

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
Unapproved Minutes of Thursday, January 13, 2022  
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson  
Eugene Marchand, Vice Chairperson  
Mary Kortmann, Secretary  
Peter DePaola  
Emma Eaton  
Courtney Rossignol  
Christina Williams

Also Present:

Celia Delvecchio, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools  
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Audience Members Present: Maria Bachiochi, GHR student and family; Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Ronda Carrie, CGS Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Beth Giller, PSSS Director; William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology; and Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning

**I. Call to Order**

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**II. Salute to the Flag**

J. Beausoleil asked student Maria Bachiochi to lead the salute to the flag.

**III. Audience of Citizens**

There were none.

**IV. Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Petrone welcomed everyone to the new year. He reviewed a few things taking place in the state, region, and locally.

**IV. A. Information - Student Recognition: GHR Student, Maria Bachiochi - Home Energy Challenge, Wind Edition 2021**

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. DeRagon who spoke about Maria and her entry in the contest. Maria shared her project with the Board. There were congratulations all around.

#### **IV. B. Information: Board of Education Student Representative Report**

Miss Delvecchio talked about happenings taking place at the high school, including exams beginning and the band and chorus concert scheduled with a live audience.

#### **V. VOTE: Consent Agenda**

M. Kortmann asked that James Careau's retirement be removed from the Consent Agenda.

#### **V. B. Accept retirement of Suzanne Hansen, CGS Teacher**

##### **MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: E. Eaton**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

#### **V.A. Accept retirement of James Careau, CGS Teacher**

##### **MOTION: Accept the retirement of James Careau.**

**By: M. Kortmann**

**Seconded: E. Eaton**

Discussion: M. Kortmann commented that her sons had Mr. Careau and he is remembered fondly.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

#### **VI. Report of the Chairman**

J. Beausoleil talked about the Joint Town Finance/BOE Fiscal Committee meeting held on Monday; the facility tours for Board members; and the Superintendent evaluation process for this year.

#### **VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes**

##### **VIII. A. Approve Minutes of December 9, 2021**

##### **MOTION: To approve the minutes of December 9, 2021**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

#### **IX. Report of Board Members**

##### **IX. A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of January 13, 2022**

M. Kortmann reviewed the Fiscal Committee meeting that was held earlier in the evening. She noted the operating budget is in good shape. She said we continue to have savings, because we are not using a bus, which is offsetting the increase in electricity. She said preschool and food services are running fine.

##### **IX. A. 1. Information and Possible VOTE: Request to Town Council to Increase Reserve Fund to 2%**

M. Kortmann explained the language change to the law and that the Fiscal Committee would like to send a request to the Town Council to change the 1% account to 2% to reflect the law. The Board discussed the use of the 1% account.

**MOTION: To Authorize the Superintendent to send a request to the Town Council regarding modifications to the Town policy related to the non-lapsing reserve fund to allow 2% of the unexpended funds to be deposited on a yearly basis.**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

Discussion: C. Williams asked why we are redoing this now. J. Beausoleil said she believes now is the time when the Council will be favorable. J. Beausoleil reviewed the history and use of the 1% account. C. Williams asked that it be done temporarily to see where we are; we have so many needs right now. J. Beausoleil said this can be changed by request at any time.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

M. Kortmann went on to explain the need for a pick-up truck that has been on the CIP, but has not been funded; the truck we have is now dead. She commented that trucks are hard to get. She said Fiscal passed a vote to recommend the Board allow a purchase of one of the trucks that Mr. Trudelle found available at Columbia Ford. J. Beausoleil said we need to secure this quicker than usual, so it is not a lost opportunity.

**MOTION: Add to the agenda information and vote on using the 1% account to purchase one of these available pick-up trucks as a replacement**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

Discussion: P. DePaola talked about his disagreement with purchasing the truck through the reserve fund and holding off on those funds for more important educational needs. He also disagreed with waiving the bidding process. He said, as such, he opposes adding it to the agenda.

**Result: Motion passes 4-3 (DePaola, Rossignol, Williams against)**

**MOTION: To approve the use of the 1% account to purchase one of the two vehicles at Columbia Ford and waive the bidding process.**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

Discussion: C. Williams asked the year and mileage of the two trucks. Mr. Trudelle said the one for \$56,000 is a 2020 with 22,000 miles and the one that is \$59,000 is a 2021 with 532 miles. Mr. Trudelle continued and reviewed the warranty information. E. Marchand asked about the condition of the current truck. Mr. Trudelle said it is dead and we are using a van in its place, which is a safety issue. Mr. Trudelle added that the truck has been on the CIP for many years. P. DePaola noted his issue is not the need for the vehicle, but more the depletion of the 1% fund when there are a lot of educational needs. E. Marchand said the administration has made good calls and used funds wisely and he fully trusts the judgement of the administration. C. Williams said funds were just spent on a utility vehicle and does not believe a truck is needed. C. Williams said

she would feel better if it was put out to bid E. Marchand asked how much is in the 1% account. Mr. Carroll said \$180,000. E. Marchandsaid we will have funds remaining to address any needs. E. Eaton said the timing is right and we, very probably, won't have time to wait for a bid.

**Result: Motion passes 4-3 (DePaola, Rossignol, Williams against)**

E. Marchand provided a brief update on the Athletic Advisory Committee meeting he attended earlier in the evening.

## **X. New Business**

### **X. A. Information: FY23 Budget Presentation**

J. Beausoleil provided a summary of the review of the budget. She noted the time and energy that is put into the development of the budget by staff.

Dr. Petrone shared the presentation of the recommended FY23 budget, which is available on the district website.

J. Beausoleil noted some surrounding town budget increases which were all higher than Coventry.

C Williams talked about enrollment projections. Dr Petrone noted we are growing at HEEC, but we are not currently planning on adding structurally.

J. Beausoleil asked if there were any questions related to the first sections of the book before the schools' sections. The Board discussed details of figures under some of the following lines: Medicare, unemployment, workers' compensation, professional services, salaries, tuition, magnet school numbers, gas/deisel/natural gas, and health insurance.

The Board discussed various lines at the G. H. Robertson School and the Coventry Grammar School.

J. Beausoleil noted the budget discussions would continue at the next meeting. She asked that members send questions ahead of time as possible.

### **X. B. Information: COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Petrone provided a summary of the current conditions and guidelines related to COVID-19.

The Board discussed the various guidelines provided by the Department of Public Health (DPH), including no longer contact tracing, quarantining, and vaccinated vs non-vaccinated students.

C. Williams argued that the current guidelines discriminate against non-vaccinated students by requiring them to quarantine when they are a close contact when vaccinated students do not have to. Dr. Petrone explained these are guidelines we must follow as a public school district. The Board discussed this topic. C. Williams asked that the Board make a statement about this discrimination. There was no consensus to do this.

The Board continued and discussed athletics and the arts. Dr. Petrone said, with athletics, Coventry will be following the DPH guidelines.

**XI. Possible VOTE: Executive Session [Bargaining Unit Negotiations]**

**MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussions related to Bargaining Unit Negotiations with the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations present at 10:22 p.m.**

**By: E. Eaton**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

**XII. Open Session**

The Board left Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 10:47 p.m.

**XIII. Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:47 p.m.**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: P. DePaola**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

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Respectfully submitted,

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme  
Board Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_