

*The minutes presented within this document provide a summary of the discussion that took place at the Board of Education meeting. For the complete discussion of the agenda items, please view the video of the Board meeting on our website at [www.southingtonschools.org](http://www.southingtonschools.org). These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education meeting.*

**SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**SPECIAL MEETING  
AUGUST 17, 2023**

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A special meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. as a public meeting in the John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut with an Executive Session preceding at 6:30 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Colleen Clark, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

Board members present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Sean Carson, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Jasper Williams

Board members absent: Mrs. Dawn Anastasio, Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. James Chrzanowski, Mr. Zaya Oshana

Cabinet administrators present: Mr. Steve Madancy, Superintendent of Schools

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION – SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS EVALUATION AND UNAFFILIATED COMPENSATION**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Williams:

**“Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent of Schools Evaluation and Unaffiliated Compensation, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

*Mrs. Clark recessed Executive Session at 6:52 p.m.*

*The Special Board Meeting was reconvened at 7:01 p.m.*

**3. RECONVENE MEETING – REGULAR SESSION**

Board members present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Sean Carson, Mr. James Chrzanowski, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Zaya Oshana (*arrived at 7:09 p.m.*), Mr. Jasper Williams

Board members absent: Mrs. Dawn Anastasio, Mr. Joseph Baczewski

Cabinet administrators present: Mr. Steven Madancy, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Jennifer Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance; Ms. Rebecca Cavallaro, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mrs. Clark led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and called for a moment of silence in memory of:

- Patricia Langdon, who passed away on July 13, 2023. Patricia taught health in the Southington Public Schools from 1982 to 1999.
- Jeanne Schumann, who passed away on July 17, 2023. Jeanne was a former science teacher and guidance counselor in the Southington Public Schools from 1975 until her retirement in 2002.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Carson:

**“Move to move Agenda Items 10.a.1, 10.a.2 and 10.a.3 to Agenda Item 5.d.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**5. ADMINISTRATIVE INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Madancy introduced the three new administrators hired for the following positions:

- a. Mrs. Rita Stearns, Principal, South End Elementary School**
- b. Mrs. Simone Crouch, Assistant Principal, Southington High School**
- c. Mrs. Alicia Naleway, K-8 Math/K-5 Science Coordinator**

The new administrators spoke briefly about their professional career and thanked the Board for the opportunity provided to them. *(Mr. Oshana arrived at 7:09 p.m.)*

*Mrs. Clark called for a brief recess at 7:10 p.m.*

*Mrs. Clark reconvened the special meeting at 7:23 p.m.*

- d. Approval of Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips (Formerly Agenda Item 10.a)**
  - 1. SHS – Varsity Cheerleading Team – Honesdale, PA
  - 2. SHS – Agriculture Science & Technology / FFA National Convention, Indianapolis, IN
  - 3. SHS – Marching Band – Orlando, FL

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Williams:

**“Move to approve the Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips, as submitted.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. Communications from Board Members**

There were no Board communications.

- b. Communications from Administration**

1. Hatton School Donation: Mr. Madancy acknowledged and thanked the Connecticut Lightning Softball Association and United States Specialty Sports Association who made a donation to Hatton Elementary School for a sensory room, similar to the ACHIEVE room in the district. There will be a recognition celebration when the room is completed.
2. Donation to Southington Family Resource Center: Mr. Madancy announced that the Spirit of Beth Telfer Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain Grant donated \$720 to the Southington Family Resource Center.
3. STEEP Grant: Mr. Madancy explained that the town was pursuing a STEEP Grant to potentially award funds for Track and Field renovations at Southington High School. The Town Council approved the Town Manager to move forward with this grant with the submission deadline Friday, August 18, 2023.
4. Safety Fund: Mr. Madancy reported that the Board of Finance approved the prioritized list that the BOE approved in June for safety enhancements. On Monday evening, the Town Council approved funding for safety items that were on the prioritized Capital Plan, Group 1.
5. Legal Update: Mr. Madancy explained that Shipman & Goodwin, LLP provided legal updates to the administrators and the impact on policies and practices at the building level made from the 2023 legislative session. Mr. Madancy will compile a list of the state mandates, which are not funded, and how they would impact the district's operating budget.

Mr. Derynoski noted that the high school football field was done many years ago and questioned if the revenue funding of \$25,000/year was still being set aside and how much money was in that account. Mr. Madancy stated that there was approximately \$400,000 in that account for that project. Mrs. Clark pointed out that although the state mandates were well intended, the General Assembly made a number of changes to the statutes that would affect public education and the costs associated with it. She explained that these legal updates can be found at [ctschoollaw.com](http://ctschoollaw.com) and is Shipman & Goodwins explanation on the legislation.

**c. Communication from Public – Agenda Items Only**

There were no public communications on agenda items.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. Districtwide Facilities Committee Meeting – June 7, 2023**

Mr. Madancy reported that the committee met and discussed the potential high priority November referendum items for the SHS Athletic Facility and bonding/cash funding versus current Capital Plan timelines. The recommendation was to bring the revised timelines to the next Committee of the Chairs meeting for further discussion. The proposals for discussion included lights for the softball field (with current funds from reallocation in 2023), tennis courts (2024 with bonding), track (2025 with bonding), and bleachers/press box (2026 with bonding or 2025 with cash funding).

