

Pending BOE Approval

**Watertown Board of Education  
Special Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date:** October 24, 2017  
**Meeting Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Meeting Place:** Lecture Hall, Watertown High School

**Members Present:** Ms. Leslie Crotty, Chairman  
Mr. Tom Lambert, Vice Chairman  
Ms. Janelle Wilk, Secretary  
Mr. Robert Makowski  
Mr. Victor Vicenzi  
Ms. Josephine Cavallo-Rosa  
Mr. Jim Gambardella  
Ms. Cheryl Albino

**Members Absent:** Ms. Cathie Rinaldi

**Others Present:** Dr. Bridget Carnemolla – Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Jill Browne – Business Manager  
Paola Dante – Student Council Representative

**A. Convene Regular Meeting – 7:30 p.m.**

**B. Salute to the Flag**

**C. Roll Call – Ms. Davidson**

**D. Minutes**

Agenda Item: D.1  
Subject: Minutes of the October 10, 2017 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Motion Presented By: Ms. Wilk  
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Makowski

Text of the Motion: So moved.

Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	Ms. Rinaldi
Vote:	Motion Passes

#### E. Report from Student Council Representative – Paola Dante

**Ms. Dante** – Good evening everyone. Students at **John Trumbull** are improving their reading, writing and math skills. They're discussing good reading habits such as reading out loud and re-reading to better understand text, while focusing on capitalization and punctuation. In math, the students are reviewing how to write addition sentences and adding in any order. Also, a big thank you to the Watertown Fire Department for visiting and teaching every class about fire safety.

Wolfe Elementary School in Houston, Texas received books, games, toys and monetary donations from **Judson** in hopes of helping the victims of Hurricane Harvey. The school also encourages students to wear pink on Fridays to raise awareness for breast cancer while also raising funds for Quilts that Care. All 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes toured the Mark Twain House on October 19<sup>th</sup> which was followed by progress reports being sent home on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Last but not least, volunteers are busy planning for the Monster Mash that will be on October 27<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 8 p.m. If you haven't already, be sure to check out and follow **Polk's** Twitter account @polkesfekete . Progress reports also went home on the 20<sup>th</sup>. This year, the school's annual Fin Run will be held in order to raise money for Chomebooks. The crowd favorite PTO Halloween Party will take place on Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 8 p.m.

Congratulations to the 89 eight graders who were inducted into the **Swift** chapter of the National Junior Society on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. These students achieved first honors for 3 consecutive trimesters and are on their way to providing service projects within the community. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Student Council and Leo Club organized "Go Pink" day where pink bracelets were sold for \$1.00. The staff also held a Dress Down event that raised money for the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

**Watertown High School's** counseling department facilitated a financial aid information session and College Fair on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The school also plans to develop a job shadowing program for 10<sup>th</sup> graders during the second semester. Lastly, our Fall Athletic teams are wrapping their seasons. We are insanely proud of everything they have accomplished! Special congratulations to our seniors for finishing strong on their Watertown athletic careers.

#### F. Award Recognition

**Dr. Carnemolla** – Earlier this evening, we had the great pleasure of doing our annual Wall of Honor induction here at Watertown High School. Each year, a committee is formed to review potential inductees. Nomination can be submitted by anyone. This evening, we had one

nominee who was selected for nomination and we wanted to be able to recognize him. Chief Ray Lagassee was nominated by a previous Wall of Honor inductee, Dr. Donofrio. Chief Lagassee, as we know him, was in the service for 30 years; and while on active duty, he distinguished himself by a meritorious achievement; the Bronze Star. By engaging in ground combat with an enemy against the United States at the Ahmed Al Jaber Air Force Base, from September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002 to August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003. This is just one of Chief Lagassee's many accomplishments that we recognized this evening as we inducted him into the Wall of Honor. We wanted to again congratulate Chief Lagassee.

- 1) The Watertown Board of Education wishes to recognize and congratulate Watertown's 2017-2018 Paraprofessional of the Year, Ms. Judy Johnston. Ms. Johnston currently serves as a paraeducator at John Trumbull Primary School. Currently, she works with students in kindergarten and encourages them to demonstrate that they are Ready, Responsible, and Respectful. In her work in the kindergarten classroom, she continually takes initiative, demonstrates flexibility, and has developed positive relationships with all of the teachers, parents, and students.

