

**NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

**MINUTES – August 17, 2023**

**PRESENT:** Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

**ABSENT:** Greg Flanagan and Stephanie Strazza

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, High School Principal James D’Amico

Video Production Coordinator Quintin Flower explained the procedures for the virtual meeting and noted that this virtual meeting is available to everyone, including members of the public.

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. June 22, 2023 - Special meeting - approved by consensus
- B. August 3, 2023 - Special meeting - approved by consensus

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - approved by consensus

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone reported on the following:
  - Spoke of his hopes for a wonderful school year, especially with the new high school building.
- B. Superintendent’s Report - Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw
  - Introduced Maria Kennedy as the new PPS Director for the district and gave a brief description of her background. Ms. Kennedy thanked everyone for this opportunity and noted that she is looking forward to joining the district.
  - Noted that the district is very close to being fully staffed for the year. Nine certified staff have been hired for this school year. Paraprofessionals are still needed. Anyone interested should contact the HR office.
  - Welcome Back letters will be sent out next week. The first day of school will be Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. Students in K - 8th Grade will have a full day. High School students will have a delayed opening in order to give teachers and staff time to acclimate to the new building.
  - Convocation will be held in the new high school.
  - A Ribbon Cutting ceremony will be held at the high school on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. for the entire community.
  - A retreat for the Leadership Team was held over the summer. They focused on improving attendance and making sure that all students feel comfortable and are not distracted in the classroom.

### C. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on August 17<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following:

- Monthly summary of budget vs. actual expenditures for the fiscal year 2022-2023. It was noted that this report does not represent final numbers.
- An Excess Cost Adjustment of \$85,000 will be received.
- Three mid-year grants totaling approximately \$30,000 for Special Education have been received.
- It was suggested that Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy give a summary and update at an upcoming BOE meeting.
- There was a Google Doc reconciliation with no deficiencies.
- The Food Service contract was renewed for the next year. Free breakfast will be provided to all students and free lunches will be provided to those who qualify.
- The air conditioning components were installed at MHHS.
- The flooring in the Middle School was completed.
- A check list walk through was done at Consolidated School.
- The high school is expected to open on time and under budget.
- There was a discussion of possibly reviewing the policy for field fees for the new auditorium and gym.

2. Field Fees - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on August 16<sup>th</sup> for the first time since March 2022. They reviewed the committee responsibilities and roles. Ed Sbordone was elected as the new chairman as this committee. They discussed the turf and track and field replacement funds and field fees for various facilities.

### D. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone gave an update on the Board of Finance since the last BOE meeting in June.

- The June 24<sup>th</sup> budget referendum failed.
- On June 26<sup>th</sup> the BOS set the Mil Rate at 34.90 for Real Estate and 32.46 for Motor Vehicles.
- The BOF met on June 28<sup>th</sup> and increased the BOE Capital by \$7,100 and the BOE Operating by \$195,900.
- The third budget referendum on July 22<sup>nd</sup> passed.
- The BOF met on July 24<sup>th</sup> and set the Mil Rate at 34.90 for Real Estate and 32.46 for Motor Vehicles.

## VII. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### A. New Fairfield High School Building Project Update

High School Principal James D'Amico gave a slideshow with pictures and a description of the new high school. He thanked Director of Technology Paul Gouveia and his team for all their hard work with making sure that the technology is working in the building.

### B. Enrollment Update

Dr. Craw spoke of anticipated enrollment and noted that it was comparable to last year.

### C. Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Craw spoke of the process for strategic planning and noted that it focuses on setting priorities, building capacity and harnessing resources. He spoke of the process which includes data collection and goal setting. He spoke of the timeline for this. It is expected that the strategic plan will be implemented on July 1, 2024.

## **VIII. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

### **A. Budget Update 2023-2024**

Dr. Craw spoke of budget adjustments that have been made since the budget was adopted on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. He noted that voter approved budget had a reduction of \$597,000 from the BOE approved budget from February 2023.

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to approve the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget reductions final tier list as presented by the Superintendent of Schools. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN**

**FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

## **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Personnel Report**

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for August 16, 2023, as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

### **B. Board of Education Policy**

#### **1. Policy 5118.111 - Tuition for Students of Staff Members**

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Board of the Education Policy 5118.111 - Tuition for Students of Staff Members as presented. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

## **X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None**

## **XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None**

## **XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Kimberly LaTourette wished everyone a great new school year. She welcomed Maria Kennedy to the district and thanked James D'Amico for the presentation.

Samantha Mannion noted that some returning staff members are starting new positions and wished them well.

Dominic Cipollone encouraged everyone to enjoy the last days of summer.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos