

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – January 7, 2020**

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

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, High School Principal James D’Amico, High School Assistant Principal Scott Rohwedder, 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, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh, BOF member Anthony Yorio, BOF member Tom Garben, First Selectman Pat Del Monaco and Selectman Khris Hall,

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. WORKSHOP**

**A. Review of the 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget**

The purpose of this special workshop was to give administrators, teachers, Board of Education members, Board of Finance members and the Board of Selectmen an opportunity to ask questions about the Superintendent’s proposed budget and to give their opinions and suggestions about different aspects of the budget.

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich Sanzo noted that this meeting was an opportunity to ask questions regarding the budget. There will also be a BOE meeting on Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> and possibly on Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Facebook Live event regarding the budget on Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. It is hopeful that the budget will be adopted by the BOE in early February.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cosentino spoke of the proposed 2020-2021 Board of Education budget and the district’s plan to market the school system and the Town of New Fairfield. She spoke of the mission of continuous improvement. She spoke of the two new school building projects and the importance of STEAM in the curriculum.

Other topics of conversation included:

- Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of curriculum implementation, gifted students and professional development.
- Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes spoke of technology and infrastructure and the budget impact of technology. She noted that the district has now moved to PowerSchool for record keeping.
- Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz noted that currently 18 special education students are out placed to other districts. There was a discussion of what is best for the students and the possibility of keeping students in district. There was a suggestion of a regional center for special education. Ms. Matz noted that one family moving in or out of district can significantly affect the special education budget. She spoke of possible additional services for 18-21 year olds and the possibility of having two advisors for a community based project for special education students.
- Dr. Sanzo spoke of the Capital Improvement plan. He noted that Colliers International has been hired to be the Owner's Project Manager for the two school building projects and will also help with a multi-year capital improvement plan throughout the district, specifically the Middle School. The requested amount for the Cap & Non account for this budget is \$400,000. There was a brief discussion of an emergency repair account.
- There was a discussion of hiring a Director of School Security. BOF member Anthony Yorio explained the role for this director. There was a discussion of whether or not this can be a part-time position or possibly a consultant. Dr. Cosentino introduced Sandy Hook School Principal Dr. Kathy Gombos who spoke of security in Newtown and specifically, the role of the Director of School Security.
- Dr. Cosentino discussed the role of the various administrators. She noted that two administrators were cut from last year's proposed budget and no administrators were added this year. She noted that the district may be looking for an additional secretary to work with Julie Luby and to assist in marketing.
- Members of the BOE and BOF asked questions of the administrators, specifically about the increase in legal counsel contracts, advertising, grants, and attrition.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT-** Amanda Lombard asked about the specifics of the marketing plan and the expected return on investment. Dr. Cosentino noted that the vision is to make the Town of New Fairfield and specifically the schools more attractive to young families and to encourage families to move to town. She noted that both new schools will be built to allow for additional students if enrollment increases.

**V. ADJOURNMENT-** Greg Flanagan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos