

Union Board of Education Meeting

18 Kinney Hollow Rd.

Union, CT 06076

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Union School Library

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. by A. Estell.

Attending: A. Estell, A. Blank, E. Perkins, M. Silbermann, E. Fournier, J. Kavanaugh, Supt./Prin. S. Jackopsic.

Others Attending: Parents and town residents.

Approval of Minutes

E. Fournier made a motion to approve the minutes from November 13, 2024. Seconded by J. Kavanaugh. Unanimously approved.

Individuals to be Heard: None

Communications: None

Administrative Reports and Activities Summary:

- a. HVAC/air quality is in process of being reviewed. Most items will be covered further down on agenda (budget, high school, bus bids, etc.)

Committee Reports:

- a. Curriculum: Science programs are being previewed.
- b. Communication: none
- c. Transportation: Lack of bus drivers continues to create difficulties.
- d. Personnel: none
- e. Building: A release valve needed to be replaced on water system and boiler was recently serviced.
- f. EASTCONN: none

Financial Report:

- a. Review of Bills: A. Estell reviewed the bills and found no issues.
- b. 2024-2025 Spending Plan: Expenditures are on target at the approximate half-way point of the fiscal year.

Old Business:

- a. High School Discussion of Next Steps: Supt./Prin. Jackopsic has made contact with all three high schools considered. The Woodstock Academy Negotiating Committee has been invited to meet with the Union Board of Education on January 22, 2025. Union is currently awaiting final confirmation from Woodstock Academy.

E. Perkins made the following motion “that the Union Board of Education will pay all tuition costs associated with any currently enrolled students who are residents of Union at Woodstock Academy and Stafford High School until completion of their program through the

27-28 school year.” A. Blank seconded the motion. The motion passed with J. Kavanagh abstaining.

New Business:

- a. Bus Bid Results: M&J Bus Co. bus was the only bid received for services. Engaging M&J Bus Co. for van services to assist current transportation difficulties due to driver shortages in the current year was also discussed. Transportation bid includes transportation to both E.O. Smith and Woodstock Academy.

Amy Blank made the following motion: “The Union Board of Education authorizes Superintendent/Principal Steve Jackopsic to immediately enter into discussions with M&J with planning and transitioning transportation responsibilities.” E. Perkins seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

- b. 2025-26 Initial Spending Plan: Supt./Prin. Jackopsic presented the 2025-2026 initial draft spending plan. The proposed spending plan indicates an approximate 11% increase over the current year. Main areas of increase include transportation and high school tuition. The breakfast program has added an administrative fee, and there is a slight increase in building maintenance. The spending plan will be re-visited in January.

Individuals to be Heard:

Some parents attending advocated to continue with Woodstock Academy as a school for Union students and offered suggestions as to how the budget could be decreased such as charging fees for after school clubs and charging parents for the preschool program.

Discussion/review of draft high school agreements/proposals and related negotiation strategies for revisions to same:

J. Kavanagh made the following motion, “I hereby move to enter into executive session for a discussion/review of draft high school agreements and proposals, as the public interest in withholding access to such draft agreements clearly outweighs the disclosure of these items, and I hereby move to invite the following persons into executive session, Supt/Principal Steve Jackopsic.” E. Fournier seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

The meeting went into executive session at 7:50 p.m. and exited executive session at 8:47 p.m.

Adjournment:

J. Kavanagh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8: 49 pm. E. Fournier seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Andrea Estell Chairman/Acting Secretary