

November 28, 2007

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting in the Middle School library on November 28, 2007. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio and Mr. Moses from the Board of Education. Also present were Mr. Otto, Mr. Engle (left at 7:10 p.m.), Mr. Yanku, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Muscente, Dr. Keefe and Mrs. Berry. Mrs. Hardell, Mrs. Majek, and Mr. Wood representing The Villager were in the audience.

Mrs. Mainville, Town Clerk, was in attendance prior to the opening of the meeting to administer the oath of office to Board members. Mrs. Mainville presented written copies of the oath of office, signed by each Board member, to be included in Board of Education records.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Berry at 7:10 p.m.

1. Election of Officers for 2007-2009

Mrs. Berry asked for nominations for Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mrs. Johnson nominated Mrs. Lyons for chairperson of the Board. Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio seconded the nomination.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to close nominations.

VOTE: Unanimous

Written ballots were collected and Mrs. Lyons was unanimously voted as Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mrs. Berry turned the meeting over to Mrs. Lyons.

Mrs. Lyons asked for nominations for Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mrs. Johnson nominated Mrs. Downs for Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Education. Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio seconded the nomination.

MOTION: (Moses/Gerardi-Voccio) to close nominations.

VOTE: Unanimous

Written ballots were collected and Mrs. Downs was unanimously voted as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Education.

Mae Lyons asked for nominations for Secretary of the Board of Education.

Mrs. Downs nominated Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio as Secretary of the Board of Education. Mr. Moses seconded the nomination.

MOTION: (Downs/Johnson) to close nominations.

VOTE: Unanimous

Written ballots were collected and Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio was unanimously voted as Secretary of the Board of Education.

2. Public Comments/Comments by representation of:

- a. BEA - no report
- b. Local 1303 - AFSCME - no report
- c. PTO - no report

3. Educational Presentation - Mr. Costello, Principal of Killingly High School

Mr. Costello commented on the construction schedule for the new high school building in Killingly and provided information on how the new facility will allow for program development. He also commented on his emphasis to reach out to all Brooklyn students and his plans to reduce the drop-out rate and increase the number of students going to college. He concluded his remarks by stating that he is eager to work with Brooklyn and has been in contact with the administration at The Brooklyn School and Brooklyn students have been at Killingly High School for a number of activities.

4. Minutes of Board Meeting:

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2007 meeting.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Correspondence:

Included in Board packets were:

- a. A letter expressing thanks to the members of the Board of Education from Mr. Swartz;
- b. request from CABA to renew membership;
- c. minutes of the Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees meeting on October 23, 2007 and the agenda for November 20, 2007.

6. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated November 26, 2007 was included in Board packets.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver approval - no report
- e. Library Books - no report

MOTION: (Moses/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Unanimous

7. Administrative Reports:

a. Middle School Principal

Mr. Yanku reviewed the report in Board packets and commented on the:

- QVMS Music Festival on November 8th which included Brooklyn students in the band and chorus;
- Veterans Day Assembly held on November 9th to honor veterans;
- Parent-Teacher Conferences on November 14th and 15th;
- training in CPR and AED for administrators and staff members;
- intruder drill on November 16th;
- eighth grade high school orientation activities and specifically the program presented by the Killingly High School Vo-Ag staff;

7. **Administrative Reports (continued):**

a. **Middle School Principal (continued)**

- performance of Anne of Green Gables for grade five students at the Hyde Center on November 26th; and
- comments on the 2006-2007 Strategic School Profile.

b. **Elementary Principal**

Dr. Keefe's report included information and comments on:

- the establishment of a Student Council which includes two students from each grade four classroom;
- Parent-Teacher Conferences on November 15th;
- Team Meetings and Faculty Meetings focused on curriculum work, school climate and review of the remedial programs in reading and math;
- the Thanksgiving Basket Project - a collection of food for the Killingly-Brooklyn Food Bank to help students understand the importance of caring for others;
- the Connecticut Storytellers Program with presentations for students in Pre-K through grade 4;
- the Ragged Hill Woods Environmental Center Program on "Old Man Winter";
- Lockdown Safety Drills and Fire Drills;
- Book Fair on November 30th through December 6th;
- the Halloween Party and the Mother/Son Dance; and
- Debut of WBES - the Grand Opening of the WBES TV Station run by the Student Council.