**Ms. Crotty** - The Watertown Board of Education wishes to recognize and congratulate Watertown's 2017-2018 Paraprofessional of the Year, Ms. Judy Johnston. Ms. Johnston has been employed with Watertown Public Schools since 2005 and currently serves as a paraeducator at John Trumbull Primary School. Working with some of our youngest students in the district, Judy encourages her kindergarten students to demonstrate that they are Ready, Responsible, and Respectful. In her work in the classroom, Ms. Johnston continually takes initiative, demonstrates flexibility, and has developed positive relationships with all of the teachers, parents, and students. Her colleagues describe her as warm, attentive, and selfless. Vice Principal Jen Galik describes Judy as a "breath of fresh air, someone who has a perpetual smile, and exudes enthusiasm regardless of where she is assigned and what she is doing. She truly has an innate sense of joy." The Watertown Board of Education is proud to recognize Ms. Judy Johnston as our paraprofessional of the Year.

**Dr. Carnemolla** – Thank you for being here with us tonight to celebrate the Chief and Ms. Johnston. I know Judy from my time spent up at John Trumbull. I have seen Judy in a number of places while in John Trumbull. When we arrived to surprise Judy and let her know she was the paraprofessional of the year, I felt like Ed McMahon. That is the exuberance and enthusiasm that Judy exhibits on a normal day and when we came to tell her that she was the paraprofessional of the year, it was breathtaking to a certain degree. So, instead of talking more about what I feel about Judy or what Mrs. Meka feels about Judy or what Mrs. Calabrese feels about Judy, we decided to say what students feel about Judy. I will do that here tonight and I thank Mrs. Meka for giving these to me. What I have here are many pictures of Mickey Mouse drawn by Kindergartners at John Trumbull. I just selected a few that I think are my favorites because most of them pretty much say the same thing. (Several were read to the audience) I think that these few examples of what Kindergartners had to say of Ms. Johnston are indicative of what any of us as adults would also say. Again Judy, we are grateful to have you. You

represent everything that we strive for in Watertown Public Schools and you absolutely represent the three R's at John Trumbull so congratulations again on this award.

2) Paraeducator of the Year Recognition of Four Nominees

The Watertown Board of Education would also like to congratulate and recognize the other four nominees, nominated for the 2017-2018 paraeducator of the year pool:

- Wendy Goodman - Polk Elementary School
- Colleen Mailhot - Swift Middle School
- Kristi Ortiz - Polk Elementary School
- Yvonne Walsh - Watertown High School

**G. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report**

1. **Appointments – (Information Only)**

Ms. Ashley Coon to the position of Grade 5 Level Leader for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$506.00.

Ms. Amy Gauthier to the position of Grade 4 Level Leader for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$506.00.

Ms. Leisha Eckerlin to the position of Homework Club Co-Advisor for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$774.50.

Ms. Valerie Tasker to the position of Homework Club Co-Advisor for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$774.50.

Ms. Jennifer Wernery to the position of Grade 3 Level Leader for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$506.00.

Ms. Erica Wilson to the position of Student Council for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$1,033.00.

Ms. Erica Wilson to the position of Invention Convention for Polk Elementary School, effective for the 2017-2018 school year, being paid the contractual stipend amount of \$759.00.

2. **Transfers – (Information Only)**

None

3. **Resignations – (Information Only)**

None

4. **Grants (Information only)**

The following grant funds are applied for annually, and are considered when we build the budget. Likewise, they are governed by specific regulations that determine how they can be used by the district.

The 2017-2018 Federal Consolidated Grant has been completed and submitted to the State Department of Education for approval. The total amount of the Consolidated Grant is \$290,639. This total includes \$7,448 for the town's parochial schools. The grant is composed of:

- a. Title I, Part A - Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies - \$231,442
- b. Title II, Part A - Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund - \$59,197

The grant monies will be applied toward district initiatives in the improvement of instruction and student learning, with a specific emphasis on academic interventions for struggling learners.

The grant was written by Janet Parlato, Ed.D.

The 2017-2018 Title III, Part A, Subpart 1 - English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement Grant application has been completed and submitted to the State Department of Education for approval. The total amount of the Title III Grant is \$11,017.

The grant monies will be used to attain the services of a tutor to work with students that are English Language Learners, and to purchase instructional supplies for use with these students.

The grant was written by Janet Parlato, Ed.D.

The 2017-2018 Bilingual Education Program Grant Application has been completed and submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education for approval. The total amount of the grant is \$1,989.

The award for this grant is intended to provide children identified as limited English proficient with materials such as native language primary-level print materials, electronic materials, and bilingual primary-level books.

The grant was written by Janet Parlato, Ed.D.

## 5. Superintendent's Report

**Dr. Carnemolla** – Thank you. I would like to start by thanking Dr. Parlato for taking care of the day to day operations for me for the time that I was out after having surgery. She did that with grace and confidence and I am especially grateful for diligence for attempting to keep as much from me as possible which I definitely needed for at least part of the time. It helped me recover and make my goal of being back here tonight to be here to recognize everyone here tonight, so thank you again Dr. Parlato, I very much appreciate it, you did a great job.

Business as usual carried on in many ways, Dr. Parlato held update meetings at each school, met repeatedly with Ms. Archibald, our K – 6 math specialist, over the last two weeks. A lot of time is spent, as you know, on the betterment of curriculum and instruction for math in the district, and many of these meeting that they were involved in were to analyze and develop tasks for students that are more rigorous, challenging, engaging, and they also discussed what we are considering our teaching and learning priorities for the rest of this year, which is to develop the math planning for the rest of the district from K – 12 and we are at just the beginning stages of developing this vertical team that I have spoken about in the past so that we can attack the grade levels together. We will look at curriculum at math together across all grade levels to analyze where there may be gaps or duplication of topics and where we may need to fill in some of the gaps.

We have been quite busy in the technology department. One of our goals was to strengthen our Wi-Fi service and they installed the access points at John Trumbull and in the past week, the second upgrade of the music lab at Swift has been completed. The photography lab at the high school needed to be updated to be in compliance with current curriculum and they have done that here. I will also thank Mr. Turner, who went above and beyond, by staying here until what I would consider all hours, because the phones were not working. Jeff has stayed behind for what had been determined to be a service related issue from a fiber line that got cut somewhere completely unrelated to the district. He was here, and on top of that, and it was much appreciated.

I am limited how much I can do, but I am out there and I am on the go, so I will be slow to schedule the full day school visits, for example, but I will let you know when those are. I would like to thank the board members that were present for the remarks that I gave at UCONN last night, Ms. Crotty, Mr. Makowski, Ms. Wilk, I was happy to see that you were there. We also had some folks from the district that were present, and it was an exciting and yet nerve racking night for me to go and be recognized in that way and to give the remarks that I did, so I appreciate that you were there. Likewise, we were at the Watertown Foundation dinner last week, which was a very nice night at recognized the Hawk Ridge Winery, and that is always an awesome annual event because the Watertown Foundation does so much for us in the Watertown Public Schools with fundraising and scholarships that are given out, so I want to thank them again publicly.

### H. Recognition and Award for Mr. James Gambardella

Board Member, Mr. James Gambardella, will be recognized tonight for his service to the Watertown Board of Education. Mr. Gambardella has served on the Board since November 12, 2013. Thank you, Mr. Gambardella for your dedication and service to the Board of Education and the Watertown Public Schools.

**Ms. Crotty** - This evening the Board is pleased to recognize Mr. James Gambardella for his four

years of dedicated service to the Watertown Board of Education. During his tenure on the Board, Jim has been 100 percent dedicated to Watertown Public Schools. Through his clear understanding of our community's values and concerns, Jim has made a positive difference in the work of this board, and has contributed greatly towards lasting change in our district. His level of caring and compassion, combined with his vast experience-based knowledge, has been an important part of what the Board has accomplished since his service began in 2013. Jim, your insight, friendship, and commitment to the students and residents of Oakville and Watertown will be deeply missed. On behalf of the BOE, we thank you for your service.

**Mr. Lambert** – Quite simply, Jim's tenure on this board has certainly made us more effective as a Board of Education. He has helped us set the vision and goals for the district, adopt policies, and set priorities. Jim has helped us with the heavy lifting of adopting -0- increase budgets, setting School Security policies, and long range Capital improvement plans. But when I reflect back on Jim's involvement as a board member, I will remember how he balanced our many discussions by offering his unique perspective and insight during our Board meetings. He made us think, collaborate and solve problems. In short, he made a difference bringing us together.

