

**Willington Board of Education  
August 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes  
Town Office Building, Lower Level Conference Room**

**(Unofficial until Board Approval)  
(revised 8/10/2016 2:30 p.m.)**

Audio Recording    yes  
Notes Taken        yes

Members present at meeting:

Herb Arico, Secretary  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Vice Chairman  
Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett  
Erika Wiecenski, Chairman

Also present: Superintendent of Schools David Harding.

1. **Call to Order** at 7:01 p.m.by Erika Wiecenski.
2. **MOTION:** by Erika Wiecenski to add agenda item E under new business to fill a Board vacancy.

Seconded by Michelle Doucette Cunningham

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett  
Erika Wiecenski

**Motion**    Passed

3. **Communications:** Received notice from the Town Clerks office that Steve Ortiz had resigned from the BOE. Letter was received on July 20<sup>th</sup>. Board Chair received notice earlier today from a candidate interested in the vacant board seat.

#### **4. Present to Speak**

Ground Rules: Any member of the public may speak. The Board reserves the right to terminate comments for reasons of time or content. Comments may be on any subject, except that critical remarks about identified employees of the school system are not permitted, in the interest of following proper personnel procedure. Such comments may be communicated privately, to a school administrator, to the Superintendent, or to the Chair of the Board of Education.

Refer to Present to Speak sign in form.

#### **5. Superintendent Reports**

Reported that all positions had been filled and that Steve Ortiz had submitted a letter to the Town Clerk resigning from the BOE and that the BOE had until August 19th to fill the vacancy.

#### **6. Committee Reports**

Finance will be meeting to review bills.  
Policy would like Brenda to schedule a meeting.

#### **7. New Business**

A. Approve minutes of June 14, 2016 BOE Meeting.

**MOTION:** by Michelle Doucette Cunningham to approve the June 14, 2016 BOE Meeting Minutes.

Seconded by Michelle Doucette Cunningham

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett  
Erika Wiecenski

**Motion** Passed

B. Transfers

**MOTION:** by Michelle Doucette Cunningham to approve transfer.

Seconded by Ann Grosjean

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Erika Wieceński

**No**

Marybeth Wallett

**Motion** Passed

C. Approve the Board Goals

**MOTION:** by Michelle Doucette Cunningham to approve the BOE Goals (Five Year Plan) as developed during the BOE July retreat with edits and with the understanding that we will add a Board Operations Goal in the coming months.

Seconded by Marybeth Wallett

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett  
Erika Wieceński

**Motion** Passed

D. Review of summer projects.

E. Filling of Board vacancy.

3 individuals attended the meeting seeking appointment to the BOE vacant seat.

**Sarah Smith** (Democrat) was recommended by the Democratic Town Council. She had run for the BOE position in the last election. She reviewed her qualifications and expressed a desire to be considered for the position.

**Melissa McKinnon** (Republican) Spoke about her desire to participate more fully after attending most of the past year budget meetings. She has three children in

the school system, is a girl-scout leader, the PTA treasurer, and the chair Willington Day. She reviewed her qualifications and expressed a desire to be considered for the position.

**Elana Testa** (Republican) Spoke about her history in town. Stated she got involved because of the gun range battle. She home schools her children and has a degree in economics.

**Public Speaking on Agenda item 7E.**

**John Blessington** (Republican Town Chair) Stated that he was concerned about the vacant seat not being filled by a Republican endorsed by the Republican Town Committee – requested that the Board wait until next month to fill the vacancy.

**Bob Jellen** (Democratic Town Committee) acknowledged the tradition of filling vacant seat with same party member but that Sarah had run in the last election and should be given consideration. Also stated that the BOE should pick the best person for the job.

The Board Chair informed everyone that the decision to fill the vacancy was guided by policy as well as statutes and that the BOE had until August 19<sup>th</sup> to fill the vacancy. If the BOE did not decide then the decision would be left up to the Board of Selectman to fill the vacant seat.

**MOTION:** by Marybeth Wallett to table the vote to a special meeting prior to August 19<sup>th</sup> so that the Republican Party can make an endorsement.

Seconded by Herb Arico

**Point of Order** made by Herb Arico to keep discussion focused on Motion

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico

Marybeth Wallett

**No**

Michelle Doucette Cunningham

Ann Grosjean

Shawn Kowalyshyn

Erika Wiecenski

**Motion** Failed

**MOTION:** by Michelle Doucette Cunningham to appoint Sarah Smith to fill the BOE vacancy

Seconded by Ann Grosjean

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Erika Wiecenski

**No**

Herb Arico  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett

**Motion** Failed

**MOTION:** by Marybeth Wallett to appoint Elana Testa to fill the BOE vacancy

Seconded by Herb Arico

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Herb Arico  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett

**No**

Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Ann Grosjean  
Erika Wiecenski

**Motion** Failed

**MOTION:** by Ann Grosjean to appoint Melissa McKinnon to fill the BOE vacancy

Seconded by Marybeth Wallett

**VOTE:**

**Yes**

Ann Grosjean  
Shawn Kowalyshyn  
Marybeth Wallett

**No**

Herb Arico  
Michelle Doucette Cunningham  
Erika Wiecenski

**Motion** Failed

**8. Old Business**

A. Website update

The superintendent projected the new website and walked the board through some of the features.

B. Update on Cooperative arrangement with Mansfield

The superintendent informed the board that Sept 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 in Mansfield Middle School is the tentative date for our next meeting with Mansfield. As soon as an agenda is out he will distribute the agenda.

8. Present to speak: None

9. Board comments

Herb Arico Commented on how great the new website looks.

Michelle Doucette Cunningham Wanted to welcome everyone back to the new school year.

Ann Grosjean pass

Shawn Kowalyshyn pass

Marybeth Wallett pass

Erika Wiecenski- Thanked the three candidates for their interest in the position. Wanted to make sure people new that the principal of Hall memorial School will be performing in the summer concert series at River Road Park on Wednesday Aug 24<sup>th</sup>.

10. Adjournment 9:41 p.m.