**8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**a. Personnel Report**

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

**“Move that the Board of Education approves the Personnel Report, as submitted by the Human Resource Department.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

## **9. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Town Government Communications**

There was no Town Government Communication to report.

### **b. ConEd Battery Storage Project**

Mr. Gregory Carey, Project Manager with RWE Clean Energy and Mr. David Raines, Senior Director of Health & Safety at RWE with 35 years in public safety positions including Law Enforcement, Fire Fighting, EMS and Hazmat, Certified Code Enforcement Officer and Fire Marshall experience, appeared before the Board to continue the discussion on the proposed Tesla MegaPack Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) at the two middle schools as proposed and discussed along with Mr. Adam Teff of TitanGen at a previous Board meeting. Mr. Gunter Schemman, Project Engineer at RWE, was also present for the discussion via cell phone.

Mr. Carey explained that the Battery Storage Project for the Southington Wastewater Treatment Plant was presented to the Town Council at their May 8, 2023 meeting, which was approved, with a lease agreement in place. RWE provided a safety overview on the fire life health and safety features, protocols, and RWE’s Emergency Response Plan at a meeting on June 20 with Southington Fire Chief Heath. Per a memo from Director of Public Works/Town Engineer, Annette Turnquist, who contacted Building Official Jeff Pooler, Acting Director of Planning & Community Development David Lavallee, stated that they all were comfortable with moving forward with the battery storage project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Carey discussed an updated overview of the proposed middle school projects, which was provided to the Board, that included the following information: RWE Ownership Model; preliminary size and layout at both middle schools; RWE owning and operating the BESS; proposed lease payment of \$25,000/year to the town for each school including property taxes for the equipment; the project development process; summary of benefits to the town of Southington such as no cost of installing, maintaining and operating the battery storage (*responsibility 100% by RWE*); generation of new annual revenues to the town, supporting the town’s efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and the effects of climate change; emergency back-up power source in the event of power outage at middle schools; and supporting Connecticut’s commitment for a zero-carbon electric grid by 2040. Also discussed in detail were the Fire Life Safety Design features.

The Board members had many questions. Mr. Carson had many technical questions. Questions included: How the batteries are charged from the grid? Who pays for the power that charges the batteries? (*Eversource*); Does it go through the school’s meter (*yes*) and who pays (*receive credit*)? Is it connected to the grid or the school’s power? (*both*); Comparison data from other similar clients with a similar load bank installed (*Ardasley Middle School in Westchester County New York with savings about \$5,000-20,000 on top of guaranteed \$25,000 lease payment*); How the number of \$25,000 was calculated for lease payment? Installation of

batteries; property tax; How revenue generated? High peak loads; Public Utilities Authority Program participation; Energy Storage Solutions Program; Batteries discharged on daily basis during summer months; Project cost for each installation? What is expected kilowatt discharge per event? (*maximum 750 kilowatts*); Active (*3 hours*) versus passive (*5 hours*) discharges discussed; Incentive payments; Who determines what kilowatt discharge is during events? Number of events during summer? (*30-60 events*); Connected Solutions Program for historical data on only active dispatches (*administered by Eversource*); Talking to other school districts using the program to ask their opinions; Contacting middle school in Westchester County that uses batteries (*Mr. Madancy will work with Adam Teff to do a virtual call*), 10-year commitment; Transparency; Contract lease agreement and tax conversation with the town; Operating temperatures of batteries? Battery management? Is off-gassing contained and measurable? Catastrophic event specialized training needed? (*Yes, with fire department & self-consumed*); Noise from units? (*RWE will provide decibel data*); Total expected profits to RWE and benefits to town? Variables? Alternative incentive model for payment? Rates for at-peak and off-peak? (*Negotiated by school business office/town with supplier*).

Mr. Madancy stated that he would gather all the technical questions from Mr. Carson and pass them on to Adam Teff.

**c. Policy 3541 – Transportation – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

**“Move to approve Policy 3541 – Transportation, as presented by the Policy & Personnel Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**d. Policy 6161 – Equipment, Books and Materials – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

**“Move to approve Policy 6161 – Equipment, Books and Materials, as presented by the Policy & Personnel Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Approval of Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips (*Moved to Agenda Item 5.d*)**
  - 1. SHS-Varsity Cheerleading Team – Honesdale, PA**
  - 2. SHS-Agriculture Science & Technology / FFA National Convention, Indianapolis, IN**
  - 3. SHS-Marching Band – Orlando, FL**
- b. Class Size Report**

Mr. Madancy explained that the district was within or below the Board guidelines for class sizes as shown on a provided grid. He noted that in early summer there was some concern about the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Hatton Elementary School and a section was added.

At the same time, they were able to collapse a section at another elementary school because they did not get the expected enrollment resulting in a teacher not needed to be added. The district should be fully staffed by opening day for the 2023-2024 school year.

**c. Obsolete Textbooks**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Oshana, seconded by Mr. Williams.

**“Move that the Board approve the disbursement or disposal of outdated textbooks that are no longer useful to the education program, as recommended by the administration.**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**11. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

**a. Communications from Public on Non-Agenda Items**

There were no communications from the public on non-agenda items.

*At 8:25 p.m., Mrs. Clark ended the Regular Session and the Board members, along with Mr. Madancy, returned to Executive Session*

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

**“Move to adjourn.”**

**Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Blanchard*

Recording Secretary