

**Minutes of the Meeting
Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees
February 14, 2012**

**Attachment 1
Minutes are informational only**

PRESENT: C. Bentley, R. Blackmer, E. Cartier (P), B. Child, C. Davis, J. Gerardi-Voccio (B), E. Higgins, R. Holland, K. Johnston, J. Kaeding (7:48), P. Kelly, G. Marmat (E), J. Rauh, S. Rosendahl (W), A. Spalding, C. Swenson, J. Trivella (B), S. Young (7:15)

ADMINISTRATION: J. Campbell, K. Caron, Jonathan Grossman, H. Singleton, K. Willis

GUESTS: Bridget Matsas, David Matsas, Daniel O'Neill, Maxwell O'Neill, Amy Ranta, K. Smith, Ian Sorensen, Jane Toomey, Elizabeth Van Flatern

ABSENT EXCUSED: M. Beckwith, G. Carabeau (E), S. Fredrickson, J. Livernois, D. Morse, P. Paquette, C. Roethlein (P), D. Teed

ABSENT: H. Barlow, J. Musumeci

1. Call to Order

President Swenson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None

3. Headmaster's Awards

The Headmaster's Award for February is given to Bridget Matsas and Max O'Neill.

Bridget Matsas

Bridget's teachers agreed that she is a wonderful choice for this award. Her extracurricular activities include: Cross Country, Basketball, Track, Latin Honor Society, Chemistry Olympiad, and F.R.E.S.H., a student run, non-profit organization that runs a mentoring program and promotes poverty awareness in the community. Bridget is the committee chair for F.R.E.S.H.'s upcoming golf tournament. Bridget is a member of the Class of 2013. She lives in Woodstock with her father, David, mother, Jane, and sister, Hannah.

Max O'Neill

His teachers feel that Max is the perfect recipient for this award as he is the epitome of what we expect of a Woodstock Academy student. Max's extracurricular activities include: Lacrosse (of which he is the captain), Prayer Club, Ocean Bowl, and Plastics Club. He has also participated in mission trips to Queens, N.Y.; Philadelphia, PA; and the Dominican Republic. Max is a member of the Class of 2012 and plans to attend Dean College. After graduating from Dean, he plans to have a career which enables him to work with and help people. Max lives in Woodstock with his father, Daniel, mother, Maria Noelle, sister, Isabel, and brother, Ian.

4. Student Council Report

Ian Sorenson, President of Student Council, reported that the Academy hosted a very successful bloodmobile, with another scheduled for the spring. The Snow Ball was held in January. The Council is selling pizza and soda at basketball games. The application for the National Gold Council of Excellence Award was mailed today.

5. Board Reports

a. Secretaries Report

i. Approval of minutes

MOTION: (Holland/Johnston) To approve the minutes from the meeting of January 17, 2011, as presented.

Abstained – Davis, Gerardi-Voccio, Rosendahl

All Others in Favor

c. President's Report

Mrs. Swenson thanked Mr. Caron for the roses and chocolate dipped strawberries that were given to members of the Board at the start of the meeting.

i. Correspondence

Mrs. Swenson noted that a letter had been received from Anthony Walker, Chairman of the Woodstock Board of Education, inviting members of the Board of Trustees to a "Meet and Greet" event on Wednesday, February 22. Mrs. Swenson encouraged all to attend.

The agenda from the February 16, 2012 meeting of the Woodstock Planning and Zoning Commission was also received. Item VIII of the agenda was a preliminary discussion of student housing.

A copy of a letter from a Woodstock Academy student, which was part of a class project, is also included. This letter was sent to the Woodstock Board of Education, rather than to the Academy. Mr. Caron's response to this letter is also included.

A letter of resignation from Bryan Klimkiewicz was also included in the packet. Mrs. Swenson thanked Mr. Klimkiewicz for all he has done for Woodstock Academy.

ii. Information and communication

1. February 25 Board Retreat

Mrs. Swenson noted that the agenda for the upcoming Board of Trustees/Woodstock Academy Foundation Retreat is included.

2. May 5 Board Retreat

Mrs. Swenson asked Board members to reserve May 5, 2012, for the spring retreat. At this retreat, the Board will complete a Board evaluation. Doug Cummings, of the Independent Schools Association of Northern New England (ISANNE), will serve as facilitator.

d. Committee Reports

i. Standing committees

1. Executive Committee

Minutes of the February 1st meeting are unavailable at this time.

2. Finance Committee

a. Capital projects reallocations

The Finance Committee met on February 6th and reviewed the budget for the 2012-2013 year.

3. Academic Committee

The Academic Committee did not meet.

4. Policy Committee

a. 4117.4 Personnel - Certified Dismissal/Suspension

b. 4118.11 Personnel - Certified/Non-Certified

c. 5125 Students - Records; Confidentiality

The committee met just prior to this Board meeting. Mr. Klimkiewicz briefly reviewed the changes for the first reading of these policies.

5. Buildings & Grounds

a. Project updates

Mr. Blackmer reported that the committee had not met since the last Board meeting. The committee has been notified that the application for the grant for the Academy Building has not been approved. The committee will investigate this application process so that future applications will be successful.

ii. Other committees– no report

e. Ex-Officio Trustee's Report (Sending district representatives)

Brooklyn – They are starting the budget process, and are working continually with CABA, and are planning a retreat and a self-evaluation of the Board of Education.

Eastford - Mr. Marmat reported that Eastford is working on the budget and updating policies.

Pomfret – Mrs. Cartier reported that they are working on the transportation contract, have completed an audit of special education, and are updating policies.

Woodstock – Mr. Rosendahl commented that he is very excited to have Mr. Cliff Davis join the Board of Trustees as a sending town representative.

f. Alumni President Report

Mrs. Willis reported that the committee is working on creating its by-laws and constitution. The committee will begin taking nominations for the Hall of Fame, and inductions will be in the fall. Barbara Child and Avis Spalding are planning a senior citizen tea for May. Homecoming is scheduled for September 17-22, and will include two varsity soccer games, as well as a home football game on the new football field. The Alumni Banquet will be October 6th. Alumni Speakers week will again be scheduled in December.

6. Assistant Headmaster/Principal Report

a. Teaching and Learning update

i. Department report: Visual Arts/Music/Performing Arts

Ms. Ranta gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the success of Woodstock Academy's students at the Scholastic Art Awards.

Ms. Ranta detailed the upgrades to the music department, including the new recording studio and Mac computer lab.

All told, 543 students participate in the art and music department.

Mr. Caron noted that the art and music departments are the heart and soul of our school. The success of our students doesn't happen by accident. We have tremendous teachers.

b. Administration update

Mrs. Singleton reviewed the recent collaboration initiatives with the sending towns in math, social studies, and guidance.

The math articulation was centered on pre-algebra and how the courses are aligned. Students have been experiencing issues with placement for courses. Students are placed in upper levels and then have to drop down, which is causing an overload in the middle sections. Mrs. Singleton was pleased that there was a wonderful give and take and the issue was fixed. The 7-12 math plan was vertically aligned. The math people then met a second time and discussed algebra placement, assessment. The group will meet a third time to review changes from the state on the common core of prescribed curriculum. This collaboration was started five years ago.

There is a change in the social studies curriculum; American History is to be taught in eighth grade. The sending towns all met and are ready to accept and take responsibility of this change. The essential components were identified, and this will allow us to make adjustments to 20th and 21st century history and civic courses. March 29th is the next scheduled meeting.

The guidance component focuses on student success plans. The Academy has always utilized these plans. Plans from the state will call for students to have a cumulative portfolio by the time they graduate.

c. Information and communication

i. School climate Plan-2nd reading

The first reading of the plan was at the Board meeting on January 17, 2012.

MOTION: (Holland/Rauh) To approve the School Climate Plan

Abstained: Davis

All others in favor

7. Headmaster/Superintendent Report

a. Academy update

i. International program update

Mr. Caron noted that the admissions process has really improved over last year, and it is primarily due to Skype, which allows the admissions team to see how students respond to questions. Mrs. Favreau and Mr. Campbell are part of that committee, and it is going well. Diversification of the program is underway. We are attracting students from continents other than Asia. We are going forward slowly to diversify with students from Europe, South America, and Mexico.

Preliminary discussions with Planning and Zoning over housing are taking place. The majority of our students are in homestays; only a small group of students are in Academy residences. Out of forty-seven students, about sixteen are housed in Academy housing. We reviewed zoning regulations prior to going down this path, and we felt certain that we met zoning regulations, and that assessment was confirmed in the October meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission said we met the definition of family, however, at that October meeting concern was expressed, which led to our researching language to address housing.

Fast forward to the January meeting, where Planning and Zoning expressed a little more concern, and a letter of violation was sent to us, referring to the fact that the housing is not expressly permitted in the regulations. Attorney Ernest Cotnoir, Joe Campbell, and Kim Caron are working with the Zoning Commission to develop alternative language. Mr. Caron is hopeful of a positive outcome, and he will keep the Board informed as to the results.

b. Director of Operations update

i. Finance

ii. Projects (Sewer) (Field)

Mr. Campbell announced that the bid package was put out for the sewer project, with a notification in the paper this past weekend. It is hoped for an early spring start to the project.

c. Information and communication

i. WA 2012/13 Budget Proposal – 1st reading

Mr. Caron gave a PowerPoint presentation on the budget, a copy of which was distributed to Board members prior to the start of the meeting. The administration has been working for several months on the 12-13 budget, and has been working closely with the Finance Committee, which endorsed this draft at its meeting on February 6th. This is a first reading, and we are currently on target for adopting this budget at the March 20th Board meeting.

As noted, guarded economic conditions and the decline in local enrollment are factors in the budget. This decline is consistent with regional and state-wide trends. Interest in Woodstock Academy for private day students is growing, which is good news for the enrollment management plan. As previously discussed, we are looking to diversify the international program with representation from every continent.

Mr. Caron noted that this is the first time he is excited about the budget for the Academy, as it stabilizes our enrollment moving forward. Revenue will be augmented through private and international students, and we are able to provide staffing levels to support excellence and to continue to offer program diversity while maintaining reasonable costs for our sending towns.

ii. WA 2012/13 School Calendar – 1st reading

Mr. Caron reviewed the proposed calendar. The superintendents are doing their best to coordinate, but as calendars vary from town to town, there are still areas that they will not be able to coordinate. The Woodstock Superintendent has not scheduled school for the elementary and middle school on August 31st, due to the Woodstock Fair, and he asked us to consider closing the Academy that day as well. Other towns are not impacted by the Fair, so we will try to address the various issues around this, including transportation costs for Woodstock Public Schools.

8. Action Items (Requiring Board vote)

a. School Climate Plan– see Item 6.c.i.

9. Woodstock Academy Foundation

a. WA Educational Grants

Mr. Higgins said the Foundation is meeting regularly. There was a special meeting last night and after getting the basics down, the directors focused on moving ahead with the capital campaign.

10. Community participation – None.

11. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Caron noted that the Class Size report was moved from the February meeting to the March meeting.

12. Executive session

MOTION: (Holland/Kelly) To move to Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss negotiations and personnel.

UNANIMOUS

a. Negotiations

b. Personnel

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ahern Straub

Susan Ahern Straub, Board Clerk