

CABOT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES Approved
MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2012

Present: Paul Stecker, Sharon O'Connor, Jackie Folsom, Ry Hoffman, Chris Tormey, (School Board Members), Karen Stewart (Principal), Rob Billings (Business Manager) Kittie Beattie Toll, (Legislative Representative), Hugh Burke (Student Representative), Heidi Cookson (Student Representative), Kassandra Morse (Student Representative)

Absent: Nancy Thomas

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Tormey with introductions.

Public input: Several guests attended, one guest presented a petition to close the high school and questions and considerations for the Board Members. Another guest read a statement regarding the process of collecting signatures for the petition and requesting that board minutes be promptly posted on the school website. One more guest in favor of keeping the high school open attended with concerns about the current curriculum, another guest voiced support for the high school. One guest attended with a concern about her elementary student's classrooms.

Consent Agenda: minutes for 12/3/2012 approved.

Reports:

Superintendent's Report: Ill - no report prior to meeting.

Principal's Report: Communications to the community through the Cabot Chronicle as well as other means for upcoming presentations of learning. This is a way for the parents and community to observe the kind of work kids are doing. Through continued communication we hope to see more attendance at presentations.

Currently , elementary grades are doing intensive reading assessments that are done three times a year. Karen will present the results of the assessments to the board when they are finished. Priority for this week has been reviewing the emergency procedures. Updates to some emergency protocols will be worked on. A memorial service for the victims of the Newtown shooting was held today with grades 6-12 in attendance. The board asked for an update on the state of the gym floor due to the unsafe nature of the service.

Student's Report: 3 student reps were in attendance and offered a report on recent school Activities.

Board Discussion:

Representative Kittiy Beattie Toll addressed the board regarding the consolidation options and cost-saving incentives for school boards or school districts. Representative Toll explained what is driving the 14% increase in health care costs for school year FY14. Representative Toll talked about the change from a Commissioner of Education to a Secretary of Education under the Governor. Representative Toll explained the monies promised to schools for bldg. projects are now delayed because VT is waiting to hear on FEMA aid for Irene Recovery . Representative Toll invited the board to contact her with questions or comments regarding any upcoming legislation.

a. Update on gym floor: Business Manager, Rob Billings provided an update from Director of Busing and Maintenance, Peter Ackerman regarding the problem and the next steps.

b. FY 2014 School budget update and plan for information sessions: Business Manager, Rob Billings

- common level of appraisal 4.18% lower means taxes will be increased and that houses selling in Cabot are selling below the grand list in town
- tax rate increased 13 cents
- a decrease of about 32,000 from special ed department
- speech services will shift with a decrease of 36,000
- \$65,000 for facilities work explained
- There has been a decrease in the number of students which will affect the tax rate
- Busing contract discussed – all bids too expensive, will continue to use own buses and drivers.

Board Action: Act on busing bids: Board voted unanimously not to bid out for busing

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:10pm.

*Please note that Business Manager Rob Billings is in possession of the petition to close Cabot High School and will see that it is delivered to the Town Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephenie Manning