

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, January 2, 2020,
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 2, 2020

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

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, 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, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino and Middle School Physical Education teachers Sasha Christie, Anthony Muratore and Alexandra Swift

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. December 12, 2019 - Special Meeting - The minutes were approved by consensus.
- B. December 19, 2019 - Regular Meeting - The minutes were approved by consensus.
- C. December 19, 2019 - Special Meeting - The minutes were approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to amend the agenda to add Action Item D. “Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Approval of Unpaid Leave of Absence Request.” Kim LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Chairman’s Report - Peggy Katkocin noted that New Fairfield residents recently received a letter in the mail regarding their new property assessment. She clarified that this is a routine assessment that is done every five years and is separate from the school project.

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

- Wished everyone a very Happy New Year!
- She will be meeting with administrators in the near future to discuss instructional programs.
- There are a lot of winter sports happening at the school and encouraged everyone to come and watch.

C. Student Representatives' Report

Senior Representative Sophia Liguori noted that:

- Applications for the Student Senate will be sent out tomorrow with a deadline of January 17th.
- Seniors will participate in the Alumni Panel on January 3rd.
- The Freshman JV and Varsity Girls' Basketball teams have home games on Friday, January 3rd. The Boys' Basketball team will play on Saturday, January 4th.
- The Program of Studies night for 8th graders and their parents will be held on January 9th.
- Penny Wars will be held from Monday, January 6th through Friday, January 10th as part of the Rebel Challenge.
- The Symphonic Band High School Winter Concert will be held on January 15th.

D. Liaison Report

1. Permanent Building Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that the PBC met on December 23rd and unanimously voted to hire Colliers Project Leaders as the Owner's Project Manager for both the high school and Consolidated School projects. The next meeting of the PBC will be Tuesday, January 14th at the high school training room.
2. School Security and Safety Committee - This committee will meet on Jan 8th.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Projects Update - The update was given by Ed Sbordone under Liaison reports.

B. Physical Education Program Update - Middle School Physical Education teachers Sasha Christie, Anthony Muratore and Alexandra Swift gave a presentation of the Sport Ed model that was recently implemented for Middle School Physical Education. This is a team based learning experience where classes simulate an athletic season. This model combines all Middle School grades and allows for more choice and responsibility for the students. The teams rotate responsibilities and allow them to learn record keeping, sportsmanship and rules of the games. The teachers explained the roles for all the students. They showed a brief video of the students participating. Anyone interested in more information can follow the Twitter account @NFMSPE.

Members of the Board asked questions about the Sport Ed program. There were some concerns expressed regarding the safety of the students due to limited space.

C. Updated New Fairfield High School Restroom Procedures - High School Principal James D'Amico spoke of the possibility of updating the high school handbook regarding the rules and regulations for restroom use to ensure that the restrooms are safe, clean and available for their proper use. He noted that there have been some issues with vandalism, vaping and eating in the restrooms and assured everyone that this is not isolated to just New Fairfield High School. Suggested rules included requiring students to sign out to use the bathrooms, allowing no more than five students at a time in the restrooms and the possibility of installing vaping sensors in all of the bathrooms.

There was a discussion among the Board members regarding the best ways to stop vaping and how to punish students who are caught. It was noted that the high school staff is working with the New Fairfield Prevention Council to give more information to students and parents regarding the dangers of vaping. It was noted that vaping may start in the middle school and it was suggested that the parents of middle school students be included in any programs. It was decided that Principal D'Amico will come back to the BOE with an estimate of how much sensors would cost for the high school bathrooms. It was also suggested that students who are caught vaping be required to attend a class about the dangers along with their parents.

D. 2020-2021 Budget - Dr. Cosentino noted that there will be a workshop between the BOE and the BOF to discuss the proposed 2020-2021 budget on Tuesday, January 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for December 19, 2019, as recommended by the administration. Rick Regan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

B. New Textbook Adoption

1. *Physics of the Universe*

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the adoption of the high school textbook - *Physics of the Universe*. Rick Regan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

C. Acceptance of Donation

1. New Fairfield Community Thrift Shop

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the donation of \$1,266.40 from the New Fairfield Community Thrift Shop to pay for round-trip transportation to and from the airport for high school students participating in international travel. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker,

Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza **OPPOSED:** Rick Regan

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli encouraged parents to make sure that their students are dressed appropriately for the cold weather. She noted that this could be especially problematic in the event of a fire drill or evacuation.

Katelyn Fox spoke in response to the vaping issue at the high school and gave some suggestions.

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

- Stephanie Strazza wished everyone a Happy New Year!
- Greg Flanagan thanked the Middle School PE teachers for their presentation. He thanked the Thrift Shop for their donation and commended Mr. D'Amico for his concerns about vaping at the high school.
- Dominic Cipollone noted that the New Fairfield Middle School PTO will be hosting a Comedy Night at the 440 Line on Friday, January 10. Tickets are \$30 per person with a cash bar. He thanked all the PTOs for doing an amazing job.
- Samantha Mannion wished everyone a Happy New Year! She followed up on the discussion about vaping and noted that Middle School parents should be given information about the problems and dangers.
- Ed Sbordone wished everyone a Happy New Year!
- Kimberly LaTourette thanked the Middle School PE teachers for their presentation and expressed concerns of the crowding and suggested the possibility of rotating Health class and PE classes to avoid overcrowding. She spoke in support of the New Fairfield Prevention Council.
- Rick Regan asked about the Superintendent's goals and it was noted that she will present the mid-year update at the January 21st BOE meeting.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING A LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:23 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a leave of absence request and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino into the Executive Session. 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

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:24 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

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the extension of the unpaid leave of absence request for Jennifer Roche per

Section 7.6 of the secretaries' contract with a return to work on January 21, 2020, as recommended by the administration. Rick Regan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Greg Flanagan 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