

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO COMMITTEE APPROVAL AT THE  
Feb 28, 2013 MEETING  
REGIONAL SUPERVISION DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

**December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

A regular meeting of the Regional Supervision District Committee was held on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Committee members present:

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Wendy King, Peg Reyer
DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Art Robbins, KC Nelson Oliveria
ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Lon Seidman, Loretta McCluskey
REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:	Mary-Beth Harrigan, Elaine Fitzgibbons

Also in attendance: Dr. Ruth Levy, Superintendent; Dr. Joanne Beekley, Assistant Superintendent; Garth Sawyer, Business Manager, and Jennifer Bryan, Committee Clerk.

Audience of Citizens: 8 citizens

**CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Wendy King called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to appoint Christine Daniels as Vice-Chair.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to appoint Lon Seidman as Secretary/Treasurer.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly made and seconded the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the Minutes from the regular meeting of October 4, 2012 and the Accounts Payable Report.

**OTHER ITEMS**

The Committee and any present community members were asked for their thoughts on the upcoming 2013-14 Supervision District budget. No comments were made.

**PUBLIC COMMENT –**

8 citizens were present. Dan Morrissey of Deep River spoke regarding the school calendar. He said that he had heard a rumor about February vacation being shortened next year, and he wanted to state his opposition to that idea because “if you ski that’s your only time to do it”. He also said he was concerned that the school calendar may drift out of sync with surrounding towns because parents rely on regional camps, and summer programs for their children to attend when school is not in session.

## **REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION**

Financial Status – Business Manager Garth Sawyer reviewed the highlights of the Supervision District financial status updates. He talked about the recent installation of the new district-wide phone system and the fact that during the system set up and switchover for all of the schools, the districts had to keep the old AT&T accounts open for longer than anticipated. Therefore there are some additional costs associated with that. However, he noted that the Committee overall is still looking at a surplus due to better contract price on heating oil than had been anticipated.

### Individual BOE reports

Chester – Wendy King reported that the Chester BOE met and their financials are currently looking good. She also reported that the Board had been talking about working with the Chester Energy Task Force regarding installation of solar panels at the school. She also noted that the Chester Parks and Recreation Department had withdrawn a request to build a storage unit onto the school.

Deep River – Board member Art Robbins reported they met last month and once again they have concerns about unanticipated special education costs. He also reported that the new Principal is doing quite well.

Essex – Board Chair Lon Seidman reported they last met about a month ago. They watched a student broadcast at the beginning of their meeting. The Board has also had to deal with a few unexpected special education costs and will most likely need to go back to town for an extra appropriation. He has already spoken to the Essex Board of Finance and they have indicated that they will be happy to help with the mandated costs.

Region 4 – Board Secretary Mary-Beth Harrigan reported that the Board had just held their November meeting last week because it had been delayed due to a snow storm at beginning of the month. Many student awards recipients were recognized at the meeting including Valley student Rachel Aikens who recently received the Yale Invitational Parliamentary Debate 1<sup>st</sup> Place Speaker award. The Board also heard a report from Director of Facilities, Bruce Glowac regarding cost saving and energy efficiency measures put into place at the Middle School and High School. Mr. Glowac also reported that the JWMS solar panels are performing beyond expectations. Additionally, the first group of students has participated in the VRHS Manufacturing Program at Whelen and it has been a wonderful experience for all involved. Students have had an enthusiastic response to the program. She also mentioned that the Baseball/Softball Boosters want to donate dugouts to the baseball field at Valley.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **Information and Communication**

The presentation of the proposed draft Supervision District budget for 2013-14 was held until the Joint BOE meeting.

Dr. Levy presented recommendations made by the Joint BOE Calendar Committee for revisions to the already approved 2012-13 and the 2013-14 district wide school calendars. The Joint BOE Calendar Committee met for over 2 hours to prepare these recommendations. Many moving pieces were taken under consideration.

The Supervision District Committee discussed the recommended provisions to this year's calendar due to Storm Sandy at the beginning of the school year. They also discussed proposed changes to next year's calendar in response to parental requests for fewer ½ days and more consistency of 5 day full weeks of school, and an earlier release date in June. Dr. Levy also discussed the requirements prescribed through

State and Federal statutes for school days, hours of instruction, hours of professional development, negotiated contracts and their considerations, district values, other local district calendars, etc...

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adopt the revisions to the 2012-13 calendar as presented (revised calendar attached to minutes)

Dr. Levy then discussed more in depth the two options for revisions recommended by the Joint BOE Calendar Committee for the 2013-14 calendar taking all of those things previously mentioned into consideration. There was a lengthy discussion regarding both options presented. Mary-Beth Harrigan voiced her support for the calendar that provides the most educational hours, which is Option A; although she felt option B was a nice compromise too. Loretta McCluskey supported a shortened February break due to its proximity to CMTs. It was noted that many area schools are moving to decrease the length of February vacation. Lon Seidman noted that most parents are most concerned with the previously stated ½ day issue and wanting more consistent full weeks of instruction. He commended the committee for their work on those specific issues as well as all of the other considerations. Art Robbins noted that making the calendar is a thankless job. He stated that he feels it has been culturally ingrained for taking a February break and he's concerned that parents may choose to remove kids from school anyway. Members of the Calendar Committee said they did consider that issue as part of their deliberations.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adopt the revisions to the 2012-13 calendar as presented in Enclosure #5, Option A (revised calendar attached to minutes).

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Peter Corcoran of Deep River stated that he was glad that a lot of calendar concerns that he had expressed previously have been addressed by the approved revisions. He asked for more parental input in future calendars. Wendy King noted that the Calendar Committee meetings are publicly posted, public meetings and all citizens are welcome to provide input there or through e-mails or calls to their Board representatives.

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Supervision District Committee Budget Workshops Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, Jan 8<sup>th</sup> & Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. CO  
BOE & Community input on 2013-14 budget - ongoing  
Review Supervision District Audit Report for 2011-12 (TBD)  
Regular Meeting and VOTE on Supervision District 2013-14 budget (Feb. 28, 2013)  
Exec Session for Superintendent's recommendation regarding staff non-renewals (Feb 28<sup>th</sup>)  
Vote/approve recommendation for legal counsel for 2013/14 (June)

On motion duly made and seconded the committee unanimously VOTED to move into Executive Session at 7:17 p.m. for a personnel issue. Dr. Joanne Beekley and Attorney Kevin Roy were invited to join them.

The Committee moved out of executive session at 7:23 p.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Lon Seidman, Secretary,  
Jennifer Bryan, Clerk