

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 20, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – June 20, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**ABSENT:** Stephanie Strazza

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, High School Interim Principal Michael Clarke, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Middle School Assistant Principal Cheryl Milo, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Meeting House Hill School Assistant Principal Allyson Story, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz, Fifth Grade teachers Matt Schlosser and Stephanie Taylor and BOF Chairman Wes Marsh

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A. June 13, 2019 – Special Meeting - approved by consensus

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

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chairman's Report - Peggy Katkocin spoke of the following:

- Spoke of the success of all the end of year activities and congratulated the graduates from all the schools.
- Noted the passing of former Consolidated School teacher Mr. Paul McManus and offered condolences to his family.

B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:

- Thanked all the volunteers for the Post Grad event especially Kathy Baker and Robin Kamps.
- Congratulated the graduates from all the schools.
- The tennis courts renovation at the high school is complete. Thanked Phil Ross and staff for getting this done.

- There is a CAFE Leadership on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Board members were encouraged to attend.
  - Spoke the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade. She encouraged Board members to set up a table with information about the building projects and to answer questions from taxpayers.
  - The grant application for State reimbursement for the building projects will be submitted by the end of the week.
  - She spoke of the marketing aspect of the building project and meeting with organizations in town to explain the projects.
- C. Student Representatives' Report - None
- D. Committee Reports
1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on June 20<sup>th</sup> and discussed the budget vs. actual numbers to date and everything is on track. He encouraged Board members to review the budget schedule on the CAFE website. He noted that fuel, diesel, propane and gas prices have been locked in for the next fiscal year with a savings from the budgeted amount. The subcommittee also discussed the building projects.
- E. Liaison Reports
1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Cosentino gave an overview of the status of the proposed building projects. There was an update on the School Security and Safety Committee. The BOF voted to recommend to a Town Meeting an additional appropriation of \$220,000 for the School Security and Safety project. This Town Meeting will be held on June 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 p.m. in the Community Room.
  2. Magnet School - Rick Regan noted that he and Dr. Cosentino attended the AIS (Magnet School) Advisory Council meeting. He noted that enrollment for next year has increased over the last couple of month. He noted that Next Generation Accountability Report named AIS a School of Distinction for 2017-2018.
  3. Parks and Recreation- Kimberly LaTourette noted that the Parks and Rec Commission will meet on June 24<sup>th</sup>. They will have an Illuminated Boat Parade on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Registration is free. The outdoor movie series will be held on Memorial Field this summer. The next one will be held on Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of August 2<sup>nd</sup>. There will also be free concerts on Memorial Field this summer.
  4. School Safety and Security Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that the committee discussed the \$220,000 additional appropriation for the school security project.

## **VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. Introduction of Special Education Supervisor - Dr. Cosentino introduced Melissa Busnel as the new Special Education Supervisor and gave a brief description of her background. Ms. Busnel thanked the district for this opportunity.

B. Fifth Grade Field Trip to Boston - Fifth Grade teachers Matt Schlosser and Stephanie Taylor spoke of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade overnight trip to Boston and showed some pictures. They thanked the BOE for their support for this trip and noted that they hope to do it again next year.

C. State of the Schools 2018-2019 - Dr. Cosentino asked the administrators from each school to give an overview of the school year from their respective schools.

- Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino and Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner spoke of celebrations and successes for the year as well as areas of focus.
- Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia and Assistant Principal Allyson Story spoke of celebrations and successes for the year as well as areas of focus.
- Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli and Assistant Principal Cheryl Milo spoke of celebrations and successes for the year as well as areas of focus.
- Interim High School Principal Michael Clarke spoke of successes for the school year specifically the NEASC visit. He thanked Dr. Sanzo for all his hard work with the NEASC visit and thanked the entire district for the opportunity to be the interim principal.

D. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update  
Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo gave an update on the proposed building projects. He spoke of cost estimates and specifically hard costs, soft costs and furniture and equipment. He noted that the reimbursement rate from the State for the Consolidated project has increased from 27.86% to 37.86% resulting in a significant savings to the project. He showed conceptual drawings for the Consolidated Early Learning Center and spoke of the advantages of building it on the same campus as MHHS. Specific advantages include being able to share special areas and parking areas.

Dr. Sanzo spoke of the proposed high school project and noted that the State reimbursement rate would be 27.86%. He noted that much of the science wing and the new culinary arts space can be repurposed in the new space. He spoke of cost savings in fuel and air conditioning with a smaller building.

Dr. Sanzo spoke of the cost impact to the taxpayers and gave different scenarios based on home values. He thanked the administration for all their help with the project to date and also BOF Chairman Wes Marsh and Finance Director Ed Sbordone for their work with bond counsel.

Residents are encouraged to go on tours of the buildings scheduled for July 24<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. and August 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. If anyone is unable to make those dates, they can arrange for a private tour with either Phil Ross or Dr. Sanzo. There will be a Public Hearing with the BOE, BOS and BOF on Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the High School auditorium to answer any questions from members of the public.

## VIII. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for June 13, 2019, as recommended by the administration. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

### B. Acceptance of Donation

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the in-kind donation of \$1,950 in store credit to Dillon Music from Elissa Weissbrod, in memory of Carol and Walter Wantman. Rick Regan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

### C. Non-Union Benefits for the Director of Buildings and Grounds - Executive Session

### D. Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract - Executive Session

## IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Jennifer Brakenwagen spoke of the proposed building projects and noted that it was unlikely that the high school could lose accreditation. She also discussed the size of the proposed school and her concerns that it might be too big for projected enrollment. Dr. Sanzo clarified the cost savings for a smaller school.

## X. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - Members of the Board discussed the following:

Kathy Baker

- Thanked everyone for everything that was done this year and looking forward to the new administration and the proposed building project.

Greg Flanagan:

- Thanked everyone for a great year and especially High School Interim Principal Michael Clarke.

Dominic Cipollone

- Thanked the administration in all the schools and spoke of the all the positive things that have happened this year. He spoke of a *Wall Street Journal* article about cell phones and cautioned parents and teachers about the over use of cell phones for young students especially Middle School students.

Rick Regan:

- Noted that he has heard many positive things from parents and students at a recent high school graduation party.

Kim LaTourette:

- Welcomed Melissa Busnel as the new Special Education Supervisor.
- Thanked Mr. Schlosser and Ms. Taylor for sharing information about the 5<sup>th</sup> grade trip.
- Also spoke of concerns of Middle School students using cell phones.

- Thanked Dr. Jason McKinnon for all his hard work in the district and wished him well.
- Wished everyone a wonderful summer.

Ed Sbordone:

- Encouraged residents to go on a tour of the schools.

Samantha Mannion:

- Thanked everyone for an awesome year and especially everyone involved in high school graduation.
- Spoke of the proposed building projects and suggested that everyone should be sensitive to the tax increase when marketing the building projects.

Peggy Katkocin:

- Thanked the administrators, teachers and Superintendent for a wonderful year.
- Thanked fellow BOE members for all they have done throughout the year.

## **XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE NON-UNION BENEFITS OF THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

## **XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE EVALUATION AND CONTRACT OF THE SUPERINTENDNET OF SCHOOLS**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. to discuss the non-union benefits of the Director of Buildings and Grounds and the evaluation and contract of the Superintendent of Schools and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino into the Executive Session. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone.

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:07 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to accept the non-union benefits of the Director of Buildings and Grounds as discussed in Executive Session. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to authorize BOE Secretary Kimberly LaTourette to sign the Superintendent's contract as amended and to give the signed copy to the Superintendent of Schools. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion that the BOE accept the evaluation of the Superintendent of School. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos