

**EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF EDUCATION  
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING OF  
December 9, 2015  
EAST WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL – Auditorium**

**I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair C. Simonelli called the meeting to order at 7:30p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair C. Simonelli led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. ATTENDANCE**

Chair C. Simonelli, Vice Chair Dr. G Michna, Secretary R. Reichle, K. Bilodeau, P. Nelson, N. DeSousa, W. Raber, Superintendent Dr. T. Kane Absent: S. Morgan

Also present: L. Foxx, M. Ryan, C. Casella, BOE Student Representative D. Couture, community members

**IV. ADDED AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**V. MINUTES**

On a motion by K. Bilodeau, 2<sup>nd</sup> by R. Reichle, the Board approved the 11/24/15 regular meeting minutes. The vote was unanimous.

**VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Jason Bowza, 34 Rye Street, congratulated C. Simonelli on her nomination as BOE Chair. He noted his support of Mr. Swaim's candidacy to fill the vacancy on the BOE, and he stated his concern related to East Windsor students choosing to go to out-of-district educational facilities. He offered to work with the Board to establish recruitment options to retain our students here in the district.

**VII. SCHOOL REPORT – Broad Brook Elementary School**

Ms. L. Foxx and Ms. C. Casella provided an overview of the Responsive Classroom approach:

4 Domains: Engaging Academics, Positive Community, Effective Management, Developmental Awareness

The 7 Guiding Principles:

1. The social and emotional curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn.
3. Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn a set of social and emotional skills that include cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
5. Knowing the children we teach – individually, culturally, and developmentally – is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Knowing the families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children we teach.
7. How we, the adults at school, work together is as important as our individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

**VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

D. Couture was present, but did not have a report to share this evening.

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: VOTE**

Board Vacancy – Chair C. Simonelli offered each candidate the opportunity to share their background and provide reasons for their candidacy and how they would benefit the Board:

**David Swaim** (Democrat):

- Construction background, including building schools
- Experience in managing budgets over the past 20 years
- Volunteer with PTO
- Has 2 daughters in the school system
- He is ready for the next step, which would be to serve on the Board
- He would like the opportunity to serve on the Board to be part of the process of making it a good experience for his children and their growth

**Lisa Ouellette** (Republican):

- Honored to be invited to apply to fill the vacancy
- Feels it would be a natural progression as she has worked with both the PTO and Booster Club
- Municipal office experience & election worker
- Interest goes deeper ~ She has concern and passion to help children
- Education is important
- Has two sons attending our schools ~ would like to do great things to help them and the Board

Chair C. Simonelli opened the floor for any questions to be posed to the candidates by Board members:

R. Reichle inquired if both candidates have the time to offer to the Board. She noted the two meetings per month, budget process, hearings, etc. Both candidates stated they are prepared to serve in full capacity.

P. Nelson questioned what each sees as the largest challenge to the EWPS:

D. Swaim: Getting parents involved.

L. Ouellette: Trying to work with schools to schedule meetings.

N. DeSousa inquired as to how long each candidate has resided in East Windsor:

L. Ouellette: She grew up in East Windsor and moved away, but returned a year ago.

D. Swaim: He moved to East Windsor in 2006

W. Raber stated the Board was presented with two great resumes.

Dr. G. Michna questioned their opinion as to how the Board of Education could be more assessable to the community:

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D. Swaim: Conduct more events/forums.

L. Ouellette: Send invitations to various events and convey a more open, unthreatening atmosphere.

K. Bilodeau inquired as to the factors they would use to base their decisions:

D. Swaim: He would use past experiences, logical point of view, and point of view by the Board as a whole.

L. Ouellette: She makes her decisions based on her faith, from her experiences, and weighing the pros and cons of a situation.

K. Bilodeau also inquired how they, as a Board member, would resolve an issue between parent/principal:

L. Ouellette: She would listen to the concerns and bring them to the entire Board for a resolution.

D. Swaim: He concurred with Ms. Ouellette. He would also assure the party the concerns would be addressed with the Board.

