

**Watertown Board of Education
Regular Board of Education Meeting**

Meeting Date: September 29, 2020
Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: Watertown High School Lecture Hall

Members Present: Ms. Leslie Crotty, Chairman
Ms. Janelle Wilk, Secretary
Mr. Robert Makowski
Ms. Cathie Rinaldi
Ms. Diane Bristol
Ms. Cindy Eastman
Mr. Jason Malagutti
Ms. Josephine Cavallo-Rosa

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. John Ramos – Interim Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Tom DiStasio – Business Manager
Ms. Natalie Lindstrom – Student Council Representative

- A. Convene Regular Meeting – 7:30 p.m.
- B. Moment of Silence – In remembrance of Mr. Thomas A. Lambert

Ms. Crotty – Tonight we would like to recognize that the Watertown Board of Education and the community has suffered a great loss.

The Obituary of Thomas A. Lambert – Read by Mr. Rob. Makowski

THOMAS A. LAMBERT
“Loving husband, dad and Grampy”

Thomas A. Lambert, age 76, of Oakville, passed away peacefully September 26, 2020 at Waterbury Hospital encircled in the love and support of his loving family. He was the beloved husband of Loretta (Stopper) Lambert.

Tom was born December 3, 1943 in Waterbury, a son of the late Raymond and Rollande (Fournier) Lambert. He grew up in Middlebury and was a graduate of Wilby High School. After graduating, Tom proudly served his country in United States Air Force, working on jets during the Vietnam War. After serving our country, Tom returned to Connecticut, where he met and married his wife and settled into the community of Watertown and Oakville. He continued his education at Post University, where he earned an associate's degree while taking night classes while working and raising his family. His career was spent in manufacturing as a tool-and-dye maker. Prior to his retirement, Thomas served as a vice president of Alves Precision Engineered Products in Watertown for more than 39 years.

Tom was an active volunteer in the Watertown community, serving on many boards and committees, including six years on the Watertown Water and Sewer Authority and one year on the Public Buildings Committee. He also served 14 years on the Watertown Board of Education, including four years as vice chairman, and was the former chairman of the Budget and Finance as well as Facilities subcommittees, and was a member of the Cablevision Advisory Board. He also was an active member of the Watertown Republican Town Committee, and an election season would not go by without Tom waving signs around town.

Tom was a proud, patriotic, old-fashioned gentleman who rarely left the house without a hat, a navy sportscoat and his flag pin or tie. In his free time, he enjoyed reading and his weekly golf outings with his close friend and cousin Billy Stopper of Naugatuck. Throughout his life, Tom made an impact on many he met, whether through work or community service. He often offered honest, thoughtful advice, whether it was focusing on improving schools and the town, mentoring younger employees in his manufacturing work, or even teaching life lessons to his family. A devoted father and grandfather, he spent countless hours working on projects for his family, whether it was building additions to his house, a desk for his granddaughter, or even teaching his grandchildren how to fish and ride their bikes.

Besides his wife of 52 years, he leaves his son, Thomas A. Lambert Jr. and his wife Monica of Bethel; his daughter, Kellie Lambert of Watertown; his brother Raymond Lambert of Bridgeport; his grandchildren Cailin, Kyle and Carly McGuire, and Riley and Abigail Lambert; as well as countless friends and family. He was predeceased by a sister, Barbara Newell.

Arrangements: Funeral will be Thursday at 10 a.m. at Saint John the Evangelist Church, 574 Main Street Watertown. Those planning to attend are asked to meet directly at the church. Burial with military honors will follow at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Watertown. Calling hours will be Wednesday evening from 5 to 8 p.m. at Chase Parkway Memorial/Albini Family Funeral Home, 430 Chase Parkway, Waterbury Connecticut 06708.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Thomas A. Lambert Career Partnership Fund (TLCPF), which will enable Watertown High School students to explore a variety of career paths through apprenticeships and internships in manufacturing and the skilled trades. Donations can be made out to Watertown High School with TLCPF in the memo line and mailed to Watertown High School, 324 French St., Watertown 06795.

In honor of Mr. Lambert and his remembrance, we ask that we all observe a moment of silence.

