Attendance Taken at 7:34 p.m.:

Present Board Members:
Ms. Jennifer Beausoleil
Ms. Mary Kortmann
Mr. Eugene Marchand
Mr. William Oros
Ms. Denise Ryan
Mr. Michael Sobol

Absent Board Members:
Ms. Mary Minor

Administrators Present:
David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Business Manager

Also Present:
Daniel Bullock, Student Board of Education Representative

Also Present: Marybeth Moyer, CGS Principal; Beth Giller, GHR Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Michele Mullaly, CHS Principal; Steve Merlino, CHS Assistant Principal; Paul Noel, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Carla Kennedy, Director of Educational Technology and Curricular Innovation; Mary Greenlaw-Dixon, Curriculum Director; John Elsesser, Town Manager; Wendy Rubin and Caterina Merriam, Coventry Recreation Department; several community members; and The Chronicle newspaper was represented.

I. Call to Order
J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag
J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens
Yuchen Fouma of 745 Merrow Road voiced concerns of families regarding the after school program if it is shut down. She explained the hardship it would put on families if the program was no longer available. She encouraged everyone to think about the future of Coventry.

Jennifer Bynes of 121 Lakeview Drive spoke in favor of the after school program. Her comments are attached to these minutes.
Ryan Nowosielski of 402 Hinkel Mae Drive noted he is a member of the Recreation Commission and also a parent. He said he fully supports the program and hopes for a positive solution this evening.

Mike Shore of 47 High Street talked to the importance of the program and said the Park & Recreation Department and programs were part of the reason they decided to move to Coventry. He spoke to the after school program itself and gave it high accolades.

Jeffrey Gord of 36 Hendee Road said he is very concerned that the program could be shut down with a last minute decision and asked the Board to continue to support the program at least through the school year.

Linda Dettore of 27 Barry Avenue noted she supports the recreation department programs. She said she was present tonight to speak to the Vernon Regional Adult Basic Education (VRABE) program and urges the Board to make it a goal that the residents are made aware of the programs VRABE has to offer. She noted Coventry is a member of the 14-town program. She asked that promotional publications be available at the different town offices. She asked that we reach out to parents in town regarding the GED program.

Amy White of 204 Love Lane expressed support of the Recreation Department’s after school program. She talked to all of the variables regarding the program the Board has to consider this evening.

Kathleen Breitenwischer of 61 Barbara Drive said she supports the after school Recreation Daze program. She submitted her comments in writing, which are attached to these minutes.

Jeff Shorts of 427 Flanders River Road, Chairman of the Town Council, thanked the Board and staff for all of their assistance surrounding the after school program. He said he hopes a decision can be made soon in support of the program.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Mr. Petrone said staff and students had a great December break. He thanked the town staff for their cooperation through the recent weather events.

IV.A. Information: Student Board of Education Representative

Mr. Petrone introduced Daniel Bullock as the new Student Board of Education Representative. E. Marchand noted the new procedure in selecting a representative. He said they are looking forward to hearing more from the representative and the student body.

Mr. Bullock thanked everyone who assisted him in becoming the representative. He noted exams are coming up and that in general the college application process for seniors is almost complete. He also spoke to other events and activities happening at CHS.

V. Consent Agenda - VOTE: Accept Retirement of Judith Burr, CHS Guidance Counselor

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as presented
By: W. Oros Seconded: D. Ryan
Result: Motion passes unanimously
VI. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil thanked all of the parents for coming out to speak about the after school program. She noted it is budget season and mentioned the special budget meeting scheduled for next Thursday, January 16 at 7:30 p.m. She also asked that questions be emailed ahead of time if at all possible. She also reminded the Board that there is a joint Fiscal/Finance meeting with the Town on Monday evening.

VII. Approval of Minutes - VOTE: Approve minutes of December 12, 2013

MOTION: To approve the minutes of December 12, 2013 as presented

By: E. Marchand
Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VIII. Old Business

J. Beausoleil said item C [policies] under Old Business will be tabled to the next regular Board meeting.

VIII.A. Information and possible VOTE: Coventry Parks & Recreation Support of After-School Program

J. Beausoleil said there were many questions raised at the last meeting regarding the after school program.

D. Ryan said she wanted to make it clear, that the first time she heard about the program was at the meeting in December. She wanted the public to be aware that she had no knowledge of the issues at hand.

J. Beausoleil said all Board members are parents in the community. She noted they have all used services provided for in town. She also said not every solution is perfect for every family. She said the Board has a responsibility to understand the specifics of the program and be sure, if the Board is involved, everything is handled accurately.

Mr. Petrone said the lines of communications have been open between the schools and the town. He is hoping a solution can be found with clear procedures put in place.

John Elsesser, Town Manager, spoke to the history of the program. He noted the current issue came up in the fall. He said the program was approved by the previous Superintendent and it wasn’t realized until this past fall that there was an "end date" to that approval.

Mr. Elsesser said there are two primary paths to keeping the program in place. He noted the concerns with the program obtaining their own license. He continued to discuss the other two more timely options. He said these options are "exempt" from licensing; one is if the program is administered by the schools, staying in the current location; and the second is housing the program in a school building. Mr. Elsesser detailed the legal opinions. He said the Recreation Department would like to pursue an option that allows them stay at Patriot's Park.

J. Beausoleil noted there will be no further liability to the town or the Board for the program to be housed or administered by the Board of Education. Mr. Elsesser confirmed there would be no municipal impact.

Ms. Rubin asked that a statement from a parent [Antonia Conti], who was unable to attend this evening, be added to the record (attached to these minutes). Ms. Rubin said she believes they can continue at Patriot's Park with the support of the Board. She said the Recreation Department in general has a long history of working with school staff through many programs and it has been
extremely beneficial and productive. She reviewed the documentation she had available regarding the current situation. She also noted that the Town Council voted Monday, asking the Board to support the program.

Ms. Rubin went on to review the safety and security procedures the program currently has and what's been updated recently.

Ms. Rubin said anything can be done to meet the needs or requests of the Board.

E. Marchand asked questions about the role of the Board regarding administering the program. Mr. Petrone said it would need to be broken down into pieces. Mr. Petrone continued saying that a full plan would need to be developed.

W. Oros asked if in the meantime, they would stay at GHR. The Board discussed the short-term plan.

Mr. Petrone gave thoughts to what the school liaison to the program would look like and said it would most likely be an administrator with an 092 endorsement.

The Board further discussed this option.

Mr. Bullock discussed his thoughts on what financial impact these decisions will have on the program.

J. Beausoleil said we need to be sensitive to the community and that it is a very fiscally complex situation.

The Board reviewed the state regulations regarding after school program certifications.

E Marchand asked if there were funds in the program to pay a stipend. Ms. Rubin said there are funds available.

D. Ryan asked Mr. Elsesser for his opinion as to where the program should be held. Mr. Elsesser said staying at Patriot’s Park would be best. Ms. Rubin agreed. Mr. Petrone talked to the challenges that are presented when the program is at the schools.

M. Kortmann said she would like to see it stay at Patriot's Park, with school supervision, with a stipend to an 092 holder perhaps to one who is in the process of obtaining one.

J. Beausoleil said the draft MOU is a good starting point, but the Board will probably want more detail. She suggested that the Superintendent be authorized to work through an MOU within 30 days and pending that, the Superintendent would be authorized to administer the program currently until the MOU is complete. It was added that the MOU would be through June 2014 and reviewed and renewed annually.

E. Marchand said he would support that.

Mr. Petrone said that is definitely doable.

**MOTION:** To enable the Superintendent to work with Town staff to come to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) within 30 days, that authorizes him to sign off on the program for this school year, and in doing so the program can continue at the G. H. Robertson School tomorrow, and move back to Patriot’s Park on Monday and the MOU will be renegotiated for the next school year and annually after that.

