

**MONTVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
SUPERINTENDENT'S LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
December 11, 2018 at 5:15 p.m.**

Item 1. Call to order/Pledge of Allegiance.

Interim Superintendent Laurie Pallin called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and all stood for the pledge. Committee members present were Sandra Berardy, Robert Mitchell, and Monica Pomazon. Steven Loiler was absent.

Item 2. Consideration and action to elect a chair.

Motion: That the committee elects Monica Pomazon as chair.

Proposed by: Robert Mitchell
Seconded by: Sandra Berardy
Vote: 3-0; carried unanimously

Item 3. Discussion on communications surrounding budget.

Budget Forums – Principal input was to hold the forum 45 minutes prior to a concert or other school event to get better participation. Several events were mentioned including the Jan. 24th Winter Band and Chorus Concert at Mohegan (starting at 6:30) and the MHS School Governance Council which meets monthly at 4:30. Laurie will ask administrators for possible dates at other schools and present for Board approval as special meetings at the Dec. 18th BOE meeting.

An Informational budget presentation by Erika Haynes from the CT School Finance Project will be held on Jan. 7 at 5:30 in the MHS library. Members of the Town Council will be invited and community members will be encouraged to attend. Topics which will be presented include:

- Change in enrollment over time and total district enrollment v. enrollment at 6 schools
- Change in size of population with greater educational needs (low income, EL, special education)
- Funding for local education – revenue sources (state and federal grants, local taxes, tuition, construction grants)
- Change in ECS grant aid over time and how it is determined; new formula starting with FY 2019
- Holdback and MBR
- Magnet, Charter, Tech School funding
- Mill rate and grand list, value of taxable property, median household income
- Special education and excess cost

Budget Survey

The survey questions identified at the October Communications Committee meeting were reviewed and it was agreed that they were too hard to answer or to collect meaningful data from because they were all open-ended. Laurie presented a sample survey that had selected responses and committee members agreed that we should develop a survey with a list of potential items to be funded and four possible responses (extremely important/must be in budget, important/should be in budget, less important/could be cut if necessary, not important/should not be funded). The location of this survey will be announced at Budget Forums, posted on website, and in flyer to be distributed in community

(possible locations: Raymond Hill Library, Montville Hardware, Herbs, Oakdale Pizza). We will also try to get this information in the Montville Times and get a link to the survey from the Montville Community Forum and from our Twitter account. We will investigate the best time to go to the senior center and potentially bring students and devices to help seniors complete the survey electronically if desired. Paper copies of the survey would also be available for return to the schools upon completion.

Sharing Budget information:

The committee discussed posting budget information in clear, graphic display on website and also posting results of the survey and an FAQ section.

Item 4. Discussion regarding Board Communications.

There was a discussion about holding a Board retreat, possibly in January or February, and asking Nick Caruso from CABA to facilitate using the Connecticut Lighthouse training modules. This topic will be added to the December Board of Education meeting agenda.

The arrangement of people at Board meetings to facilitate communication with the Board and between the Board and the audience was also discussed. It was agreed that we will try a new layout to ensure all people are facing a presenter and the screen.

The desire to have the Board engaged more often in conversation about students' education at regular Board meetings was discussed. Committee members expressed that they would like the principals to have more opportunity to participate in discussions at Board meetings. They mentioned that they would prefer verbal reports from principals to the written principal reports and that maybe elementary and secondary principals could provide bimonthly updates at alternate meetings.

Item 5. Discussion of future agenda items.

- CABA Lighthouse Project
- General Communications Planning
- Marketing of District Schools

Item 7. Adjournment

Motion: To Adjourn the meeting

Motion: Sandra Berardy
Second: Robert Mitchell
Vote: 3-0; carried unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Laurie Pallin, Interim Superintendent