

MINUTES OF THE CORNWALL BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2010 AT 5:00 P.M.  
AT CORNWALL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

Board members present were: Becky Hurlburt, Phil Hart, Irene Hurlburt, Wynne Kavanagh, and Rachel Matsudaira. Thomas K. Levine was present for the executive session. Others present were: Patricia Chamberlain, Superintendent of Schools; Robert Vaughan, Principal; Skip Kosciusko, Cornwall Fire Department Rescue Captain; David Samson, Cornwall resident; and three members of the press.

Mrs. Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

**On a motion by Mrs. Kavanagh, seconded by Mr. Hart, the Agenda was amended as follows: Add *Landscaping* under New Business.**

**On a motion by Mrs. I. Hurlburt, seconded by Mr. Hart, the minutes of the February 18th meeting were approved.**

**On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mrs. Kavanagh, the minutes of the March 1<sup>st</sup> special meeting were approved.**

Correspondence and Communications to the Board: Mr. Hart read a letter addressed to the Board from CCS parent Jim Terrall which detailed his dismay at the handling of and resulting decision (to install a monitored buzz-in system) regarding the front door security issue at the school.

Mr. Samson addressed the Board about an issue he thinks is important to the community and to society – the gender difference between boys’ and girls’ academic success, noting that when boys are unsuccessful in elementary grades, they tend to “zone out” in later grades. Mr. Samson distributed an article showing that boys are lagging behind girls in standardized reading tests, and 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade Connecticut Mastery Test results from 2007 through 2009 showing that girls consistently have higher At/Above Proficient scores than boys. It was agreed to include the issue on April’s agenda.

Mr. Hart reported from the Region One Board that HVRHS enrollment is currently 498. The budget is set with a 1.79% increase. Becky Sawicki was recently named to the All-State Chorus. The musical *Grease* will be performed this weekend. There were no warnings cited in the last high school accreditation report.

Mrs. B. Hurlburt spoke about the KONA (insurance brokers) presentation at the last ABC (All Board Chairs) meeting. Boards are considering working with health insurance carriers other than Anthem. The superintendent’s evaluation was completed, with credit given to Superintendent Chamberlain for a job well done.

There was no report from the Board of Finance. The Boards of Education and Selectmen meet tonight to hear Board of Finance reactions to their proposed budgets.

Standing Building Committee – Board members were asked to suggest additional members for the committee. (currently Mr. Vaughan, Peter Selino, Mr. Hart, and Jim Terrall)

**On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mrs. Kavanagh, the Board followed the Standing Building Committee’s recommendation and approved R&M Insulation’s proposal for insulating the ceiling area in the PE office and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade room at a cost of \$3,684.**

Ms. Chamberlain – Superintendent’s Report

- Each Board member (and the Board clerk) received flowers in honor of Board Appreciation Month, Ms. Chamberlain noting that meetings were just the tip of the iceberg of what Board members do.

**Acting on the superintendent’s recommendation, on a motion by Mrs. I. Hurlburt, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the Board approved the resignation of Robert Kanehl, effective June 30, 2010.**

- Distributed literature about the use of seatbelts in school buses
- Grade 4 Arts Day held at Hotchkiss was a great success

Principal’s Report

- CMTs are done. Martha Bruehl was thanked for arranging to have breakfast snacks delivered by Education Connection, and the PTA for sharing the cost.
- A Brown Bag Lunch concert by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders was appreciated by the audience.
- The solar panels started generating electricity on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and activity is viewable online at <http://siteapp.fatspaniel.net/siteapp/simpleView.jsf?eid=434183> . Electricity savings of approximately 5% are anticipated.
- Daniel Hammond was hired as a regular paraprofessional through the end of the year
- Three quotes for a front door monitoring system ranging from \$4,500 to \$6,500 have been received. Mr. Kosciusko and the Cornwall Fire Chief met with Mr. Vaughan to share concerns about the proposed monitoring system, and the necessity of the locked door not hindering operations in a medical event. The fire and rescue departments asked to review the specs and operation of proposals, and give their comments to the Board before proposals are accepted. Pete Selino has suggested to Mr. Vaughan that with any new system, re-keying (possibly keyless entry) all doors would be advisable.

Old Business

- a) Mr. Hart is getting sketches for the entryway benches.

New Business

- a) The trees in front of the school and in the parking area will be ringed with compost, and those in front fertilized.

**On a motion by Mrs. I. Hurlburt, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the Board adjourned to executive session at 6:11 p.m. to discuss classified staff negotiations and the principal’s and nurse’s contracts. Ms. Chamberlain and Mr. Vaughan were invited to attend.**

The Board came out of executive session at 6:59 p.m.

**On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mrs. I. Hurlburt, the contract with school nurse, Martha Bruehl, was set for the 2010-2011 school year with an hourly rate of \$31, other benefits remaining the same as the current year.**

**On a motion by Mrs. Matsudaira, seconded by Mr. Hart, the Board accepted the offer of Cornwall Consolidated School Employees Local 1303-352 of Connecticut council 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO (the Union) to not participate in negotiations for a new contract, but to freeze salaries and health insurance cost share percentages for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mrs. Matsudaira, the Board offered a 2% salary increase to Principal Robert Vaughan for the 2010-2011 school year. Health insurance premium share will follow the teachers' contract.**

**On a motion by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mr. Hart, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.**

Susan F. Gingert  
Board Clerk