C. Salute to the Flag

D. Roll Call – Ms. Davidson

E. Minutes

Agenda Item: E.1
Subject: Minutes of the September 8, 2020 Special Board of Education Meeting

Motion Presented By: Ms. Wilk
Motion Seconded By: Ms. Rinaldi

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board approve of the minutes of the September 8th, 2020 Special Board Meeting as presented by Ms. Davidson.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion passed

Agenda Item: E.2
Subject: Minutes of the September 14th, 2020 Regular Board of Education Meeting

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

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board approve of the minutes of the September 14th, 2020 Regular Board Meeting as presented by Ms. Davidson.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion passed

F. Report from Student Council Representative – Natalie Lindstrom

Ms. Lindstrom - John Trumbull celebrated its virtual open house last Thursday evening. Teachers narrated a presentation that shared information regarding “A Day in the Life” of our students as well as our reading, writing, math and phonics curricula. Time was also given for questions and our families praised our amazing teachers and their commitment to our

students. JTPS has worked hard to make changes to arrival and dismissal procedures to ensure safety while at the same time minimizing the amount of time our parents have to spend waiting in line. Officer Shirk, the new JTPS safety and security officer, is a popular sight whether greeting students out front at arrival, visiting classrooms and lunch, or being visible at dismissal. We are so excited to have him as part of our JTPS staff!

Last Thursday, **Polk** teachers welcomed families to our first ever Virtual Open House event. From the comfort of their own homes, families logged in via Google Meets to learn more about their child's school day. Teachers each shared a brief presentation to walk family members through a typical day at Polk, reported out on curriculum topics that will be covered this year, and shared an overview on new procedures in place due to COVID. In addition, each teacher engaged in a question and answer session with families. We are so appreciative to the families who logged in to learn more about our school. Over the past 2 weeks our in school and voluntary remote learners have all participated in taking the I-Ready diagnostic assessment in both math and reading. This important tool provides teachers with a snapshot of where students are in relation to the standards. During our upcoming professional development day on September 30th, Polk teachers will engage in a data analysis protocol to analyze this assessment information, create small groups for instruction and intervention, and plan for these groups.

Judson hosted a Virtual Open House on Thursday, September 17, 2020. Our staff did an amazing job with preparing slideshow presentations for our families to view. Teachers also provided time for a Question and Answer session. While we wish we could have welcomed families in person, our teachers were creative and provided great information to our families!

Mr. Hogrefe spent Wednesday, September 23rd and Thursday, September 24th with Mrs. Raymond to shadow and watch the daily happenings at Judson. Mr. Hogrefe and Mrs. Raymond have been in communication to make sure the transition is as smooth as possible. Mr. Hogrefe will take over on Friday, September 25, 2020. Mrs. Raymond's return date is Monday, November 9, 2020.

Students at **Swift**, like elsewhere in the district, participated in both Math and Language Arts I-Ready assessments this week. The purpose of these assessments is to gauge student understanding of key concepts while also identifying skills not yet mastered. This data will also be examined by the full department members on the professional learning day, September 30th. Swift is pleased to announce that we are now offering two after school intramural athletic opportunities for our students. These activities, co-ed soccer and running, have more than 50 athletes registered so far and are set to start on Monday September 28th and run through the end of October. Our regular fall coaches will be overseeing these athletes every day. Swift is very pleased to now have our remote learners join us every day in our live classrooms. Preparations have been made to create a smooth transition for these students and our teachers. Our remote learners will participate weekly in their classroom "circle" time and have full access to their teachers' Google Classroom assignments.

At **Watertown High School**, students and staff are settling in nicely to this year's schedules and all of the new routines that we have in place. Students have been doing great with wearing their masks consistently, beginning when they walk into the building until the end of the day. Both students and staff are doing well with the mix of online learning and in-person learning, since each of these ways are two totally different ways of teaching and learning. We have a great deal to be proud of with everyone's flexibility and patience as we get better and better at doing school in these new ways. Fall sports practices have begun for cross country, boys' and girls'

soccer, field hockey, volleyball, and girls' swimming and diving. Varsity games and matches for these sports will begin on October 1. We are looking forward to hearing about the successes of our student-athletes in action on the fields and on the court. Grade 12 students have begun planning for their Capstone projects. These projects serve as a culminating activity for all seniors, and they require students to complete a proposal, do related research, implement their project, and then reflect upon their learning. Students are doing great thinking when having to incorporate some virtual elements into their projects, when in previous years, the same elements would have been in-person.

G. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report

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

None

2. **Transfers – (Information Only)**

None

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

None

4. **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Ramos - Good evening everyone. I have a couple of announcements to make. First of all, The Greater Waterbury YMCA Wednesday Early Dismissal Program registration program is now open. Their staff will be on site at the schools from the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays. Families can register for either early dismissal until the end of the normal day or early dismissal until 6:00 p.m. This program, again, is for early dismissal days that are scheduled for Wednesdays. As a reminder, if after school activities are cancelled due to the weather, the program does not operate. This is a source of help for families who may need it.

I would also like to share with the Board and the community that we are pleased to welcome our new Food Services Director, Ms. Joanna Schipke, who began yesterday. Our new Student Services Director, Ms. Amy Sjovall, will begin on October 26th.

As a reminder, tomorrow is professional day and staff will be involved in training with professional development and there will be no school for students. I would also like to share for you that we have plans for Munson House to move into the new location on October 13th. The idea is to manage the move on Friday proceeding Columbus Day weekend so that staff can walk into the new facility on that Tuesday.

H. Discussion Regarding Superintendent Search

Ms. Crotty - As the board of education is aware, we are in need of a permanent superintendent. In your Friday packet, I have included three proposals from three different search entities for the superintendent search. I would like to draw your attention to the first one that is from Joe

Erardi. He has served us in this capacity once before. There is a two-page proposal and for those of you who have not had a chance to review it, it includes attending upcoming Board of Education meetings, designing the position brochure, conducting the recruitment, advertising, selection and entry plan, working with the community to come up with the ideal characteristics of a superintendent, collecting all of the candidate information, helping through the contractual agreement and working until the end of that. The pricing for that is included and the consulting fee does not include the advertising, travel expenses and a few other incidentals. That is \$6,500. I know that Dr. Erardi ran a thorough recruitment process for us the last time and I am very appreciative of him submitting a proposal to work with us again.

Moving on to the second proposal, it is from Mary Broderick through CAFE, Connecticut Boards of Education, and there are two sections. There is an opening cover letter that goes through what their work is rooted in and Mary's own expertise and in the second packet of her material she will detail the expenses on the first page totally \$9,999 dollars and that does not include some of the background check fees that we would be responsible for with any of the search consultants. There is a very extensive proposal that you hopefully had time to look through and how she would conduct our search and it includes all of the things from cultivating a vision, having an understanding of our leadership and what our needs are here, doing community focus groups, surveys, providing recruitment process and interview process, and providing it through the contractual end. It also includes the search services that she has provided through CAFE for a variety of school districts including Canterbury, Newtown, Eastford, Bethany, Somers, East Granby and it also includes her resume.

Moving on to the third proposal that we received from The Cooperative Education Services through their TBG Executive Searches. On the front you can find a letter from Charles Dumais who would be running the search and you can see he has an extensive proposal and they also have a variety of arms that they use for both research, recruitment, selection, and a transition period. They also have an extensive client List that they shared including Region 13, Ridgefield, Region 17, Windsor Locks, Milford, and the list goes on. If you move forward, it goes through three different options and pricing. The first option being a traditional interview and a professional consulting fee costing the district \$11,900 and that includes application collection, first and second interviews, background checks, online advertising, and site visits. The second is a little bit more expensive at \$16,400 and then the third option, \$20,500. Those prices do not include print advertising and the estimated cost of about \$2,000 for that. They have done a sample towards the back of what their brochure for the superintendent's job would look like and some samples that they have used in the past.

As you know, with our timeline, it is our hope to have someone hired by January and to go into the new year with a new superintendent on board. If that is not possible, the board will need to look for additional interim services as Dr. Ramos will be with us through December. I want to put it out there publicly that if we go through a search now and we do not find a viable candidate, however I do know there are many viable candidates out there now, as there are many searches going on in the state and I have been in touch with some of those boards that are going through the process and also some of the search consultants have shared that there are some great candidates out there and some may not be available until June and that is something that we would obviously, for the right candidate, have to make arrangements for. I hope that we can make a decision tonight and have the posting out very soon.

