Chairman Mark Holden called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:
Mark Holden, Chairman
Thomas Minotti, Vice Chairman
Arlene Liscinsky, Secretary (via Skype)
David Gioiello
Faith Hack

Kate Kutash
Win Oppel (via Skype)
Darlisa Ritter
Kathleen Yolish

Full Quorum

Board of Education Administration present:
Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Christopher Clouet
Assistant Superintendent, Lorraine Rossner
Human Resources Director, Carole Pannozzo
Finance Director, Dominic Barone

(1 tape on file in City/Town Clerk’s office)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda
Thomas Minotti moved to add two items to the agenda: SHS FIRST Robotics Team request to fundraise and a donation from The Weller Foundation to SHS Media Center; motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

Arlene Liscinsky moved to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Kathy Yolish and passed unanimously.

Public Hearing
Ron Pavluvcik, 287 Eagles Landing, discussed his concern that many SHS students are not being challenged with enough homework. He spoke about teacher absences (on average 8.5 days per year) resulting in costs for substitutes and lack of continuity for students. He referenced Jim Geissler’s letter to the editor in the Shelton Herald on October 29 complaining about excessive student absences at SHS and then asked Superintendent Clouet to look into it. Dr. Clouet responded briefly to Mr. Pavluvcik’s concerns stating he will follow up and work with Dr. Smith and her leadership team. He agreed that well-designed homework that is meaningful is important and is part of challenging students and said he is very confident that in almost all cases our students are provided a rigorous curriculum and are very successful getting into colleges. Dr. Clouet challenged the rate of teacher absenteeism presented and said a report produced this week on the status of teacher absences this year shows they are
down significantly, which indicates a level of commitment on the part of our teachers. Regarding truancy, he said we share a concern in that area and are addressing it.

Judson Crawford, 8 Jordan Avenue, discussed the issue of funds in the reserve account being removed by the City and expressed concern for funding the insurance if something happens.

Deb Keller, 311 Pheasant Glen, President of Teachers Union, responded to Mr. Pavluvcik’s comments about teacher absences stating that teachers are very strong rule followers and are cognizant of that fact that they want to meet or exceed expectations of the new Teacher Evaluation system, which includes absenteeism. She welcomed Dr. Clouet to Shelton. As Curriculum Leader for Performing Arts, Deb Keller thanked the board and Superintendent for making a conscientious effort to attend concerts and art shows, which is appreciated by staff and students.

Approval of Minutes
Win Oppel moved to approve the minutes of Special Meeting 12-9-15; Special Meeting 12-16-15; Regular Meeting 12-16-15; Special Meeting 1-6-16; Special Meeting 1-12-16. Motion was seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

Presentations/Recognitions
There were no presentations/recognitions.

Communications to the Board
There were no communications this month.

Superintendent’s Commentary – Dr. Clouet stated the Strategic Planning process is beginning with a meeting of the Steering Committee and then reaching out to Focus Committees. A number of public events will be held throughout this year and next to gather input relative to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; Humanities (including Performing Arts); Innovation; Career Pathways; and Community Connections to help us develop a plan moving forward for the next several years. He attended the SHS Fire Code Building Committee meeting this morning and said there is sense of momentum and confidence that this project will move forward. Dr. Clouet said he has been attending faculty meetings and is enjoying the opportunity to interact with faculties and talk about the future of education as he sees it and his desire to work with all faculty members. He said the administrators group and he have been working together to form a book group and starting today will be reading a book of a professional nature related to our work. He was very impressed with the performance of Adaptations, which was fun, showed a lot of energy on the part of the students and great community support with two sold-out nights. Dr. Clouet reported he has met with PTO and will meet again soon to look at the possibility of working on a district-wide PTO Council, which is exciting and has energized a number of parents. He expressed appreciation to all for a warm welcome.
**Approved Field Trips**
The board was apprised of an approved field trip to Washington, DC, February 25-28, for Junior Statesmen of America.

**Items Presented for a Vote**
Kate Kutash moved to accept on behalf of Long Hill School donations from Dennis Arriola and Janet Winnick ($500) and the Dennis Arriola and Janet Winnick Family Trust ($500) for the needs of Long Hill School, at the discretion of the Principal; motion seconded by Thomas Minotti and passed unanimously.

Thomas Minotti moved to approve the request of the SHS Girls Basketball Club to conduct fundraising activities for the 2015-2016 school year; motion seconded by Kate Kutash and passed unanimously.

