

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a meeting on Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
Virtual meeting via Zoom

MINUTES – June 4, 2020

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, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, High School Principal James D’Amico, 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, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca, Outgoing Athletic Director Mary Stolle, Incoming Athletic Director Mark Ottusch

Network Administrator Paul Gouveia explained the procedure for the virtual meeting and noted that this virtual meeting is available to everyone including members of the public.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. May 21, 2020 Regular meeting - approved by consensus.
- B. May 28, 2020 Special meeting - approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to amend the agenda for tonight’s meeting to add Information Item F “Halo Awards.” Samantha Mannion seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

V. SPECIAL PRESENTATION ~ CABE COMMUNICATIONS AWARD -

CABE Representative Michelle Embree Ku presented the district with the CABE Bonnie B. Carney Award for Excellence in Communications for the 2019-2020 Calendar and Guide.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kathy Baker spoke on behalf of the Post Grad Committee to thank the BOE, administrators, teachers and the community for their overwhelming support in honoring the Class of 2020.

Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli invited the Board of Education members to the virtual 8th grade promotional ceremony on both Tuesday, June 9th and Wednesday, June 10th at 6:30 p.m. streaming live on Facebook.

High School Principal James D'Amico thanked the Post Grade Committee for all their work celebrating the Class of 2020. He noted that the final plans for graduation at Squantz Pond for June 12th will be sent to parents soon. He further congratulated Senior Representative Sophia Liguori on her graduation.

Senior Representative Sophia Liguori asked about the possibility of having an in-person graduation for the Class of 2020 later in the summer. Dr. Cosentino noted that she cannot promise that this will happen but will speak to the administrators about the possibility. High School Principal James D'Amico noted that he and the staff will do whatever they can to bring the class together later in the summer if possible. BOE member Greg Flanagan spoke of the possibility of having a socially distanced ceremony on the football field.

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Thanked the over 80 members of the staff who volunteered to serve on the Steering Committee to help plan for the reopening of school in the fall.
- There will be a special meeting of the BOE on Thursday, June 11th at 7:00 p.m. that will be an Executive Session. Chairman Katkocin will look into the possibility of this being an in-person meeting.

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

- Thanked High School Principal James D'Amico and staff for making graduation a special occasion for the students. She thanked Brendan Regan for putting together the video.
- Encourage everyone to cheer on the graduates at the Senior Parade on Thursday, June 11th at 6:30 p.m. Seniors will decorate their cars.
- Diplomas will be given out at the high school from 4:00-6:30 p.m. on June 12th at the high school, and there will be a drive-in ceremony at Squantz Pond that evening.
- Middle School graduation will be a Facebook live event on Tuesday, June 9th and Wednesday, June 10th.
- MHHS will have their drive thru step-up ceremony on Monday, June 8th from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Consolidated School will have their drive thru step-up for 2nd graders on Wednesday, June 10th.
- Dr. Cosentino noted that the administrative team sent out letters regarding the unrest in the country. A letter from the high school staff was sent to students outlining expectations for social media. She spoke of the importance of making

sure that every student feels safe and welcome at school. Some resources will be sent home for students and parents.

- There will be a Facebook Live webinar for parents and students of Grades 6-12 on Monday, June 8th about the plans for reopening the schools in the fall.
- The administrative team has agreed to furlough two days of salary as a donation to the schools. Dr. Cosentino thanked all her colleagues for doing this.

C. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on June 3rd, discussed the Medical Plan and reduced the Individual Stop loss from \$200,000 to \$150,000. They approved and adopted the BOE budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$43,709,084 and approved a Mill Rate of 30.58. Peggy Katkocin thanked the BOF for all their hard work this year during a very difficult year.
2. School Security and Safety - Samantha Mannion noted that this committee met on June 1st and discussed their role as the School Safety Design Committee working with the architectural firm and discussed the staffing of personnel for the new schools.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Introduction of New Athletic Director

High School Principal James D'Amico introduced Mark Ottusch as the new Athletic Director. He thanked outgoing Athletic Director Mary Stolle for doing such a wonderful job, and welcomed Mr. Ottusch to the district. BOE Chairman Peggy Katkocin welcomed Mr. Ottusch and thanked Mary Stolle and wished her well in her retirement.