K. Bilodeau also asked their opinion as to what the district has done well in the last 5 years:

D. Swaim: Students seem to be more involved, as do the staff and administration. They have established a more welcoming process.

L. Ouellette: She has a lack of experience being she has not lived here over the past 5 years, but feels her children adjusted very well upon their return to town.

Chair C. Simonelli offered the candidates to ask questions of the Board:

L. Ouellette questioned how they felt the Board worked together:

C. Simonelli stated she feels they are very respectful of each other's opinions. They all have the same vision to move the district forward. She also agreed that getting the community involved is a challenge and that we don't have the financial means to always reach out to bring them together.

D. Swaim noted the many different types of social groups; parents who are active, parents who are not, senior citizens, etc.

N. DeSousa feels most disagreements occur during budget season. Also, if the Board cannot come to an agreement, they will table the item(s) for further discussion/additional information as not to make impulsive decisions.

K. Bilodeau stated that they listen to each other's opinions, even if it is not their own.

W. Raber noted the Board's great exchange of information and views. He also noted the district has a superintendent that provides information when asked.

S. Morgan noted how helpful the Board (and administration) was to him upon his nomination to the Board.

K. Bilodeau stated we have a fantastic administrative team lead by an amazing and active superintendent. They are always looking for ways to increase communication between Boards and the community.

On a motion by S. Morgan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dr. G. Michna, the Board voted for a 15 minute recess to allow both parties to caucus. The vote was unanimous. The time was 8:27 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 8:53 p.m.

On a motion by W. Raber, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dr. G. Michna, the board voted to vote via paper ballot.

K. Bilodeau made a motion to postpone the vote this evening. No one seconded her motion.

All members were in favor of the paper ballot votes.

W. Raber noted that the inclusion of the voter's name on the ballot has never been required in the past. Chair C. Simonelli informed the Board she had researched such and this is the way in which to conduct the vote. W. Raber asked the superintendent to confirm it with Attorney Chinni.

Each Board member was provided a piece of paper on which to cast their vote.

The votes were handed to A. Kalesnik, BOE Recording Secretary, to tally.

With 6 out of the 8 votes, the Board congratulated Mr. David Swaim on his nomination and thanked both candidates for their time and interest in serving on the Board.

**X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: DISCUSSION**

1. Broad Brook Elementary School Modular Project Update – Dr. Kane informed the Board the EW Building Committee will be meeting on 12/21. She also noted the sprinkler pipe has been installed and will be painted to match the walls. The project is on schedule to open for the start of the 2016-2017 school year.
2. EWMS Nurses Suite Update – Dr. Kane noted the project has been completed. The final move-in is anticipated to occur next week. The classroom has already moved into the new space.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS: VOTE**

None

**XII. NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION**

None

**XIII. LIAISONS' REPORTS**

None

**XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**XV. MISCELLANEOUS**

Dr. Kane informed the Board we are in receipt of two copies of the CABA reference materials for members. They are available to all Board members for review upon request.

**XVI. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Calendar of Events
2. Enrollment
3. Copy of student commendation letter sent to EWHS NHS inductees
4. BBES Newsletter
5. EWMS *Wildcat*

**XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Dr. G. Michna, 2<sup>nd</sup> by W. Raber, the Board voted to enter executive session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss strategy and negotiations regarding pending claims or pending litigation, and to discuss contract negotiations. The vote was unanimous.

Attendance: Chair C. Simonelli, Vice Chair Dr. G. Michna, Secretary, R. Reichle, K. Bilodeau, P. Nelson, N. DeSousa, S. Morgan, W. Raber, and Dr. T. Kane

The Board adjourned executive session at 9:35 p.m.

**XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by S. Morgan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by N. DeSousa, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalesnik  
Recording Secretary

Randi Reichle  
Secretary

**Approved:**