

Pending BOE Approval

**Watertown Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: December 14, 2015
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. Victor Vicenzi
Mr. Jim Gambardella
Mr. Robert Makowski
Ms. Cathie Rinaldi
Ms. Josephine Cavallo-Rosa
Ms. Cheryl Albino

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Bridget Carnemolla – Superintendent of Schools
Jill Browne – Business Manager
Karina Mancini – Student Council Representative

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

A moment of silence was offered to remember the Sandy Hook tragedy.

B. Salute to the Flag

C. Roll Call – Ms. Davidson

D. Award Recognition

The Watertown Board of Education would like to congratulate the following students from ***Watertown High School***, who were recognized by their teachers and counselors as ***Students of the Month***. The selection of the student of the month is based upon the student's work ethic,

respect shown to peers and school, and overall character. The nominating teachers present their selected students to their fellow teachers, they review the nominees, and choose the most worthy recipient per grade level. We also want to thank the Rotary Club for providing a monthly luncheon for these students.

September

- Phillip McDaniel – Grade 9
- Diana Ghisa – Grade 10
- Samantha Chabot – Grade 11
- Karigan Knopf –Grade 12

October

- Megan Gallagher – Grade 9
- Samantha Cross – Grade 10
- Rubin Caco – Grade 12
- Marcella DiBona – Grade 12

November

- Alyssa Perugini – Grade 9
- Julia Squillace – Grade 10
- Rachel Martineau – Grade 11
- Matthew Daddona –Grade 12

E. Minutes

Agenda Item:	E.1
Subject:	Minutes of the November 23, 2015 Regular Board of Education Meeting
Motion Presented By:	Mr. Makowski
Motion Seconded By:	Ms. Rinaldi
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the board approve of the minutes of the November 23, 2015 regular meeting of the Board of Education as submitted.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	Ms. Wilk
Vote:	Motion Passes

F. Report from Student Council Representative – Karina Mancini

Here are this week's updates:

In preparing for the holiday season, students at John Trumbull primary school are learning about holiday traditions from around the world in countries such as Holland, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Italy, and England. In math classes, students are ordering numbers to 1000, and in reading they are writing summaries about nonfiction texts.

At Judson, students attended the play "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe," based on the novel by C. S. Lewis, which was funded by the PTO. The School Leadership Team met with technical advisors from SERC this week to continue their work with developing a system for providing interventions as part of the SRBI process.

Students at Polk school have been earning "bucket slips" throughout the school year for being respectful, responsible, and safe. These bucket slips can be traded in for items on the "reward menu." A new system was recently developed, where students can meet with the "bucket ladies" on Monday mornings to trade in their slips for items.

At Swift, Mrs. Cunningham's 8th grade reading class made 110 cards to be sent to Operation Gratitude, and then, to deployed troops. Through making these cards, students practiced formal letter writing, and learned more about what Operation Gratitude does for our troops. Also, the Student Council Holiday party was a great success this year, with the biggest turnout ever. Students hosted, with younger siblings invited to participate in games, art and crafts, listen to music, and enjoy refreshments.

This past Thursday, Watertown High School conducted a successful winter concert, with performances from our Bands and Choruses. Also, teacher committees are submitting their first drafts for the NEASC summaries this week.

G. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report

1. Appointments (Information Only)

- a) Ms. Adelina Ajro to the position of Paraprofessional, Category 2 at John Trumbull Primary School, effective November 30, 2015, at the contractual rate of \$14.01 hourly, at 22.5 hours per week.
- b) Mr. Warren Campbell to the position of Ninth Grade Team Advisor for Watertown High School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, to be paid the contractual stipend of \$1,994.00.
- c) Ms. Michelle Gorski to the position of Social Studies Coordinator for Swift Middle School, effective November 6, 2015, to be paid the contractual stipend of \$1,436.56, (prorated).
- d) Ms. Jennifer Levasseur to the position of Paraprofessional, Category 2 for John Trumbull Primary School, effective December 7, 2015, at the contractual rate of \$14.01 hourly, at 29.5 hours per week.

2. Transfer (Information Only)

- a. Ms. Melissa Noel transferred to the position of Paraprofessional, Category 2 at Watertown High School, effective November 17, 2015, at the contractual stipend of \$17.63 hourly,

Step 5, 30 hours per week.