**Comments by the Board Chair**
Chairman Holden stated Dr. Clouet has hit the ground running! Having had a longer than normal transition period was a real help, and he used that time to get out into the community to talk with various stakeholders and people in corporations seeking their involvement in support of our system. Mr. Holden said he has received a lot of positive feedback about Dr. Clouet. Chairman Holden talked about the YouTube videos of our Board Meetings, noting that six have been posted thus far, and the average video has had 110 viewers. He said we continue to prepare next year’s budget proposal and are working collaboratively to create a budget that offers the best education while trying to keep the cost reasonable for taxpayers. Mark Holden discussed the Reserve Account issue and said he is hopeful to be able to have discussions with the City to resolve the matter amicably. If we can’t get to a good place, we will end up adjusting our budget next year to go back to full insurance.

**Reports of Standing Committees**

**Teaching and Learning** – Thomas Minotti said the committee did not meet due to lack of agenda items but is scheduled to meet on February 9 at 4:00 p.m.

**Finance** – Win Oppel said the committee met last week to review the current budget and brings two motions to the board:

Win Oppel moved to approve the proposed set of transfers from electricity, heating fuel, school bus fuel to teacher salaries and a transfer from heating fuel to gas, as recommended by Finance Committee; motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

Win Oppel moved to accept the donations described (9 used ANSAC workstations and 1 new Promethean touch screen), as recommended by the Finance Committee; motion seconded by Faith Hack and passed unanimously.
Policy – Kate Kutash said the committee met on January 12 to discuss the upcoming policy revisions and organized for the Ad Hoc Committee to meet. It was decided to take things in phases. Today, the committee dealt with Phase 1, which included 15 missing policies that are mandated and those which CABE’s review recommended to be completed as soon as possible. Phase 2 will be to look at policy revision recommendations by family, and, finally, any legislative updates based on last year and this year. The next Policy Committee meeting will be February 9 at 5:00 p.m., followed by the Ad Hoc Policy Committee to begin looking at Series 1000.

Ad Hoc Policy Committee - Arlene Liscinsky said she met with Lorraine Rossner last week to discuss the 15 mandated policies, a lot of which is housekeeping edits, and have a recommendation to move forward.

Reports of Special Committees
CES – Arlene Liscinsky said her report is included in packets.

CABE – Faith Hack discussed the CABE Area 6 Legislative Breakfast on February 1. A Day on the Hill will be March 2 at 8:30 a.m. at the Bushnell in Hartford. If interested, registration is online. She also mentioned Lighthouse training and publications for new board members, which can be ordered online.

Chairman Holden stated he is reappointing Win Oppel to serve as SAC liaison for SAC and appointing Kathy Yolish as SEA liaison.

New Business
Kate Kutash moved to accept conditionally the request from SHS FIRST Robotics Team to conduct fundraising activities for the 2015-2016 school year. Discussion concerned $15,000 funds from parents/students and John Niski will be asked to explain. Motion was seconded by Kathy Yolish and passed unanimously.

Faith Hack moved to accept on behalf of Shelton High School Media Center a donation of $1,250 from The Weller Foundation for the purpose of purchasing educational books; motion seconded by Arlene Liscinsky and passed unanimously.

For Your Information
Chairman Holden referenced the attachments in the packet including Vacancy Report, Staff and Stipend Actions, and Enrollment Report.

Highlights
Kathy Yolish commended the students, staff and parents for Adaptations. She congratulated Dr. Clouet on his first newsletter, Grand Shelton Station. Mrs. Yolish said the custodians did a wonderful job cleaning after the snow storm. She enjoyed the SIS Science Fair and Long Hill School’s Golden Ticket, One Book, One School, Whole Community.
Faith Hack commented on the Winter Art Festival at SIS. She was unexpectedly invited to meet with the Superintendent and enjoyed a good brainstorming session. She said the PHS Panther Pride newsletter is outstanding.

Thomas Minotti attended the SIS concert, which was outstanding and very well attended by the public.

Kate Kutash also attended the SIS concert and was able to see the science projects in the lobby. She also attended Adaptations.

David Gioiello said the Science Fair was very impressive, and he enjoyed discussion with students about their projects.

Darlisa Ritter has enjoyed all the events and thanked the administrators for attending the board meetings.

Dr. Clouet had a great experience being escorted by Principal Lorraine Williams at PHS during the club sessions and was interviewed by one of the young journalists.

Mark Holden was not able to attend the SIS concert due to his attending the Board of Aldermen meeting. A suggestion had been made at a public meeting during the election to have a liaison with the BOA and encourage them to attend our meetings to try to improve relations, so he is trying to do his part by attending their meetings. Mr. Holden said he attended the kick-off for Robotics and said their game this is year is amazingly challenging. He said it is a fantastic group of kids and mentors. He attended the information night to promote a PTO Council. He said he had the pleasure of being one of the judges at the Invention Convention at SIS as well as the Science Fair and described one of the projects he enjoyed.

Adjournment
Chairman Holden adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Diane Luther
Diane Luther
Secretary to Board of Education
February 3, 2016