



Hampton Board of Education  
380 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247

September 27, 2023  
7:00 pm

HES Library

## Minutes

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Rose Bisson called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Present: Rose Bisson, Juan Arriola (left at 8:36pm), David Halbach, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Elizabeth Lindorff, Diane Gagnon, Maryellen Donnelly, John Russell. Staff and Others: Acting Superintendent Valerie Bruneau, Principal Patrice Merendina, Russell Blair, Director of Education and Communications, Connecticut Freedom Of Information Commission and others.

### 2. Audience for Citizens and Staff

none

### 3. Correspondence to the Board

none

### 4. Approval of the Minutes from 8/23/23 and Special meeting minutes from 09/06/23

Mark Becker moved to approve the Minutes from 08/23/23 and the Special meeting Minutes from 09/06/23. David Halbach seconded the motion. A brief discussion occurred. Voting Yes: Rose Bisson, David Halbach, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Elizabeth Lindorff, Diane Gagnon, Maryellen Donnelly, John Russell. Voting No: Juan Arriola.

8-1-0

The motion passed

### 5. Tom Hennick's Presentation of Freedom of Information Act items and updates and what it means for Board members

Russell Blair, Director of Education and Communications, Connecticut Freedom Of Information Commission, gave a presentation, replacing Tom Hennick, about Freedom Of Information (FOI) items and elaborated on topics that are relevant for the Board. He shared brief details on different topics, such as Basics, Meetings, Executive Session, Minutes and Records; and took the time to answer questions the Board had after his presentation. Blair encouraged the Board to reach out to him if there are open questions that need more detailed information.

### 6. Presentation of Dennis Timbermans draft charge to create an Ad-Hoc committee to support schools audio needs

Dennis Timberman handed out his draft charge. A brief discussion about creating a committee or a liaison occurred. Mark Becker moved to make Dennis Timberman a liaison to support the investigation of audio needs. Maryellen Donnelly seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Rose Bisson, David Halbach, John Russell, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Elizabeth Lindorff, Diane Gagnon, Maryellen Donnelly. Voting No: Juan Arriola.

8-1-0

The motion passed



## 7. Superintendent's Report

- Acting Superintendent Valerie Bruneau reported on the status of the grants she applied for.
- She shared that additional "Wonders" curriculum materials were purchased that will be grant funded.
- Bruneau stated a concern about the lack of cameras and that it will be "imperative" to look at purchasing more and/or updated cameras for security purposes.
- She shared a quote and letters of reference about the duct work that needs to be done in the school. A discussion about the bidding process occurred. The Board suggested that bids should be obtained and to table the discussion for a later time. A special meeting could be held in order to vote.
- Furthermore, a discussion about personnel matter began. The item was not on the agenda. There was no further discussion at this time.

## 8. Principal's Report

- Principal Merendina reported on storage areas that cause a problem for fire inspections and that they should be cleared out. She will work with the town and Dr. Sarli to find a solution.
- She shared that the new Special Education teacher, Melissa Lynch, officially started on 09/27/23 and that she already connected with staff and students, got her room set up and is excited to be a part of the team.
- Merendina successfully involved students in the morning announcements and in putting up and taking down the flag everyday. With Merendina's initial guidance, the students were able to take ownership and established their own routines.
- The principal is interviewing possible candidates for the open SRBI/Interventions teacher position.

## 9. Business Coordinator's Report

Acting Superintendent Valerie Bruneau explained numbers on the Business Coordinator's Report as Mrs. Sally Lehoux was not present. It is encouraged to reach out to Sally Lehoux if there are any further questions about her report.

## 10. Board Business: Board votes to approve the use of grant funds for duct cleaning

tabled to a later date

## 11. Executive session for the purpose of discussion of negotiations with respect to collective bargaining

After moving agenda item 11 to the end of the meeting, Maryellen Donnelly motioned to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of negotiations with respect to collective bargaining at 9:23pm, Mark Becker seconded.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

The Board entered public session at 9:31pm.

## 12. Committee and Liaison reports: Any updates will be presented by committees

F&O:

- Mark Becker reported that the committee was given a presentation about the installation of the new heating system, what system it would be and which costs would be involved.
- Maryellen Donnelly shared that the Eversource rep is looking for incentives for hot water and the removal of the oil tanks.

EASTCONN:

- Maryellen Donnelly reported that EASTCONN shared audit updates at their last meeting.
- She also passed information about the transportation Hackathon on.
- EASTCONN hired a grant writer and are looking for a lobbyist to advocate for funding

## 13. Additions to the Agenda

Mark Becker moved to add the Discussion of Board of Education involvement in the hiring practice of new staff, Maryellen Donnelly seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**



**13a. Discussion of Board of Education involvement in the hiring practice of new staff**

The Board discussed the current district policy regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education and the Superintendent's authority on matters, such as staff hiring.

David Halbach motioned to continue the practice of the Boards approval for hiring new certified staff, including salary. Diane Gagnon seconded the motion. A discussion occurred if the present practice is still viable or should be changed. A discussion about possibly updating the current policy began. Voting Yes: Diane Gagnon, David Halbach, John Russell. Voting No: Maryellen Donnelly, Elizabeth Lindorff, Mark Becker, Dennis Timberman, Rose Bisson.

**3-5-0**

**The motion did not pass.**

**14. Next Agenda Planning**

none

**15. Audience for Citizens and Staff**

none

**16. Adjournment**

Diane Gagnon moved to adjourn at 9:31pm. John Russell seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ramona Anderson

*This is a draft until approved by the Board of Education.*