I. Discussion Regarding COVID-19 Revised Mask Policy

Dr. Ramos - Since approving the face covering policy on September 8th, the Office of Early Childhood, being given authority by the Governor, updated their policy and guidance regarding face mask on children ages 3 and older. As of September 21st, all students aged 3 and older, which captures the John Trumbull population, are required to wear face coverings in all school related activities. A good number of our preschoolers already are doing this prior to the policy change with the support of their families. The preschool staff have already been teaching our young ones about how to put on and take off the masks or ask for help to do so. Wearing masks for increasingly long periods of time and understanding what socially distance means in a classroom and at recess. We will continue to offer this instruction and reinforcement and communicate with families about the specific progress with their children and any suggested accommodations that could help our preschoolers with this new expectation. I would also like to highlight that since approving the policy, Watertown has also updated the face covering Medical Health exemption forms that are embedded in the policy. These forms must be completed by the family and the treating physician in order for the school to consider a medical exemption request. If your child has a non-medical disability what you believe will limit their ability to learn how to wear a face covering, please contact your child's teacher to discuss your concerns. The overarching message I want families to hear is that we can work through and problem-solve any issue as long as home and school are communicating and working together towards helping our children of any age learn and practice the policy affording face coverings in school. Hearing just this morning a state call from the Department of Health, that the mitigation strategies they have been offered to us from the state are considered to be a sweet; the hand-washing, the mask wearing, these are different mitigation strategies along with the social distancing and it is important that we don't lose our steam on this. Now it has been determined too that it is important that our younger ones wear the masks as well. We have revised our policy to reflect this and that is why there is an item for this on the agenda tonight.

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

Becky Zadlo, 226 Beach Ave, WTN – Had questions and comments related to the Superintendent's search.

To hear the entire public participation, please go to:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFOJNLBnIUA>

K. Communications – Secretary

None

L. Committee Reports:

Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Ms. Cathie Rinaldi, Chair – No
Policy and Labor Committee, Ms. Janelle Wilk, Chair – No
Budget and Finance Committee, Ms. Diane Bristol, Chair – No
Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee, Mr. Thomas Lambert, Chair – No

Governance and Community Engagement Committee, Mr. Robert Makowski, Chair – No

M. Report from the Board Chair

No Report

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

Agenda Item:	N.1
Subject:	Consideration to Approve of a Superintendent Search for Watertown Public Schools
Motion Presented By:	Ms. Bristol
Motion Seconded By:	Mr. Malagutti
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the Board of Ms. Mary Broderick of CABA as the Superintendent Search Consultant for Watertown Public Schools as presented.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion passed
Agenda Item:	N.2
Subject:	Consideration to Approve the Updated COVID-19 Mask Policy for Preschool Students (ages three and over)
Motion Presented By:	Ms. Rinaldi
Motion Seconded By:	Ms. Rosa
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the Board approve of the updated COVID-19 policy for preschool students as presented.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion passed

Agenda Item: N.3
Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the Acceptance of a Gift

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

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board accept the generous donation of 37 Wi-Fi access points with the estimated value of \$925.00 to Watertown Public Schools given by Connecticut Orthopedics in Hamden. I further move that a letter of appreciation be sent to the donor.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion passed

O. Future Agenda Items and Board Members Comments

Ms. Crotty – At our next meeting in October, we as a board, will be honoring Mr. Tom Lambert.

P. Public Participation – (Please state your name, address and topic of discussion)

None

Q. Executive Session (8:12 p.m.)

Agenda Item: Q.1
Subject: To go into Executive Session

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

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board go into Executive Session for the purpose of a discussion regarding the Watertown Public School's Safety Plans. Attending the Executive Session are John Ramos, Leslie Crotty, Janelle

Wilk, Cathie Rinaldi, Diane Bristol, Josephine Rosa, Jason Malagutti, Cindy Eastman, and myself, Rob Makowski.

Discussion: None
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

R. Regular Session (8:37 p.m.)

Agenda Item: R.1
Subject: Approval of the Watertown Public School Safety Plan

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

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the Board approve of the Watertown Public Schools Safety Plan as presented.

Discussion: None
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

S. Adjournment

Agenda Item: S.1
Subject: To adjourn the meeting

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

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

Discussion: None

Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary

Janelle Wilk
Secretary of the Board