Mrs. Downs requested information on the activities of the reading coordinator and Dr. Keefe stated that she would assemble a booklet of activities that Mrs. Bell has provided at the elementary building.

c. **Assistant Principal**

Mrs. Sweet's report included the following:

- the ERR report for the period of September 28th through October 29th;
- a report on the fall sports program which included comments on the success of the boys and girls soccer teams; the cross country season, which ended with the state championship race with two Brooklyn students participating on a cold and rainy Saturday morning; and a pizza party and slide show which will be held on November 30th;
- the basketball season will begin on December 5th with Mr. Lohbush coaching the girls' team and Mr. Garosshen coaching the boys' team;
- thirty students have participated in cheerleading tryouts. The final selection for this team will be made next week;
- the magazine drive was very successful and the final sales are expected to be higher than last year; and
- the staff committee on wellness will meet next week to review the Board's policy on this issue and consider proposals for changes/improvements which will be recommended to the Policy Committee for its consideration.

c. **Assistant Principal (continued):**

Mrs. Downs asked about establishing an ERR Program at the elementary building. The consensus of Board members' comments was that this issue should be revisited during the preparation of the 2008-2009 budget.

d. **Director of Student Services**

Mrs. Muscente's report included:

- comments on the 2006-2007 Strategic School Profile;
- a review of the current enrollment in special education programs (130);
- the number of PPT meetings held this past month (28);
- the co-teaching workshops that a number of our regular and special education teachers have attended;
- the CMT state workshops that both Mrs. Muscente and Mrs. Sweet attended this week to prepare for next spring's test administration;
- the Community Resource Guide that the Brooklyn Collaborative has prepared and distributed; and
- comments on the process of identification of gifted and talented students in grades 3-8 as required by statute.

Mrs. Muscente noted that although identification is required by statute, programming for those students so identified is not required and this generated a number of questions and comments about how programming could be provided.

e. **Superintendent's Report**

The following reports were included in Board packets and Mrs. Berry commented on a number of them.

- Grant Applications - Mrs. Berry reported on three applications that she had prepared and submitted for funding; specifically: 1) School Security to the Department of Energy Management and Homeland Security for additions to the facilities infrastructure; 2) Technology to the Department of Education to address the need for professional development in the use of data and the use of interactive white boards to deliver more effective lessons; and 3) to provide information on local resources on drug and alcohol prevention to students and their families submitted to the Quinebaug Prevention Grant Advisory Council for a local website on the use and the prevention of substance abuse.
- Eastconn Arts Magnet School - the executive director of EastConn has requested an opportunity to speak to the Brooklyn Board of Education about this school's program and Brooklyn's participation as a member of the Board of Directors. Mrs. Colen will be invited to a Board meeting after the holidays.

7. Administrative Reports (continued):

e. Superintendent's Report (continued):

- Reports in Board packets included:
 - Healthy Food Certification from the State Department of Education;
 - Substitute Teacher Pay Rates for the northeast area school systems;
 - Shipman and Goodwin bill for legal costs of the referendum on a cooperative high school;
 - Pre-K - grade 12 Enrollment Report for November, 2007;
 - Financial Report for November, 2007;
 - Cafeteria Report for October, 2007; and
 - Radon testing letter to parents concerning the radon testing program scheduled for December 18th - December 21st

8. Public Comments:

A question was asked by Mrs. Majek concerning the lack of an advanced math class in grades 5 and 6 and the need for such a class for students who have outstanding math ability. This question generated a discussion on grouping practices in this system and questions/comments were offered on the value of heterogeneous versus homogenous grouping.

Following the discussion, Mrs. Lyons recommended that the issue be referred to the Curriculum Committee for review and Mrs. Downs recommended that the issue should be discussed in detail.

The issue of a Board retreat in January for Board members and administrators was raised as an opportunity to discuss a number of issues in depth without the pressure of the monthly Board agenda items. Scheduling of a retreat will be placed on the December agenda for review.