Together, we are not alone. The local School Board is a uniquely American institution. Serving on a board of Education is a crucial aspect of grass roots democracy and more than 1,400 dedicated citizens guide Connecticut public school districts. Together, we are not alike. We come from different backgrounds, educational levels, skills and yes, political parties. Together, we are a so called melting pot of Americana, working within ourselves and yes sometimes outside of our comfort zone.

As I have often said, the best part of this job is serving together with a Board that has members like you, Jim. You are one of us and we have grown as a team because of your vision and dedication to this Board, our District and our students. Your compensation for your service is the satisfaction that comes from providing an indispensable public service to our community. For this we honor you tonight. We wish you good luck in the future and thank you again, together, from all of us.

Mr. Makowski, Ms. Wilk, Ms. Albino and Ms. Rosa also added in comments and thanks.

**Dr. Carnemolla** – Thank you Mr. Lambert for saying what most of us would want to say to Jim. I want to say just a couple of things. Number one, for me, I think this is the first time that someone who I have worked here with the entire time that I have been the superintendent is moving on, so that is bittersweet for me. It was always a refresher that you brought a fresh perspective, and I think that is primarily because of what you do for a living, as you are an educator, and it does take a lot, especially after the promotion that you have taken at work, to put the kind of time in that you have with this with board all along, but particularly while you were running the school, I have a tremendous amount of admiration and respect for you, and that you made any of the next meetings after you became principle, but that said, I will truly miss the ideas that you brought to us, the perspective and the ability to think outside of the box, as we address issues in this district, particularly when I first came on board, and we were trying to put together our initial vision and district goals. I can remember one of the things that you said to me very early on, when I first started, I tried to speak to individual board members when I could, to find out what their goals were and what would drive any of you to serve in this capacity, which is also very difficult for you to do, and I was a little nervous with Jim at first because he was another educator and professional, and you never know what is driving someone to be on the board with that type of background, and Jim said to me in only a way that

Jim can...with his hand...which said enough, "I'm just here because I want to make sure we do the right thing for the schools and the people that work here and the kids." If that is why someone sits here with us that is all we will ever need. Thank you, Jim.

#### **I. First Quarter Budget Summary**

**Ms. Browne** – Thank you. As previously indicated by Dr. Carnemolla, our budget remains frozen. We are including essential spending only while the state continues to work towards developing a reasonable operating budget. So as such, our quarter one operating budget will reflect this conservative approach. A few things that I wanted to point out to you, the first line, object 111, we appear to be under by \$344,000, but with keeping with our conservative approach, we've avoided filling some of our open positions with permanent staff, so you will see the consequence of that on the substitute salary line, which so far, we are forecasting will be over by \$75,000.

Our employee benefits line, object 200, which appears to be over and shows a variance of \$320,625. We have given the town our October funds already. The town continues to deal with several large ongoing claims. We knew last year that some of those claims would hit us hard and continue throughout the year. It doesn't look to be as bad as last year, but, we are getting through. A little further down in object 310 and 560, these are two of the three places, where we are granted special education cost grants, and these numbers appear to be low for quarter one, but we actually received several invoices that were received after this report. These two areas we know we are going to go over. They are designed that way. Then the excess cost funding that we are granted by the state makes up the difference.

In the custodial supply line, 613, that appears to also be over. We went back last year and noted the spending was a little over \$61,000, and this year's quarter one spending is at \$57,705. It is more than a quarter of the annual budget earmarked for custodial supplies, but it does reflect the heavy duty cleaning that we over the summer and for the start up for the school year.

Overall, we do expect to stay on budget in this area. I also just wanted to go over a couple of questions that I have received through the chair; it appears in 620 we have spent a good deal of our budget for heating, but remember that we participate with the CT consortium for cooperative purchase and we prepay for heating oil at 46,000 gallons at \$1.97 a gallon. So we are ready to go with that and that is why we pay up front, to get the discount. In line 510, we are over in transportation for a certain amount, but again that is the third area we can allocate the excess cost grant for special education. So that would be offset there. For the telephone line, don't forget we have e-rate funding, so that is one of our other lines that is designed to go over and be off set with the e-rate funding.

Our instructional line, 611, our teachers have been giving us a lot of support, as well as our administrators, with their response in us asking for essential items only.

#### **J. Discussion Regarding the 2018 Board of Education Meeting Dates**

**Ms. Crotty/Dr. Carnemolla** – Board members received a list of meetings through December of 2018. One thing to remember is that we do our best to schedule these to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, but sometimes those are holidays, as you can see, the Monday of Memorial Day and Columbus Day, but depending upon the school calendar and other issues as we move forward, we may need to move meeting and we can do that as a board, but the time being, these are the dates that will work.

**K. Public Participation (Please state name, address and topic of discussion)**

None

**L. Committee Reports:**

**Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Ms. Cathie Rinaldi, Chair – No**  
**Policy and Labor Committee, Mr. Victor Vicenzi, Chair – No**  
**Budget and Finance Committee, Mr. Thomas Lambert, Chair – No**  
**Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee, Mr. Thomas Lambert, Chair – No**  
**Governance and Community Engagement Committee, Mr. Robert Makowski, Chair – No**

**M. Communications – Secretary**

None

**N. Report from the Board Chair**

**Ms. Crotty – FOUNDATION:** On October 19<sup>th</sup> I attended the Watertown Foundation Annual Members Meeting with the Board of Trustees. Foundation President Joe Kinsella presided over the meeting which detailed the 2017 Annual Report. The Foundation's assets are now over \$3,000,000 thanks to generous endowments, contributions, and savvy investment strategies. In the past year, the Foundation awarded \$55,000 in 26 scholarships to Watertown area students – 22 of which went to WHS seniors, and \$82,095 in community service grants. Following the meeting, I attended their 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dinner with fellow BOE Members Cheryl Albino, Tom Lambert, Cathie Rinaldi, and Janelle Wilk, where the Richard Buzzuto Family and Former Senator Rob Kane were honored, and the co-owners of Hawk Ridge Winery were the key-note speakers.

**CIRCLE OF SPORTS:** On October 16<sup>th</sup> I attended the Circle of Sports Meeting. While the final costs are still being reconciled, the total expenditure for the Press Box is approximately \$10,000. We remain grateful to the Circle of Sports for their continued commitment to the entirety of our community's athletic programs.

**CRIME STOPPERS:** On October 22<sup>nd</sup> I attended the Water-Oak Crime Stoppers Fundraiser. Board Member Janelle Wilk was also present, along with many residents, town officials, and employees.

**NEAG:** Last night I had the fortunate opportunity to attend the UCONN Neag School of Education 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Educational Leadership Forum where Dr. Carnemolla, a distinguished alumni nominee, was the keynote speaker. Dr. Carnemolla's inspiring remarks detailed the challenges and solutions in educational leadership; and she did so with the eloquence and strength of a seasoned professional. Dr. Carnemolla was introduced by Dr. Robert Villanova, the Executive Leadership Program Director at UCONN's Neag School of Education, and Diane Ullman, their Special Advisor. Surrounded by family, friends, students, alumni, and colleagues from across the state, Dr. Carnemolla was described as "representing the best of Neag". In her introduction Diane Ullman stated that "Bridget left her mark on public education well before pursuing the superintendency, and has since done a lot of work to advance our profession." She noted that Dr. Carnemolla is "is a brave, brilliant leader guided by what is good for kids, and never lets that light dim in anything she does." She went on to share that "she digs deep into the details of all she takes on, and remains focused on instructional leadership." I encourage you all to watch Dr. Carnemolla's speech on the CT Network. I have shared the link on the BOE's Twitter and FaceBook Account.

**O. Action Items – Adoption of Items to be Approved by Consent**

Agenda Item: O.1  
Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the 2018 Schedule of Meeting Dates for the Watertown Board of Education

Motion Presented By: Mr. Gambardella  
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Lambert

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board accept the 2018 Schedule of Meeting Dates for the Board of Education as presented.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

Agenda Item: O.2  
Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the Acceptance of a Gift

Motion Presented By: Mr. Gambardella  
Motion Seconded By: Ms. Rosa

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board accept the generous donation of a trombone valued at \$1,749.00, given to Watertown High School by Mr. & Mrs. Johnston of Oakville, and that a letter of appreciation be sent to the donor.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

**P. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments**

None

**Q. Public Participation (Please state name, address and topic of discussion)**

None

**R. Adjournment**

Agenda Item:	R.1
Subject:	To adjourn the meeting
Motion Presented By:	Mr. Gambardella
Motion Seconded By:	Mr. Makowski
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that we adjourn
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mindi Davidson  
Recording Secretary

Janelle Wilk  
Secretary of the Board