

Southington Education Foundation
Board Meeting Minutes
FEBRUARY 10, 2026
6:30 PM on Zoom

In Attendance:

12 Directors: Katie Wade, Lisa Cammuso, Ellen Bellinger, Trish Kenefick, Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, Nancy Rogers, Paula Knight, Dianne Quinn, Jerry Belanger, Nancy Garry, Patricia Gagliardi and Jessica Springer-Cap

2 Volunteers: Judi Spreda and Amy Horton

Administrator: Frank Pepe

Welcome/Call to Order:

Lisa called the meeting to order at 6:32.

Approval of the Minutes: Nancy R

Trish moved acceptance of the January 13, 2026 minutes as distributed. Ellen seconded the motion and they were approved with Jerry and Nancy G abstaining.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle

Michelle reviewed budget details and transactions during January. The current balance is \$98,368.57. She noted that donations to SEF of \$10,409.08 to date have exceeded expectations in the budget.

Jerry moved acceptance of the report and Paula seconded the motion. It was approved without objection.

Lisa and Paula will follow up with contacting a CPA for help with filing taxes.

Superintendent's Report: Frank

The barn project at Depaolo Middle School will break ground when the weather permits.

The Board of Education passed the 2026-2027 proposed budget with a 6.71% increase.

Evaluators are checking in at the midway point in the school year regarding students' academic growth and teachers' performance.

Frank also noted that tomorrow is designated as "Red, White and Blue Day" in honor of Austin Florian, a former Southington High School student who will compete this week in the Milano Cortina Olympics as a skeleton racer.

Committee Work:

Scholarship: Ann

Lisa reported on Ann's behalf that she is all set with readers for scholarship applications. The deadline for submitting applications will be the first week of March and Ann will distribute them by email to her volunteer readers.

Grants: Jan

Ellen reported on Jan's behalf regarding the Grants Committee's recommendations.

Ellen moved that the SEF Board allocate \$2747 to fund the "Play for All: An Inclusive Playground" grant that would provide toys and playground equipment for 104 special needs students in Pre K-5. Nancy R seconded the motion.

A discussion followed as to the acknowledged need to improve the outdoor and indoor play experience for these students. Paula proposed that a team be formed to conduct a needs assessment, and that the findings be brought to the community in order to raise funds. Members discussed the possibility of this initiative becoming a broader program. The motion passed without objection.

Ellen moved that the SEF Board allocate \$2434.61 to fund the "Expanding Possibilities: Enrichment Through Assistive Technology" grant that proposes to remove physical barriers for 12-15 special needs students so that they can participate more fully in creative experiences. Jerry seconded the motion.

Concern was expressed that the grant only impacted a small number of students. It was noted that the equipment could be used year after year. The motion passed without objection.

Ellen moved that the SEF Board allocate \$1659.96 to fund the "Roots of Innovation" grant that would provide equipment for a hydroponics/aeroponics program for 72 seventh-grade students. Paula seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection.

Lisa reported that there was a request from the recipient of the STELLAR Store grant that they be able to use \$281.19 of the remaining \$284 for shelving, which wasn't noted in the initial grant application budget. Lisa moved that SEF board authorize the use of those remaining funds for that purpose. Paula seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection.

Board Development: Jan

Lisa reported that Jan met with prospective new members at her home. She has circulated an updated members and volunteers list.

Events: Nancy G and Paula

Trish reported that the new date for the Community Basketball Game, which was postponed because of a snowstorm, is March 15th. Five teams have still signed on: Police, Fire Fighters; Y; teachers and Camp Korp. Katie will send out an updated flyer for members to share with friends and family.

Nancy R reported that notes will be sent to previous sponsors of the Cider Tasting event to inform them as to how SEF has used funds raised this year and advise them of the upcoming event.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Jerry moved that the meeting adjourned at 7:57. Trish seconded the motion and it passed without objection.

Meetings and Events Scheduled:

Events Committee: February 23 at 6:30 on Zoom

SEF Board Meeting: March 10 at 6:30 on Zoom

Community Basketball Game: March 15 from 1:30-4 at the SHS Gym

Cider Tasting: June 3 at Long View Ciderhouse

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Rogers, Recording Secretary