn't work out. Mr. Hicks felt that once you have something, it's virtually impossible to get rid of it. Mr. Hicks will be meeting with representatives from Bethany, Woodbridge, Orange and Amity tomorrow and will get their feedback on it.

Mr. Yamartino commented that the Board of Education budget passed by nine votes last year, even with the full endorsement of the Middlefield Board of Finance. Every year prior, Middlefield has voted in the negative but passed it last year.

Dr. Taylor stated that unless someone is both an accountant and an educator, they do not have the ability to go line by line and say what is or is not a necessary piece of equipment. He feels that is the administrators' jobs to do. Dr. Taylor feels that the level of trust is between the Board of Education and Dr. Veronesi.

Mr. Yamartino explained that both individual municipal budgets passed close to unanimously, but the school budget passed by nine votes. The Middlefield budget that was passed was an 11.5 percent increase which is the highest ever and it was still unanimous. Having served on both sides now, Mr. Yamartino felt this is an opportunity bring both side together which will create a higher level of trust.

Mr. Hicks also commented that the Board of Education budget goes to referendum while the town budgets go to town meeting and there is a huge difference there.

Mr. Moore reviewed that the language in the state statute indicates that the committee provides local budget issues to the Board of Education and it seems to be a very narrow scope. He does not believe they can be voting members as they were not elected to the Board of Education. He also felt that having two from each town would offset the formula of having representation based on the number of students. However, Mr. Moore does not know how the Board of Education will not establish the committee now that both towns have requested it and will be appointing members.

Being specific, Dr. Taylor commented that the Selectmen have asked for this, not the towns. Mr. Hicks also pointed out that this did not go to the Board of Finance in Durham.

Mrs. Boyle had suggested the ERC members be on the finance committee along with two representatives from each town, but Mr. Moore also suggested appointing two members from the Board of Education. Mr. Augur also suggested that one member from the Board be on the ERC as well so there is no disconnect. Mr. Yamartino liked Mrs. Boyle's suggestion that the ERC members are on the finance committee as well. Mr. Yamartino felt that the finance committee needs to go over the budget in depth and then be champions for it in the public. Mr. Moore stated that that was not what the statute called for and Mr. Yamartino stated that he felt that the Board of Education should request assistance in assessing the budget.

Dr. Veronesi reminded the Board that Mrs. Neubig plays a major role in development of the budget and that this would add another meeting as well as another layer of vetting to the budget process. Dr. Veronesi felt the finance committee would bring local issues to the Board and be less about vetting the school budget.

Dr. Taylor felt that the language in the statute is not clear and is too open to interpretation. Mr. Moore suggested that some members of the Board get together to define the role of the finance committee and the rules by which it will operate. That will then go through ERC and then to the full Board at the January meeting.

Mr. Yamartino agreed as long as it comes back in January because time is ticking on another budget season. He also asked whether there would be two separate committees, ERC and finance, or have just one combined committee. Mr. Yamartino did not want to create more meetings for Board members, but could see both sides of the argument. He would like the Board to vote on whether they plan to do this or not and then if it will be combined or separate. He would also like the Board's feeling on whether the finance committee members can vote. Mr. Yamartino pointed out that anyone appointed to a committee by the towns has voting rights and he firmly believes that they should in this case also. His third question would be who would lead the committee and would that be by appointment by the chairman of the Board of Education or would they be elected by the members of the committee. His last question was about timing and he thought it needed to happen by the end of February, at the very latest.

Mr. Moore did not feel the Board could answer those questions until they decide what the role of the finance committee will be. Mr. Yamartino asked if it was worth defining the role if the Board did not want to pursue a finance committee. Dr. Taylor stated that he would not vote for something that he did not know what he was voting for.

*Mr. Augur made a motion, seconded by Mr. Yamartino, that the Board of Education form a finance committee for the regional school district. Such committee shall provide information to the regional school board concerning local budget issues of the member towns and any assistance requested by the regional board of education in the preparation of the proposed budget.*

Mrs. Petrella commented that any assistance requested by the Board will be the issue decided when the subcommittee defines the role of the finance committee. Mr. Augur agreed and stated that this would allow them to move forward with that. Mrs. Geraci did not see how you can vote on something when you don't know what the function of the committee will be. Mrs. Boyle stated that that is because both towns have asked the Board to do this and it will be developed as we go along. Mrs. Boyle felt that people seem to be coming from a place of fear of the unknown instead of a place of trust, respect and good faith. Mr. Hicks reminded Mrs. Boyle that the towns did not ask for this, but rather it was the Boards of Selectmen.

*In favor of establishing a finance committee for the regional school district to provide information to the regional school board concerning local budget issues of the member towns and any assistance requested by the regional board of education in the preparation of the proposed budget: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Mr. Yamartino. Against: Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks and Mr. Taylor. Mr. Moore abstained. Motion passed 5-3.*

Mr. Moore will call individuals to work on the language for this and will bring something back to the January meeting.

**Public Comment**

Carl Stoup applauded the Board for forming the finance committee.

Melissa Booth asked if the Board would make sure to publicize the meeting that will happen in January. She also commented that her husband and a friend are watching this meeting at home and she had also watched a meeting while away on vacation.

Jim Irish, from Middlefield, also applauded the Board for forming the finance committee. Mr. Irish stated that the Board of Finance read the legislation language clearly and understood the scope was to bring local issues but also be responsive to the Board of Education. He believes this is just a next step in the good dialog that has been happening between the towns and the Board of Ed. Mr. Yamartino added that Mr. Irish had been elected as the new chairman of the Board of Finance in Middlefield.

**Anticipated Executive Session**

**A. Discuss real estate matter**

**B. Discuss personnel matters**

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to move into Executive Session and invite Dr. Veronesi to join the executive session.*

*In favor of moving into executive session: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

**Adjournment**

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education.*

*In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.*

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz  
Alwaz First