

Galway Central School District
Board of Education Work Session

MINUTES

Thursday, September 12, 2013

6:30pm – High School Library

Board Members Present: Thomas Rumsey, President, Dennis Schaperjahn, Nancy Lisicki, Melodye Eldeen, Joan Slagle, Laura Sakala, Jay Anderson

Others in Attendance: Shannon Shine, Superintendent, Mike Healey, Jr./Sr. High School Principal, Brita Donovan, Associate Jr./Sr. High School Principal/Athletic Director, Tim Hilker, Business Official, community and faculty members.

Prior to the commencement of the Board of Education Work Session, the Board participated in a building walk through.

1. Dockstader Trust Greenhouse Sustainable Farming Project

Discussion resumed regarding the Dockstader Trust. A letter was received stating that if there has not been significant progress cleaning up the greenhouses by February 2014, the grant money must be returned. Mr. Shine reported that Mr. Healey received a letter from community member and parent, Amy David, who is willing to help see the project through. Ms. David has a Horticulture Certificate and Masters in Science. Mr. Healey will follow up with her. Some other suggestions from Board members were using the greenhouses through the Distance Learning classes and perhaps Cornell Cooperative Extension can help out in the summer.

There is still the issue of the bio fuel, tiller and some missing equipment. If no one is going to use the bio fuel equipment, Mr. Ostrander, spokesperson from the Galway Education Foundation, would like to find someone else to use it if Galway does not. The greenhouses still need to be made useable. Mr. Schaperjahn and a few community members have been working on the cleanup.

The Board would like to create and implement a policy and regulation for accepting grants. Mr. Hilker will attempt to compile a list of grants the district currently has so that the Board can track them and prevent this from happening again.

2. Opening Day/Beginning of School Update

Mr. Shine stated the district is off to a good start with a new beginning and new foundation to move forward. The Board noticed a significant change in the look of the building during the Board walk through. The administrators have spruced up the halls with an air of enthusiasm. Mr. Rumsey thanked the Board members who helped out on the first day of school, as well as Mr. Shine, stating that we don't always have to agree, however we do need to work together.

The one bus run has begun. All administrators have been present each morning and afternoon for bus arrival and departure, as well as Mr. Sherman, Director of Transportation and Mr. Shine. Teachers are bringing their students out to the busses. A few things have been “tweaked” for a more efficient dismissal procedure. A “Bus Ally” program has been implemented with 1 or 2 older responsible students from each bus assisting the younger students. Some Board members have received phone calls from parents with issues. Some issues, such as overcrowding, behavior and long routes have been addressed. Some students have had their busses changed to allow for a quicker bus run. Drivers need to enforce that older students sit in the back and the younger ones sit up front. There was an issue where the younger student was in the back of the bus alone, because their sibling didn’t ride that day. Now, when siblings want to sit together, the older will sit up front with younger student. The Board would like to have bus tapes reviewed randomly just to keep on top of any issues that may be brewing. A parent with an issue commented on how quickly Mr. Sherman responded. The Board would like to have Mr. Sherman attend a Board meeting in a month or so to report on how things are going with the one bus run.

Mr. Shine addressed concerns regarding recess or lack thereof. He shared that structured wellness allowed us to meet our mandated PE requirements for the number of minutes (120) per week. Originally structured wellness was planning to be offered 5 days per week and incorporated all special area teachers supporting the program. However, after discussion with the staff it was decided to limit structured wellness to one day per week to allow the teachers more flexibility in their schedule. With the teacher aide’s hours cut, we do not have the aides necessary to now cover recess and the teacher’s contracts indicated that all scheduled recess be reserved for teacher’s to meet with each other, tutor students etc.. However, this does not preclude teachers from scheduling unstructured time for their students in or outside. Mr. Rumsey suggested that perhaps the bus drivers could come in to do recess, but the teachers would then lose their flexibility. Mr. Schaperjahn suggested having a discussion with the teachers taking their own students out. Mrs. Slagle suggested communicating with the elementary teachers, along with the GTA on how we can work this out. Mrs. Lisicki stated that the contract was written prior to the current schedule and state mandates and now that there is a need the teachers may be willing to take the students out. Mr. Shine shared that the district he came from let the students go outside after they were done eating their lunch (20 minutes for lunch, 20 minutes outside).

3. Appointment of Temporary Personnel Clerk

This is an upgraded payroll position. The ad for the position went out today (09.12.13).

