

MINUTES OF THE CORNWALL BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010 AT 5:00 P.M.
AT CORNWALL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

Board members present were: Becky Hurlburt, Phil Hart, Thomas Levine, and Rachel Matsudaira. Irene Hurlburt and Wynne Kavanagh were absent. Others present were: Patricia Chamberlain, Superintendent of Schools; Robert Vaughan, Principal; two community members; and two members of the press.

Mrs. Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the Agenda was amended as follows: under Standing Building Committee add a) Benches.

On a motion by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the minutes of the March 18th meeting were approved.

Correspondence and Communications to the Board:

- Mr. Hart noted that the public has been active in contacting Board members in response to issues at the school this year.
- Mrs. Matsudaira reported from the PTA that some parents objected to some of the books on the summer reading list, which is distributed by the HVRHS library to middle school students, and asked if the list could include more classical literature and more age-appropriate literature.

Mr. Hart reported from the Region One Board that the next regular meeting is May 3rd, followed by a Special Meeting on May 10th to discuss board members and their relationship to issues. The music trip to Florida was a success, as was the musical *Grease*. The high school alpine ski team coached by Jim Terrall won in their league. They were the only public school in that league.

Mrs. Hurlburt reported that the ABC Committee, as well as town representatives, met with Aetna Insurance representatives to review their bid proposal. A Special Meeting will be held on May 3rd to make a final recommendation about a health insurance carrier.

The budget remains in good shape through the third quarter.

There was no report from the Board of Finance.

Standing Building Committee – Mr. Hart distributed drawings of the (at least) one 10-foot bench for the main entryway that Jim Terrall proposed to build from the wood from the maple that was cut down to make way for the new gym.

On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Levine, the Board voted to ask Jim Terrall to proceed with the benches project, total cost not to exceed \$4,000.

Mr. Terrall will keep the Board informed on progress.

Ms. Chamberlain – Superintendent's Report

- April is Autism Awareness Month – 1 in 114 children are now identified with autism
- CABE reported that the Connecticut Supreme Court has determined that students have a right to "educational adequacy."
- Seat Belt legislation has been deferred for one year to allow for more time studying the options.

- Region One Referendum takes place on May4th from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.
- Announcements

Principal's Report

- Mr. Vaughan will be meeting with middle school staff, parents, the assistant superintendent, and possibly the department chair at HVRHS next week to review the Language Arts Program
- The Solar Celebration was attended by many in the community as well as the 6th graders and science teacher Kathy West.
- Carl Anderson will be at school next week as Writer-in-residence, working with 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers and students. Alexa Venturini spearheaded this opportunity and money has already come from the Cornwall Foundation. The REAP grant will cover the balance.
- 3rd graders attended an afternoon concert at Music Mountain.
- Before a solution is proposed for securing the building, Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Selino are looking into rekeying (possibly keyless systems) exterior and some interior doors. Mr. Vaughan will have cost information for the May meeting.

Old Business

a) Budget 2010-2011

On a motion by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the Board voted to submit to the Board of Finance for the Public Hearing a proposed FY 2011 Budget of \$3,874,615.

- b) Gender Equity in Education – Mr. Hart thanked Mr. Samson for bringing the issue forward, noting that it was difficult to frame the issue of achievement and performance of girls over boys. Mr. Samson noted that the gap between girls' and boys' performance in school widens as they age. Mr. Vaughan noted that there is a lot of data available, but the data is uneven. In one year girls may have higher CMT scores, and in the next it will be reversed. Boys in fact tend to have higher SAT scores. Mr. Samson expressed the hope that a small study group (one or two parents, one or two teachers, and a community member) could get together to look at the issues and ideas.

New Business

- a) Graduation Speaker – Mr. Hart is in the process of lining up a speaker, usually a former CCS student.
- b) Social Networking Policy – a draft will be reviewed at the May meeting, after reviewing CABE's policies. There are questions about the appropriate uses and value of social networking sites.

Additional Comments from Board Members and/or Public: Mr. Hart thanked Susan Gingert for helping him clean the area around the solar panels.

On a motion by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Susan F. Gingert
Board Clerk