The issue of an advanced math class in grades five and six has been referred to the Curriculum Committee.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. **Budget** - no meeting
- b. **Curriculum** - there is need for a meeting or a full Board of Education workshop
- c. **Discipline Advisory** - no meeting
- d. **Educational Planning** - no meeting
- e. **Facilities** - a meeting will be needed in January
- f. **Policy** - no meeting
- g. **Public Relations** - no report
- h. **Special Education** - no report
- i. **Staff Negotiations** - no meeting
- j. **Staff Relations** - no meeting
- k. **Technology** - no meeting
- l. **Transportation** - no meeting

10. Board Representatives to Other Committees:

- a. **Eastconn** - Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio was not able to attend.
- b. **Board of Finance** - Mr. Otto reported on the last Board of Finance meeting and asked that the Board of Education submit any requests for capital project funding to this committee. He also commented on the Board of Finance interest in a common insurance agent for the town and the school.
- c. **Insurance** - no meeting
- d. **Killingly Board of Education** - Mrs. Johnson reported on the two new board members on the Killingly Board.
- e. **PTO** - Mrs. Downs reported on the fundraisers underway and activities/events scheduled through December; specifically:
 - Smart Board Project;
 - The Holiday Breakfast on December 8th;
 - The Basket Raffle - a huge fundraiser;
 - Book Raffle - with books signed by the author;
 - Holiday Shopping Store for K through 6; and
 - The successful cookbook project.

Mrs. Downs noted that all of the activities, as well as information about the fundraisers, are listed on the school's website. In addition, she commented on the reduction in sales for some of the fundraisers this fall.

- f. **Preschool Building Committee** - Mrs. Lyons reported that the preschool construction project is on schedule.
- g. **Recreation** - Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio reported that the last regular meeting of the Recreation Commission was on October 25th and the report on activities included the following:
 - bus trips for various events are sold out;
 - the brochures for summer activities are being prepared; and
 - last summer's recreation program had an enrollment of 186 children and the revenue was \$53,000.
- h. **School Readiness Council/Brooklyn Collaborative** - This committee met on November 19th and discussed ways of getting more community members involved in the committee and its activities. They plan to hold another Community Conversation and are exploring ways to get representation from residents of Creamery Book and Quebec Square. They also are exploring the concept of a local Family Resources Center for family services and Positive Parenting training.
- i. **School Safety Committee** - no meeting
- j. **Woodstock Academy** - New Brooklyn representatives to this board will be appointed by Mrs. Lyons later in tonight's meeting.

11. Old Business:

- a. **Board Dinner**

Plans were finalized for a dinner on December 6th to honor retiring members of the Brooklyn Board of Education - Ken Swartz; Deborah Cornman and Christine Boyle.

12. New Business:

a. Committee Assignments

Following review of the existing committee structure and discussion on both the time commitment for various committees and the interest of Board members for assignment to certain committees, the committee structure noted below was agreed upon by consensus of the members present.

Committees

Budget:	*Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio, Mr. Moses, Mr. Gutierrez
Curriculum:	Mrs. Downs, *Mrs. Johnson
Educational Planning:	*Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio, Mr. Moses, Mr. Gutierrez
Facilities:	Mrs. Downs, *Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio
Policy	Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio, *Mr. Gutierrez
Public Relations:	*Mr. Moses
Special Education:	*Mrs. Lyons, Mr. Gutierrez
Staff Negotiations:	*Mrs. Lyons, Mr. Moses, Mr. Gutierrez
Staff Relations:	*Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson
Technology:	Mrs. Downs, *Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio
Transportation:	*Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio, Mr. Moses, Mr. Gutierrez

***The chairperson of the committee.**

Liaisons

EASTCONN:	Mrs. Johnson
Insurance:	Mrs. Lyons, Mr. Moses
Finance:	Mr. Moses
Killingly High School:	Mrs. Johnson
PTO:	Mrs. Downs
Recreation:	Mr. Moses
Safety Committee:	Mrs. Lyons
School Readiness:	Mr. Gutierrez
Woodstock Academy:	Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio
Preschool Building Committee:	Mrs. Lyons

13. Other:

- a. The December Board of Education meeting has been rescheduled to December 19th at 7:00 p.m. because of the holiday.

14. Public Comments: none

15. Adjournment

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to adjourn at 10:50 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous