

**SALEM BOARD OF EDUCATION
SALEM, CONNECTICUT**

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Sean Reith, Sue Spang, Jen Rucci, Erik Trotter, Tiffany Cunningham, Kelly Francis, Ryan Little, Krystal Hales, Keri Weaver

ADMINISTRATION: Brian Hendrickson, Superintendent; Kim Gadaree, Business Manager; Megin Sechen, Assistant Principal/Director of Curriculum; Dan Driscoll, Principal; Kim Gritman, Director of Student Services

VISITORS: Leah Francis (ELHS Student Representative), Tony Henry, Jonathan Chechile, Todd Millen, Sue Bennett, Brian Fleming, Jen Werb, Sue Miller, Gary Closius, Janet Griggs (BOF liaison), Naomi Swider, Danielle Bucci-Nardoza, Ruth Savalle, Laura Adams, Leah Georgens-Fennell, Kristi Morrison, Alesha Brothers, Greg Wetzel, Tori Sullivan, Jillian Lecy, Joe Cunningham, Jenny Miller, Hannah Kanter (Note: others were present, but the sign in sheet was missing)

I. CALL TO ORDER - Meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. by Chairman, Sean Reith.

MOTION: Add to Executive Session - Discussion of the special meeting as it relates to the Superintendent.

Made: Sue Spang

2nd: Ryan Little

Vote: In Favor: SR, SS, RL,
KH, JR, ET, TC, KW

Absent (during vote): KF

MOTION PASSED

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS & REPORTS

A. Student Recognition

Sam Limburg was recognized for his excellence in leadership at Salem School.

B. December Report

Leah Francis, ELHS Student Representative, reported on recent and upcoming ELHS events.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment portion of the meeting is a time for members of the audience to address the Board of Education to express opinions concerning the educational program or other topics within the purview of the Board. The public is advised that any discussion of specific Board employees will not be allowed. The Board will listen to remarks but discussion and Board action is limited to agenda items only. When making a comment, please use the microphone and state your name and address.

- Todd Millen, 50 Sullivan Road - Spoke about sexual harassment (2nd reading) and current bullying policy language being too vague.
- Laura Adams, 62 Music Vale Road - Spoke about teacher turnover/retention.
- Leah Georgens-Fennell, 105 Witter Road - Spoke about teacher turnover, declining test scores and stated that Bacon Academy in Colchester is a HS option for Salem.
- Kristi Morrison, 82 Valley Drive - Spoke about her concerns regarding administration, declining test scores and the decline of instructional time for students.
- Alesha Brothers, 24 Gardner Lake Heights - Spoke about teacher turnover/retention.
- Greg Wetzel, 248 Norwich Road - Spoke about his recent positive experience with Salem School and stated his kids are thriving (at Salem School and ELHS).
- Tori Sullivan, 101 Witch Meadow Road - Spoke about her past positive experience with teachers at Salem School.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications were received from the Salem Seniors, Mrs. Wisniewski, Mr. Chechile, SFT leadership, Tori McCabe, Jessica Fletcher, and the East Lyme Building Committee

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve Minutes of the November 2, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting

B. Superintendent's Staffing Report

Assignments:

- Appointed Jeffrey Cusick-Howat as Custodian (2nd shift) starting November 11, 2024 at an hourly rate of \$18.83.

Supplemental Assignments:

- Appointed Jessica Fletcher as Girls' Assistant Basketball Coach for SY2024-25 for a stipend amount of \$1,293.00.
- Appointed Jennifer Labrie as Boys' Basketball Coach for SY2024-25 for a stipend amount of \$1,758.00.

Resignations:

- Rachel Kohl, MS ELA Teacher, resigned effective November 10, 2024.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda items, as presented.

Made: Sue Spang

2nd: Jen Rucci

Vote: All in Favor

MOTION PASSED

VII. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

A. District Updates

Brian Hendrickson reported on the November *Snapshot* newsletter, School Security, Fire Panel Update, Boiler Replacement, Accountability Index Improvement, Applied for CSDE AI pilot, LEARN Regional Grant, Website Update, Parent Conferences, and Budget Development (parent & staff feedback).

VIII. BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

A. Action Item: Approve Expenditure Reports, Line Item Adjustments and Monthly Grant Spending Report

Kim Gadaree reported on the financial reports and line item adjustments.

MOTION: To approve the Expenditure Report, Line Item Adjustments and Monthly Grant Spending Report, as presented.

Made: Ryan Little

2nd: Keri Weaver

Vote: All in Favor

MOTION PASSED

IX. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. SY2025-26 Budget - Transportation and Special Education

Kim Gritman, Director of Student Services discussed the areas of need and areas of strength in the Special Education Department. Kim Gadaree, Business Manager reported that transportation and special education numbers would change depending on the number of student outplacements.

X. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS/ANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

A. Long-Range Educational Planning Subcommittee

Tiffany Cunningham reported that the subcommittee reviewed the charge of the LREP subcommittee and that the Capital Plan has been sent to the Board of Finance. The subcommittee is looking to review energy efficiency and the impact of the RLE Energy project as a future meeting item.

B. Personnel Subcommittee

Sue Spang reported that the subcommittee met earlier in the evening and discussed 3-year administrator contracts (with support from LEARN), increasing substitute daily rates to \$160 and \$165 to be competitive with other districts in the area, reviewed a MOU for Volleyball Coach stipend, and set a date to meet with Policy to review the Exit Surveys/Exit Interview policy (December 16th at 5:30 pm). Additionally, the subcommittee discussed and agreed it was a good idea to contact the State Department of Education regarding the previous Superintendent's testimony at a Labor Board hearing.

C. Policy Subcommittee

Jen Rucci stated that there will be a joint meeting with Personnel on December 16th at 5:30 pm to discuss the Exit Surveys/Exit Interviews policy. Policy 2nd readings were tabled until the next BOE meeting.

D. Budget/Finance Subcommittee

Ryan Little reviewed the timeline for upcoming Budget Subcommittee meetings.

E. Curriculum Ad-Hoc Subcommittee

Kelly Francis reported that the subcommittee met on November 18th and discussed professional development, student data and report cards. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on December 17th at 5:00 pm.

F. Annual Management Plan

The annual management plan was reviewed.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

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- Jillian Lecy, 193 Rathbun Hill Road - Spoke about teacher turnover, quality of education and school climate for teachers.
- Joe Cunningham, Cockle Hill Road - Spoke about his disappointment with administration and the Board of Education due to the high teacher turnover.
- Jenny Miller, 87 Mill Lane - Spoke about her frustrations with the school especially regarding students who are struggling and concerns with teacher turnover rates.
- Gary Closious, 294 Hartford Road - Thanked the school administration for hosting the Salem Seniors meeting in November, the Lions vision and hearing testing and for the Care and Share Food Drive/donations.
- Hannah Kanter, 82 Horsepond Road - Spoke of her mistrust in the Board and administration following a previous meeting and requested transparency moving forward to support the children/students.

XII. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETINGS – January 13, 2025

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Discussion and Possible Further Action On/Appeal of SFT SBLR Decision

B. Discussion of the Special Meeting as it Relates to the Superintendent

MOTION: To enter executive session at 9:40 pm for the purpose of discussion and possible further action on/appeal of SFT SBLR decision as well as discussion of the Special Meeting as it relates to the Superintendent, inviting Brian Hendrickson, Kim Gadaree, Megin Sechen, Dan Driscoll, and Board Attorney (via phone).

Made: Sue Spang

2nd: Ryan Little

Vote: All in Favor

Motion Passed

Exited executive session at 11:50 pm.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn at 11:51 pm.

Made: Jen Rucci

2nd: Krystal Hales

Vote: All in Favor

Motion Passed

Meeting adjourned at 11:51 p.m.

JR/jlk