

NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
Board Meeting Minutes
Champlain Elementary School
April 3, 2018
6:00 PM

Meeting Called to Order at 6:06 PM

1. Oath of Office

A. Swearing in of Newly Elected and Re-Elected Commissioners

Karsen Woods swears in the new board.

Motion to approve.

Barlow/Orwell

This is immaterial because there are no sworn in commissioners as of this meeting.

2. Election of Board Chair

A. Election of Board Chair

Motion to nominate Commissioner Wool as Board Chair

Commissioner Gulick/Commissioner Carey

Motion passes

3. Election of Other Officers

A. Election of Vice Chair

Motion to nominate Commissioner Wick as Vice Chair

Commissioner Pillsbury/Commissioner Olwell

Motion passes

B. Election of Clerk

Motion to nominate Commissioner Fisher as Board Clerk

Commissioner Ivancic/Commissioner Carey

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Chair Wool offered opportunity for discussion.

Commissioner McLaren has a deep discomfort with our entire board leadership team being represented by one District in the city.

Commissioner McLaren opposed, Motion carries.

4. Approval of Agenda

A. Motion to Approve Agenda

Commissioner Pillsbury/Commissioner Ivancic

Motion to amend the agenda to include a resolution regarding the RIF.

The resolution will be included in the agenda after public comment as item number 6.

5. Public Comment

Allison Seagar read from a statement. Parent of three district students. RP

Bill Brian is shocked and appalled to hold an emergency board meeting on Sunday at 9PM. Recognizes the importance of our Open Meeting Laws. Implicit bias and process training are desperately needed.

Allen Mattson former Board Member from 2008-2015.

6. RIF Resolution

Commissioner Pillsbury introduced the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the Burlington Board of School Commissioners is concerned about the effect on students of the recently proposed elimination of direct instructional teaching positions, including the interventionist positions, the elementary classroom teacher positions, the high school physical education position, and the high school business teacher positions.

The Superintendent is instructed to take no further action to implement the elimination of these positions (RIFs) until the superintendent provides the board with additional information demonstrating to the board's satisfaction that the proposed RIFs are in the best interest of the students.

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Commissioner Pillsbury/Commissioner Ivancic

Commissioner Curry asked the Superintendent to speak to the issue at hand. He expressed that this Board needs an opportunity to get a presentation on the process and particulars. He explained that there may be an instructional position that the District will maintain while the position gets utilized in a new way. The Superintendent explained that there is a procedure to follow, contractually, but then there is an opportunity to hire those staff back. He expressed again that he is willing to do a presentation on this process at the regular Board meeting for further explanation. He reminded the new Board that the budget was approved and it is still being maintained.

Commissioner Barlow asked Commissioner Pillsbury to clarify what it means to take no further actions: RIFs have been sent out already.

Commissioner Pillsbury said that while RIFs have been sent out, they can be recalled. He alleges that the money is in the budget for the positions, therefore they should maintain those positions.

Commissioner Ivancic agreed she would appreciate a presentation on the process.

Superintendent Obeng said he would like to do a presentation. He attempted to explain the RIF process in regards to the Equity Index: District and School numbers are different. If the District has 200 teachers, 200 teachers will be maintained. However, it is possible that some schools may lose a teacher, where another school gains that same teachers. It is about shifting resources to where they are needed in the system.

Superintendent Obeng also explained that he needs clear direction from the Board on what they mean by “no further action.” He is doing what is contractually agreed upon regarding the RIF process.

Commissioner Gulick contributed to the discussion by clarifying that there is a difference between eliminating an employee and handing out of RIF Notices.

Commissioner Curry told the Board that the above Resolution sets a tone of a lack of desire to understand the process. She noted that the RIF list cannot be pulled out individually, but needs to be looked at in entirety. Commissioner Curry

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called attention to the January 22nd Board meeting presentation and Director Phillips' presentation about the failed system, and the restructuring that will take place by using these positions differently. Curry notes it is not the job of the Board to decide appropriate staffing levels for the District, but to entrust Director Phillips, who is an expert in her field.

Commissioner McLaren Second Commissioner Curry's point, explaining that he voted on the budget and was fully aware of the changes. The budget that went to voters fully and accurately reflects the changes being made in the system. He said he cannot support the resolution because it goes against Board Policy 3.33 and the Board motion is in violation of board limitations.

Commissioner Ivancic told the Superintendent that the Interventionists positions have only been implemented for 3 years, and she feels that is not enough time to say that it is not working.

Commissioner Barlow will not support the motion.

Commissioner Wick would like to find some middle ground on how to satisfy the group. He feels like there is a sense of urgency on the issue which is the catalyst for the motion. He is also mindful of McLaren's note of the limitations of the board.

Superintendent Obeng explained, once again, people need more information. He is concerned that this Board is out of compliance by suggesting this directive. Superintendent Obeng wants to know what the real question is: is it about RIF or about the positions? If the Board wants to risk compliance to change a directive, it needs to be very specific and narrow focus. Obeng says the prudent thing to do would be to send a list of questions to be answered by him in the presentation at the regular board meeting.

Commissioner Pillsbury spoke out of order to announce he still has questions about instructional staff reductions. Superintendent Obeng called upon the Chair Wool to call a Point of Order. He already requested these questions be sent in writing.

Motion to table the resolution.

Commissioner McLaren/Commissioner Barlow

Not amenable or debatable. We vote up or down. Needs a majority to pass.

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Commissioner Pillsbury opposed. Motion carries.

6. Adjournment

A. Motion to Adjourn

Commissioner Wick/Commissioner McLaren

DRAFT

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