Matt Ottusch thanked everyone in the district for the opportunity. Mary Stolle thanked everyone for the well wishes.

B. A Road Map to Reopening Schools Update

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of the plans for reopening the schools in the fall. The Steering Committee and Planning Teams have met. The committees are seeking as much feedback as possible.

C. Extended School Year (ESY)

Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz noted that ESY for this year will be held virtually from July 6th to August 6th. She spoke of public safety guidelines, and it was determined that in-person instruction cannot be held safely this summer. Greg Flanagan asked about the possibility of in-person small groups. This will be looked at further once distance learning is set up. Dominic Cipollone and Samantha Mannion spoke of the importance of in-person learning, specifically for special needs students. Dr. Cosentino noted that there are many challenges with having the students in-person at the schools.

D. Superintendent Goals - End of Year Progress *(To be discussed in Executive Session)*

Dr. Cosentino gave a brief overview of her progress and goals that has been updated as of May 22nd. She especially spoke of the importance of curriculum, instruction and professional development. She thanked the staff for all their hard work with distance learning. She spoke

of communications and marketing and good relationships with other boards and administrators. She noted that everything accomplished this year was a combination of everyone's hard work.

E. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update

Dr. Sanzo gave a brief update on the building projects. They are continuing to work with the design team, owner's representative and construction manager to develop the cost estimates for the first phase of the for the Consolidated School project. The PBC is working with administrative teams for both the Consolidated project and the High School project. They are looking at various scenarios for site design and especially spoke of traffic patterns.

F. Halo Awards - Dr. Cosentino showed a brief clip of the high school students participating *Pajama Game* that would have been the Spring Musical for this year. She announced the names of student winners of the Halo awards for the Fall Play *It's a Wonderful Life*.

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 May 28, 2020, as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

B. MOA with New Fairfield Administrator's Association

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the memorandum of agreement regarding furlough days with the New Fairfield Administrators' Association. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Chairman Peggy Katkocin thanked all the administrators for their generosity with the furlough days.

C. Budget Adjustments 2020-2021

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2020-21 FY budget adjustments as recommended by the administration. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

There was a discussion of the recommended reductions at this point in time and it was noted that they could change based on recommendations from the Steering Committee. There was a brief discussion of hiring a secretary for the Athletic Director and it was noted that it is not in the budget. Dr. Cosentino spoke of positions that will be posted in the near future. She spoke of the importance of a secretary for the Director of Business and Operations.

D. New Textbook Adoption

1. *The Challenge of Democracy*

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the adoption of the following textbook: *The Challenge of Democracy*. Rick Regan seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

E. Non-Union Salaries and Benefits (*This item will be voted on after Executive Session.*)

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino welcomed Mark Ottusch as the new Athletic Director.

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the BOE welcomed Mark Ottusch as the new Athletic Director. They thanked the post grad committee and congratulated all the seniors on their graduation. They congratulated Senior Student Representative Sophia Liguori on her graduation. They welcomed Mark Ottusch as the new Athletic Director and thanked Mary Stolle and wished her well in her retirement.

Rick Regan thanked the Music Department and encouraged students to join.

Kimberly LaTourette noted that the virtual field day was very successful.

Dominic Cipollone spoke of the importance of in-person instruction for Extended School Year and asked about the possibility of smaller groups meeting in person.

Greg Flanagan thanked everyone involved with putting together the drive-in ceremony for the graduates and spoke of disappointment that there cannot be an in-person socially distanced ceremony.

Samantha Mannion thanked Jen McPartland for her hard work with all the musicals and plays at the high school.

Peggy Katkocin noted that she recorded a video for the graduates on behalf of the BOE and told them that they will persevere and do great things in the future.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING SUPERINTENDENT END-OF-YEAR GOALS

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING NON-UNION CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session 8:35 p.m. to discuss Superintendent end-of-year goals and non-union contract negotiations 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 and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session 8:59 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: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of Option A of the non-union salaries and benefits for the 2020-2021 school year as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

XV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m. Kathy Baker 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