3. Resignations (Information Only)

Ms. Linda DaSilva from the position of Secretary I – Grade II, at Watertown High School, effective January 4, 2016, for the purpose of retirement.

4. Superintendent's Report

“Good evening. There are a number of things that I could discuss in my weekly report that I would normally discuss, but tonight, I am going to focus on what is on the forefront of my own mind and that of the community, especially at Swift. As we all know, Swift Middle School was evacuated Thursday after three students were ill in the auditorium during a choral rehearsal. While there were other students that were ill at school that day, like any other day, the fact that all three had been in the same area, and that someone on staff reported a faint odor in the front of the building, Chief Black and the administration at Swift made a decision to evacuate. Once outside, many more students were seen by both our nurses and the first responders; and there were various reasons that they were either seen and released to parents picking them up or transported to the hospital. I say many reasons, not to conceal information, but rather to uphold the privacy of those students and the medical issues that may have or have had that day.

At the time of the evacuation, and the medical treatment of students, the Swift staff faced the challenge of how to communicate the issues to parent, in part because of the lack of access to enough phones while outside. In the course of our investigation and debriefing, we have begun to discuss how that could have been handled differently in the future, and you can rest assured that we will implement the necessary backup communications plans to ensure that our parents are informed in a timely fashion. In addition to the communication needs, my focus then and now, is on the actual safety of the building. We enlisted the assistance of the Department of Environmental Control, the Torrington Area Health District, and the fire department. And all test and inspections found no environmental issues in the school. We also hired a private company to do further environmental testing for additional analysis of biological spores such as mold, and also for another source of information regarding the air quality, including carbon monoxide, since we knew that could be a concern with heating ventilation and air equipment running. Likewise, we had TriStar Mechanical, our heating and air conditioner contractors; check all of the heating and air conditioners and equipment, and also Yankee Gas check all of their equipment. And on our own end, our facilities manager, Mr. Ceniccola, rechecked all of our HVAC and safety sensors, including the carbon monoxide sensors and monitors in the duct work, which are monitored with our online system, our BMS management system.

Today, again we had Chief Black come into monitor the air quality twice. And, again, all reports are normal. Having been told by all of the experts that the air quality is good and the

building is safe for use and we could reopen. However, I am keenly aware that as both our superintendent and a parent myself, that all of the aforementioned events are unnerving. I would have been much happier with a report that there was an issue that we could fix rather than to have a situation where there are doubts of what may have happened or what could possibly happen.

Moving forward, what I do know is that we will continue to monitor the situation. Fire Chief Black, Mr. Ceniccola and I will continue to monitor the situation and determine the other ways there may be to continually monitor the air quality, just in case there is an issue that only presents itself under certain conditions and then dissipates before the air quality is tested with the sensors that we bring in. We continue to work with the Torrington Area Health district, as we often do during cold and flu seasons as well, since we have had a number of students at Swift, and across the district, that have had illnesses. Likewise, a thorough cleaning of the building is underway to ensure that we can counteract any viruses that may be present. I have done a thorough investigation of the events of that day, as you all know, I was there on Thursday, all day on Friday, and again, the majority of today. I will continue to be present at Swift, more than likely, until the remainder of the time until the winter recess to ensure that I am aware of, and on hand for, any issues. We will be vigilant in our efforts to maintain our students' and our staffs' safety – everything else is secondary. We will continue to monitor the situation at Swift and to be proactive in ensuring that the building is safe."

Questions:

Mr. Makowski – Q – Is there a timeline in which you hope to have the findings you talked about and what the next steps may be? **A** – I have, from the time the first student was ill, to the time the building was evacuated, have completed that part of the investigation. That was in part, to make sure I understood what happened and that the plan, as it is written, was followed. I also wanted to speak to the people who were there at the time. I spoke to the students and the parents. I didn't come away with any particular information that may have pointed me in any one direction. However, in the bigger picture standpoint, we are reviewing our emergency management plans so that any time we have any kids of response; we are all on the same page, including the town. We will all be meeting, including the fire chief, town manager, etc...we will look back at the plan, the backup communication plan which is needed when you can't communicate from the scene, these are just come of the pieces of what we need to discuss. For the most part, our current plan worked that day. We will also discuss the possibility of having to dismiss any school, because of an emergency, at an alternate location from the school they are at. We will map out all of our schools and discuss these alternate locations. While we already have these, there are alternate locations they walk to for instance, Swift would walk and split between St. Mary Magdalen and the VFW. What I am talking about, is that when one school needs an emergency dismissal, we have an alternate location. Those are the two main things we will be talking about in the meeting. Once we are all set, I will be reporting back on all of that. **Q** – Is there a target timeline? 30, 60, 90 days? To go through this exercise and know what needs to be done? **A** – That would be after the next meeting. **Q** – Is this plan consistent across the district? **A** – To some degree. Each school

already has a plan, as the law requires. Each school district is required to turn in a plan by July 1st of every year. For every school, it's probably about 100 pages. It has a plan for just about any possible disaster. There are steps outlined, then in each school, they personalize them.

Ms. Crotty – Q – When we talk about determining alternate locations, in essence, if that were in place now, would it look somewhat like students would go to location A and the parents would know they are there, and then say, we have what happened at Swift and then they are told their child has been taken to the hospital, or for arguments sake, they are at the high school gym. So there could be no other location? **A** – Correct. If there is a question to the safety on the grounds of the buildings, we will move them by bus to the location, unless they need medical attention, they would be dismissed on the spot. The walkers, pickups, bussers, all would be dismissed from the alternate location. Parents would be notified and then would be given a time to start pickup. That gives us control of attendance and time. It also ensures that every student is going home to someone.

Ms. Albino – Asked to recommend that all parents go online through Infinite Campus to make sure all of their contact information is up to date. The automated system depends solely on the information in your students' profile. Please check all emails, home and cell numbers and emergency contacts. Also, we talked at a PTO meeting to plug in to all cell contacts the number of our mail line, 860-945-4800.

Note: That may be the number 9 times out of 10, but it can come up as another number. Blackboard connect will broadcast from where it gets a line from. There have been times a California number comes up or is noted as unknown.

Dr. Carnemolla – While there are always ways we can improve, I want to also mention that having been there and watching the administration and the staff in action, the main goal was for them to take care of the students. All of them. The children out front, the 62 students that two of our nurses and administrators and anyone else not assigned to students were looking after that potentially needed medical assistance out front. Stop and think about that for a moment. I am thankful that made sure that those students were well cared for.

5. Discussion to Review the Cogeneration Electrical Power and Thermal Energy Purchase Agreement

You are all aware of the issue we have at JTPS with the current generator and we need to have that replaced. We believe we have a viable solution which is also cost effective. We have been going back and forth with the company we hope to approve tonight and have determined it will cost us, in a fifteen year plan, \$46,000, or just a little over that. Included are: a generator, a co-gen unit, which will provide savings with our heating costs, and the maintenance contracts.

The standby generator will be run on oil, just like the one we have currently. There is no hookup for natural gas.

All expenses are included in the monthly payment for the fifteen year contract, including the maintenance and annual contract. The \$46,620 pays for the generator, use of the co-gen unit, and for an immediate rental generator for as long as that is needed while our generator is being built. They are anticipating an 8 week period to create our generator. If it goes longer, we will not owe any more money, however, if it goes less, we can save money. This is

an excellent solution that reduces our cost and our energy usage. It is also important to note there are no finance charges in relation to paying this monthly. The \$46,620 is all we will pay over the fifteen years.

6. Follow Up Discussion Regarding the Lighting Proposal with Greenleaf Energy Solutions

As you all know, we had several companies come in and look at the lighting in all five schools. The idea was to determine if it was feasible to upgrade the lighting and make improvements in our energy efficiency. There are several programs out there now that are supported by Eversource that help change over to the LED lighting, which was, in the past, cost prohibitive. Greenleaf came in with a proposal that is basically cost free to us. They will come in and change out all of our lighting, in the entire district, to an LED equivalent, and the overall savings will be substantial. The end result will be an immediate savings on our maintenance costs. The costs for maintenance on an annual basis are about \$40-60 thousand dollars. That savings, along with our lower usage for energy with Eversource, is reason enough to move forward. We should see about a reduction of \$260,000 after the 2 ½ year period. This proposal also includes them changing out all of the ballasts and light bulbs going forward, if in fact, they should fail. They will do that at no cost to us over a five year period.

The company will work with the principals of all of the schools so that we have a plan that fits their needs. They have enough manpower to replace, once everything is approved, all of the fixtures in about two weeks. There should be no need for any actual construction.

H. Public Participation

Jessica Veneziano – Lemos – 103 Jenks St., Watertown – Spoke in favor of all day kindergarten.

I. Report from the Board Chair

This evening, I would like to mention something about our students. There has been a lot of conversation that I and other board members and administrators have had in regards to the events that happened at Swift. But tonight, I would like to talk a little bit about the students. What I was able to witness both outside at Swift, after the evacuation, and in St. Mary's and Waterbury hospitals, was a group of students who I am so proud of. What was certainly a traumatic day, particularly for those who had to be taken by ambulance, to see fellow students have blood pressure cuffs put on them, in front of their school, to see oxygen levels be checked, and oxygen masks being passed around, ages 12 or 13, some a little younger, some a little older; it's quite traumatic. And I was proud at the level of maturity that these kids exhibited and how well they listened to the adults that were around them, whether they knew them or not, whether they had on a uniform or not, whether they were in a suit or sweatshirt, they were outstanding. This community of parents and caregivers should be really proud of our students for making it through that day that would otherwise be very difficult for a lot of us adults. They are not so much as asking us why; they just know that they are ok and happy to be in their school again. I just want all of the parents and the community to know, and the teachers and the

administrators that work with these kids, how proud I am of them and how proud I was of them on that day.

J. 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. Tom Lambert, Chair – No
Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee, Mr. Tom Lambert, Chair – No
Governance and Community Engagement Committee, Mr. Robert Makowski, Chair – No**

K. Communications – Secretary

None

L. Action Items – Adoption of Items to be Approved by Consent

Agenda Item: L.1
Subject: Consideration of the Approval to Authorize the Business Manager to enter into an Agreement with TitanGen for a Cogeneration Electric Power and Thermal Energy Purchase Agreement, to include Immediate Generator Rental while the Cogeneration unit is built to specifications at John Trumbull Primary School

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

Text of the Motion: Madam Chair, I move that the board approve of authorizing the Business Manager to enter into a fifteen (15) year agreement with TitenGen for the purchase of a 75KW Tecogen CM-75 Cogeneration Electric Power and Thermal Energy Unit and a Cummins 200KW Generator each to be installed at John Trumbull Primary School, at a yearly cost of \$3,108.00 and a total fifteen (15) year total cost not to exceed \$46, 620.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

Agenda Item: L.2
Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the Acceptance of Gifts

Motion Presented By: Ms. Rosa
Motion Seconded By: Ms. Albino

Text of the Motion: Madam Chair, I move that the Board of Education approve of these generous donations as presented and that a letter of thanks be sent to the donors.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

M. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments

N. Public Participation

Mindi Davidson – 55 Westview Dr. Oakville – Asked about a follow up email to blackboard connect calls in an emergency.

O. Executive Session

Agenda Item: O.1
Subject: To Move into Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Regarding the Working Agreement between the Watertown Board of Education and the Cafeteria Employees, AFSE Local 1049

Motion Presented By: Mr. Vicenzi
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Makowski

Text of the Motion: Madam Chair, I move that the Board move into Executive Session for the purpose of a discussion regarding the working agreement between the Watertown Board of Education and the Cafeteria Employees, AFSCME Local 1049. Attending the executive session are Josephine Rosa, Jim Gambardella, Cheryl Albino, Tom Lambert, Leslie Crotty, Janelle Wilk, Cathie Rinaldi, Rob Makowski, Jill Browne, Bridget Carnemolla, and myself, Vic Vicenzi.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

P. Regular Session

Agenda Item: P.1

Subject: Possible Action Regarding the Agreement between the Watertown Board Of Education and the Cafeteria Employees, AFSCME Local 1049

Motion Presented By: Ms. Wilk

Motion Seconded By: Ms. Rinaldi

Text of the Motion: Madam Chair, I move that the Board approve of the working agreement between the Watertown Board of Education and the Cafeteria Employees, AFSCME Local 1049 from 2015 – 2018.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

Q. Adjournment

Agenda Item: Q.1

Subject: To Adjourn the Meeting

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

Text of the Motion: Madam Chair, I move that we adjourn.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary

Janelle Wilk
Secretary of the Board