By:  M. Sobol

Seconded:  M. Marchand

Result: Motion passes unanimously

**VIII.B. Information and possible VOTE:** Approve 2014-2015 School Calendar

Mr. Petrone noted the issue brought forward by the Board at the last meeting was whether it was possible to align the fall parent conference early release days at K-5 with those at 6-12.
Ms. Moyer said discussions took place at the schools, including surveying parents verbally. Ms. Moyer continued saying moving the K-5 conference dates to later in the trimester would be detrimental to the reason they were pushed to earlier in the trimester this school year. She said the staff and parents truly say they are best where they are. Dr. Giller agreed.

The Board had no further questions.

Motion: To approve the 2014-2015 School Calendar as presented in the packet
By: M. Sobol Seconded: E. Marchand
Result: Motion passes unanimously

IX. New Business

IX.A. Information: FY15 Budget Presentations

IX.A.1. Presentation of the FY15 Budget

Mr. Petrone said the PowerPoint is loaded for members in CABE-meeting. He said one of the Board’s most important tasks is approving a budget. He said he worked very closely with the administrative team to develop this budget and they listened to the Board and the Community over the past year as to where it needed to go.

He reviewed his budget proposal for the FY15 school year.

The Board discussed the School Resource Officer proposal. Questions and answers regarding funds, responsibilities, and procedures took place.

Mr. Petrone said his PowerPoint will be available on the website.

IX.A.2. Coventry High School

Ms. Mullaly reviewed a brief overview of the Coventry High School budget for FY15.

J. Beausoleil noted due to the extensive agenda, some budget presentations could be tabled to next week. It was agreed that the budget presentations from PSSS, Central Office and Physical Plant and Facilities would be tabled to the January 16 meeting. It was also agreed that the Report of Board members would be tabled to January 16 as well.

IX.A.3. Capt. Nathan Hale School

Ms. DeJulius presented a brief overview of the Capt. Nathan Hale School budget for the FY15 school year.

IX.A.4. G. H. Robertson School

Dr. Giller reviewed a brief overview of the G. H. Robertson School budget for the FY15 school year.

IX.A.5. Coventry Grammar School

Ms. Moyer presented a brief overview of the Coventry Grammar School budget for the FY15 school year.

E. Marchand asked if there are any parents who still had concerns with full-day kindergarten. Ms. Moyer said there were those who were apprehensive at first, but they are extremely supportive now, once going through the program.
IX.A.9 Technology Department
Ms. Kennedy reviewed a brief review of the Technology Department's operating budget for the FY15 school year.

W. Oros asked if the technology was in place and ready for the new testing. Ms. Kennedy said they are working on it and will be ready.

XI. Adjournment
MOTION: To adjourn the Board meeting at 10:49 p.m.
By: W. Oros  Seconded: M. Kortmann
Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted:

________________________________________
Kimberlee Arey Michaud
Board Clerk

Approved: January 30, 2014
Good Evening

My name is Jennifer Bynes and I live at 121 Lakeview Drive. We all wear many hats in our lives. Tonight I come to you wearing two of my hats, one of those hats is as chairperson of our Parks and Recreation Commission and other is Mom of a child who attends Rec Daze at Patriots Park.

As chairperson of our Park and Recreation commission I can relate to your concerns regarding risk management and the safety of our children. As a commission we stand 100% behind Cat and Wendy, we know how seriously they take every safety, staff, facilities, and activities.

We meet and exceed best practices in safety daily. Our
staff our well trained in epi-pens, emergency procedures, first-aid, management, and problem solving. We are constantly improving our policies and procedures when programming dictates that it’s time to do so. We find safety of utmost importance. Our staff, wow, I’m always stumped on how accurately to share how top notch they are. I have had a participant in our programs for almost five years now. This department is EXTREMELY fortunate to have low turnover throughout all its school aged programs. We are lucky to have the same staff working throughout the year with us at rec daze, summer camps, swim lessons, recreation programs and special events.
Our facilities at Patriot’s Park have met our need now and for the past 7 years. Patriots Park offers us amenities that align with our mission of fostering active lifestyles, social well-being and environmental stewardship. We strive to provide quality opportunities for recreational programming by encouraging positive youth development, inclusion of special populations, healthy lifestyles, enrichment and lifelong learning. We are so fortunate to be able to use an age appropriate playscape for the kindergartens through fifth grade that attend our programs, the opportunity for those who attend to experience nature at its finest, and the ever so important chance for
our children to socialize with one another.
The activities of our days will be touched on a little later in the agenda- but again this program provides what no one else in town does. In fact all of our programs arise from a need for these services that no one else provides. They are self supporting because people need them and demand them. Let me switch hats for you. I am a mom of two. I am mom who has sole physical custody of her two children. I am a mom who reentered the work force full time this year. I am a mom who couldn’t do it without this program or this team. I need to be able to count on the care for my children. The staff at these
programs has become an extension of my family. We’ve been lucky enough to count on the program and staff as my family made a large transition in our lives this year. They adore my girls and treat them in and out of programs just like I treat them and would want them to be treated. They assist them developmentally program is to their family and their situation. So let me put back on my other hat. What I can add to that discussion is the team that makes up this department and commission are so very dedicated to meeting the needs of those in town. This is a need that isn’t being met anywhere else and certainly not in other facilities that offers what our mission
and emotionally, and I will forever be thankful.

This program helps families like me on professional development days so we can continue to be at work and the ever important option of drop in care for others who sch’d dictates that need.

I know every parent here will share with you how very important the Rec Daze states. So as a board, a chairperson and staff of our schools I hope we leave this evening supporting the families of this town as we come together to continue our missions.

Thank you
My name is Kathleen Breitenwischer and I live at 61 Barbara Drive, here in Coventry.

I am here tonight in support of the Recreation Daze after school program. My son John is in Kindergarten at the Grammar school and attends the after school program.

Both my husband and I work full time and having a safe, nurturing environment for our son to go to after school every day is invaluable to us. If this program were to end, I honestly don’t know what we would do. Financially, it is an extremely affordable after school option for us.

My son really enjoys the program. I think he has benefited most from the social skills he continues to grow and develop through his interactions with older children. There is something to be said for a kindergartener and a 4th or 5th grader negotiating and playing together. Being a typical boy, my son doesn’t share much about his day but he sure is proud to tell us about the friends he has a GHR that are 5th graders.

He has also learned how to play chess at Recreation Daze. And I am told by the staff member who taught him to play that he is a pretty good player.

I told John why I was coming here tonight and he wanted me to say to you to please let them go back to Patriots Park so that they can have more room and all their equipment back to play with.

Personally, I just want you to support this program at whatever location you feel it needs to be in.

I thank you for your time and consideration.
Caterina Merriam

From: Antonia Conti [toniconti948@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Thursday, January 09, 2014 5:39 PM  
To: Caterina Merriam  
Subject: Recreation Daze

Cat:

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting, but please feel free to share my email with the Board of Education. Please see below:

I am writing to ask the Coventry Board of Education (the "Board") to support the Coventry Parks & Recreation after-school program known as Recreation Daze ("Rec. Daze"). I am writing as both a member of the Coventry Parks & Recreation Commission as well as a parent of two students who attended the Rec. Daze program for a number of years.

Rec. Daze is a well-run, safe, convenient and affordable after school program. When my daughters were enrolled in the program, I was consistently satisfied with the quality of care that was provided. The caregivers were well trained and enthusiastic. The caregivers (many of whom we also knew as day camp counselors) kept the kids busy having fun, but also required that the kids do their homework.

The program provided the children the opportunity to play outside when the weather was appropriate, and when they were inside, there were crafts and games to play. Rec. Daze gave the kids the opportunity for the children to hang out with their friends, while at the same time gave parents, like me, a safe and convenient place for my children after school.

In addition to supporting Rec. Daze, I would respectfully request that the Board allow the program to remain at its original location. The building and location are ideally suitable for an after-school program. In addition, the location made pick-up safe and easy for the parents. That is an issue that is, of course, certainly important for busy families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Antonia Conti  
22 Farmstead Lane  
Coventry, CT 06238  
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860-655-4836