

BOARD OF EDUCATION
LYMAN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
LEBANON, CONNECTICUT
Regular Session – January 27, 2009

The Chairman will vote only to make or break a tie.

I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman, Donna Lafontaine, Darcy Battye, Melissa Hofmann, Lori Jahoda, James Mello, Donna Skaats, Marisa Haralson, Rene Wentworth, Keith Wentworth

ABSENT: Beriah Smith, student representative

ALSO PRESENT: Robert McGray, Superintendent, Sandye Simon, Stephen Salisbury, Carol Moore, Rob Laskarzewski, Mal Leichter, Maryanne Leichter

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. COMMUNICATIONS – Secondary School Reform

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -

Chris Jordan – Presented his consulting services to the Board in the fall to provide energy savings for the school district.

Suzanne Yeo – Retired teacher and a Lebanon taxpayer, asked the Board to review where other towns are with regard to the 0% budget request and to take into consideration the cuts that are in place; no new initiatives in many years and loss of the talented/gifted program many years ago.

Stephen Salisbury – Representing the Administrations of Lebanon expressed concern with the proposed reduction at the administration level; loss of 1 administrator last year and talk of another this year; reducing staff is risky and a daunting task for everyone; give total school organization some thought.

Christine Babinski – Parent, volunteer and LES substitute teacher, profound increase in student needs; increasing class size effects academic levels; don't cut valuable teacher staff.

Courtney Adams – A Junior at Lyman, school supplies exhausted at mid year; no teacher cuts at LES; keep existing class size; no cuts of extra-curricular activities; look at pay-to-play sports before cutting education.

Rebecca Smith – Lebanon resident and Instructional Assistant at LES, look at the budget carefully before making cuts; how do we retain the accreditation and extra-curricular; paying twice for sports offered through the Town Recreation Dept.; larger class size is irresponsible due to the larger number of special education students.

Rita Perry – Lebanon resident and parent, fight to keep current class sizes and our teachers; willing to pay-to-play sports.

Lisa Verrizi - Lebanon resident and parent, thanked our teachers; the need to keep our teachers; keep exploratory arts.

Ann Birrell -Parent and teacher at Lyman, encourage art and music programs; importance of these programs at the elementary school level; will have to look at other alternatives if not offered in Lebanon.

Jacob Duff - A Senior at Lyman, sports and extra-curricular activities are a necessity; when looking at teachers look carefully at each and their performance verses their seniority.

Miguel Garcia - On behalf of the Teachers Association, thanked the Finance Subcommittee for their efforts and hard work; a 0% budget is not fiscally responsible; the Board of Ed is to represent the needs of everyone who works for the children.

Gabriel Paun, on behalf of Beriah Smith - no teacher layoffs, don't increase class size; don't accept a 0% budget; put the students 1st.

V. CONSENT AGENDA –

Moved by Melissa Hofmann and seconded by Rene Wentworth to approve the following minutes:

1. Regular Meeting – 12/9/08
2. Special Meeting – 12/5/08, Finance/Budget Subcommittee – 12/9/08, Communications Subcommittee – 12/9/08, Finance/Budget Subcommittee – 1/6/09, Policy Subcommittee – 1/13/09, Finance/Budget Subcommittee – 1/13/09, Finance/Budget Subcommittee – 1/20/09. Abstaining: Keith Wentworth
Motion passed.

VI. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

CURRICULUM – no report.

FINANCE/BUDGET – The Subcommittee has met to discuss and review the 2009/2010 budget.

GOALS – no report.

NEGOTIATIONS – no report.

POLICY - The Subcommittee met and has a list of policies to review and will present at upcoming meetings.

TRANSPORTATION – no report.

COMMUNICATIONS - no report.

VO-AG ADVISORY – The Subcommittee met last Wednesday for an update on the State Competition; discuss enrollment for this year and next; the grant development process for upcoming years.

PHYSICAL PLANT/FACILITIES – The Subcommittee met this evening to review the maintenance and custodial progress.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – no report.

VII. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT –

1. Updates:

- Professional Development Day information was provided for the Board's review.
 - The Elementary School has received the Big Y Honorable Mention for their video project and received 25,000 bonus points.
2. Trooper Kalkus, School Resource Officer presented on school safety which included: lockdown drills, an increase in staff involvement in the hallways at the middle and high schools; inoperable video cameras due to budgetary issues at the high school; free Resource Officer Services through the State; an additional opportunity for security with a dog walk through at the schools; the district has applied for a School Security Grant to upgrade video system.
 3. An introduction on the status of the Board of Ed budget. Mr. McGray thanked everyone who came out this evening; the Board is working on a 0% budget as expected by the Board of Finance; the budget is set by the Board of Finance and sent to referendum; there are still unknowns from the State with regard to Special Education; the retirement incentive package is under tonight's Action Items. A Public Hearing with the Board of Finance is scheduled for Saturday, February 28th at 9a.m. at the Fire Safety Complex. The Board discussed the challenges of meeting a 0% budget increase. Ideas regarding the budget were suggested and discussed.

Moved by Jim Mello and seconded by Lori Jahoda to suspend the rules and amend the agenda to add: 1) To act on a budget with an increase of contractual expenditure amount, only. Voting Aye: Melissa Hofmann, Jim Mello, Marisa Haralson, Lori Jahoda Voting Nay: Donna Skaats, Rene Wentworth, Keith Wentworth, Darcy Battye. Motion Tied – Chairman votes Aye. Motion passed.

Moved by Rene Wentworth and seconded by Jim Mello to suspend the rules and amend the agenda to add: 2) To apply for submission of a grant for the proposal of a small wind turbine demonstration. Motion unanimously passed.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS –

1. Moved by Rene Wentworth and seconded by Jim Mello to authorize the Superintendent to develop and present a retirement incentive package not to exceed \$11,000 in health insurance subsidy or a \$5,000 cash payment for three years per eligible employee for certified staff. Voting Aye: Jim Mello, Lori Jahoda, Keith Wentworth. Voting Nay: Melissa Hofmann, Darcy Battye, Rene Wentworth, Marisa Haralson, Donna Skaats. Motion defeated.
2. Moved by Rene Wentworth and seconded by Keith Wentworth to approve EASTCONN Adult Education as Lebanon Adult Education service provider. Motion unanimously passed.
3. Moved by Melissa Hofmann and seconded by Darcy Battye to approve an overnight end of year eighth grade field trip to New York City. Voting Aye: Keith Wentworth, Melissa Hofmann, Darcy Battye, Rene Wentworth, Lori Jahoda, Marisa Haralson. Voting Nay: Donna Skaats, Abstaining: Jim Mello Motion passed.
4. Moved by Melissa Hofmann and seconded by Jim Mello to approve a Varsity Baseball trip to Annapolis, Maryland and New Jersey. Motion unanimously passed.
5. Moved by Darcy Battye and seconded by Rene Wentworth to approve Lyman Memorial trip to Turner Falls, MA. Motion unanimously passed.
6. Moved by Jim Mello to act on a budget with an increase of contractual expenditure amount, only. With no second, the motion failed.
7. Moved by Rene Wentworth and seconded by Donna Skaats to apply for submission of a grant for the proposal of a small wind turbine demonstration. Motion unanimously passed.

IX. New Business/Items for upcoming Agendas – 1) Submission of documents from Finance Subcommittee meetings to all Board members 2) February 3rd Special Meeting on budget, only; 3) Evaluation and guidelines of positions; 4) Update from principals at the February 10th meeting.

X. Adjournment

Moved by Keith Wentworth and seconded by Rene Wentworth to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:28 p.m. Motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Bennett, Recording Secretary