A motion was made by Jay Anderson, seconded by Nancy Lisicki, to approve the appointment of Barbara Sleight as a Temporary Personnel Clerk, at a rate of \$25 per hour, effective September 6, 2013, to be used on a limited basis, until a Personnel Clerk is hired for the position.

7-Aye 0-No Motion Carried

4. Approval of CSEA Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Vacation Time

A motion was made by Nancy Lisicki, seconded by Meloyde Eldeen to approve the CSEA Memorandum of Agreement regarding Vacation Time.

7-Aye 0-No Motion Carried

5. Board of Education Goal Update

After the Board/Administrator Retreat, the Board drafted 5 broad goals plus sub goals. The goals are:

1. Targeting Achievement
2. Success for ALL Students
3. Focus on the Power of Literacy
4. Soaring to the Future: Common Core and Beyond
5. Building a Culture of Achievement, Pride and Responsibility

Mr. Shine met with the administrative team to refine some of the sub goals. Mrs. Lisicki stated that after sub goals are decided on, the teachers will need the tools to attain the goals. There was a speaker at the Gloversville School District on opening day, which she thought would be a great resource for our teachers.

6. Student Enrollment Update

At the end of the 2012-13 school year, we had 907 students. We have begun the 2013-14 school year with 937 students. When asked why families were moving into the Galway School District, they said it was because they have heard good things about Galway and our school.

7. District Climate/Culture Update

The building looks nicer; a lot of positive changes, expectations are now the new normal. Mr. Shine is solidly optimistic about the start of the new school year. Mr. Rumsey would like to do a 5-10 question survey to students to get their views and feelings about the new school year. Mrs. Slagle would like to resurrect the end of the year faculty/staff survey from the past to see how teachers feel about the ability to "steer the ship".

8. Cabinet and Labor Relations Meetings

Mr. Shine had a cabinet meeting with supervisors and administrators, which included operations and maintenance, transportation, technology and food service supervisors in attendance. This was the first time that all were together and it seemed to work out well. He would like set up these meetings bi-weekly with all in attendance for the first part of the meeting, dismissing the supervisors and have the administrators stay for the entire time. They are in the process of reinstating the Professional Development Committee and the District Technology Committee.

9. Data Team/Data Dashboard

Lisa Marcellus, the District's Chief Information Officer, is in the process of a data analysis using Datamate. All Districts are required to choose a vendor to provide a visual of their district's data. The program is free for two years and then you need to purchase the software. This is an unfunded state mandate.

10. Miscellaneous Discussions

Mr. Rumsey asked if there was anything that other Board members would like to see on the next meeting's agenda. The following was mentioned;

- Calls have been coming in regarding the amount that taxes have gone up. We should explain how this process works at the next meeting.
- Mr. Schaperjahn would like a clarification on the process of the Board's dismissal into executive session.
- Mrs. Donovan, Athletic Director was asked to report on the Homecoming festivities.

10. Miscellaneous Discussions (Continued)

Mr. Rumsey would like to see the District's new initiatives advertised in the form of a press release, the web and our District Newsletter regarding our 2 distance learning labs and the classes being offered through them, the iPad carts being used in the classrooms, etc.

Mrs. Sakala commented on the attendance of Mr. Shine at the Galway Preservation Society meeting. The members were appreciative of his presence, noting that he is the only superintendent who has ever attended one of their meetings.

Mrs. Eldeen thanked Mr. Shine and Mr. Rumsey for opening day comments as they addressed the faculty and staff on their first day.

Mrs. Slagle would like to see the budget process begin earlier this year. She also informed the Board that have been no delegates to the School Boards Conference since 2004 or the Rural School Association Meetings. Members should plan ahead for these in July. These conferences are usually very informative.

Mrs. Lisicki would like to see some discussion on the weighting of grades.

Mrs. Lisicki announced that she is no longer able to serve on the Board of Education due to other commitments and the amount of time that she has to spend on her job. She submitted her resignation effective September 13, 2013. She is very happy with the direction the Board is going at this time.

6. Executive Session

Motion was made by Nancy Lisicki, seconded by Jay Anderson, to move into executive session at 8:45pm to discuss specific personnel matter(s).

Aye: 7 No: 0 Motion Carried

7. Regular Session

Motion was made by Laura Sakala, seconded by Dennis Schaperjahn, to return to regular session and adjourn at 10:00pm.

Aye: 7 No: 0 Motion Carried

8. Adjournment

Motion was made by Melodye Eldeen, seconded by Dennis Schaperjahn, to adjourn at 10:01pm.

Aye: 7 No: 0 Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara A. Agresta
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District Clerk