

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.
Virtual meeting via Zoom

MINUTES – May 21, 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. 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, 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 Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel and Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca

I. CALL TO ORDER: Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo explained the procedure for the virtual meeting and noted that this virtual meeting is available to everyone, including members of the public.

Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. May 7, 2020 - approved by consensus with the correction of the acronym for the School Safety and Security grant as SVPP instead of SBPP.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to amend the agenda for tonight’s meeting to table Item V “SPECIAL PRESENTATION - CABE COMMUNICATION AWARD.” 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

V. SPECIAL PRESENTATION - CABE COMMUNICATIONS AWARD - Tabled

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Chairman's Report - Chairman Peggy Katkocin complimented teachers, administrators and staff for all the hard work with distant learning.
- B. Superintendent's Report
Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:
- Thanked everyone for all their hard work with distance learning and noted that it has been a smooth transition with very few disruptions.
 - Congratulated Dr. Rich Sanzo for winning the Connecticut Association of School Board Officials Rising Star award. There will be a ceremony to honor him next year.
 - Spoke briefly of plans for ESY (Extended School Year) for summer school.
 - Spoke of the timeline for her evaluation. She will present end-of-year progress on goals in the near future. There will be an Executive Session on the progress of these goals. The Board will meet on June 11th to complete the evaluation form without the superintendent and will present it to the superintendent the week of June 15th.
 - Principals from the respective schools spoke of their plans for graduation/step-up.
 - High School Principal James D'Amico noted that the ceremony will be held on Friday, June 12th, which will allow students to come to the school in the afternoon to get their diploma and take pictures with their families. Later that evening, there will be a drive-in graduation video at Squantz Pond with students and their families in cars.
 - Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli has asked each 8th grade team to have students send in pictures with poems and quotes, and there will be a slide show with awards given to students and messages from administrators and teachers. This will consist of a virtual ceremony for each team on different days on June 9th and June 10th at 6:30 p.m. Additionally, there will be a virtual talent show for students.
 - Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia noted that they will have a drive-up step-up at 10 a.m. on June 8th. Teachers will be lined up by team. Mr. Mandracchia and Mrs. Story will announce names and will give out gift bags and diplomas. Teachers will give the students their belongings that were left at the school. Parents of 3rd and 4th graders will be able to pick up any personal items left by the students on June 9th.
 - Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner noted that the 2nd Grade step-up ceremony will be a drive-up ceremony similar to MHHS and will be held on June 10th. Parents can pick up students' belongings on May 28th.
- C. Committee Report
1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on May 21st and reviewed the current year budget as of April 30th. They also discussed the summary of expenditures and encumbrances report and there will be a possible surplus of approximately \$385,000. Dr. Sanzo will make a detailed presentation of this at the June 4th meeting. They also discussed end of year budget transfers that will be voted on at this meeting.
 2. Curriculum - Dominic Cipollone noted that this committee met and noted that the after-school virtual enrichment classes have been very successful. Examples

of these classes are cooking, American Sign Language and photography. There will be a second session of these classes. It is hopeful that more high school students will participate. It was noted that these classes are free due to the repurposing of the Derx Grant. There will be virtual messages from the K-5 teachers to the students. There was a brief discussion of Math Curriculum and a textbook that includes distance learning adaptability. There was a suggestion of the creation of a steering committee to create a roadmap “Going from Crisis to Back to Normal” which will focus on the areas of operations, teaching and learning, and social and emotional needs.

D. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF marked up the budget on May 13th and made reductions to both the BOS and BOE budgets. The motion was to have the BOE reduce their budget by \$341,950. The BOF will meet again on May 27th to discuss the budget and will adopt the Mil Rate on June 3rd which will consist of a .99% increase to the entire combined budget for the BOS and BOE.

2. Parks and Rec Committee - Kimberly LaTourette noted that the Parks and Rec Commission met on May 11th and noted that all summer events will be cancelled. The boat parade scheduled for July 10th may be cancelled. It is possible that they will host a Drive-In Movie night at Squantz Pond and are waiting for permission from the State. There was also a discussion of a possible online enrichment program.

3. School Security and Safety - This subcommittee has not met.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Major Minor Presentation - Allyson Story introduced 4th and 5th grade students who sang a song via a virtual presentation. Everyone thanked the students and MHHS Music teacher Kelly Burger for the wonderful presentation.

B. Planning for Future - Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of plans for the 2020-2021 road map. She spoke of a blended learning model which includes operational systems, teaching and learning, and social and emotional learning. The district is developing a steering committee that will be made up of administrators, a BOE member, parents, teachers and the head school nurse that will meet to review the school reopening plans and to communicate the plan to the community. Surveys to staff and parents will be sent in order to get feedback.

C. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update - Dr. Sanzo noted that the first phase of the design and cost estimated projection for the Consolidated School project is almost complete. The high school project will be completed in a couple of weeks. There will be a presentation to the public, BOE and PBC in the near future. The PBC will meet virtually on May 26th at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the process. There was a brief discussion of possible changes to the specifications due to COVID-19, and it was noted that there will be discussions regarding the layout of the school to provide maximum flexibility.

D. CARES Funds - Dr. Sanzo noted that the district will receive approximately \$200,000 under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief portion of the CARES Act. The application will ask the district how they intend to use the money which must be used to cover costs that would not have occurred without COVID-19.

E. New Textbook Adoption (Second Reading)

1. *The Challenge of Democracy*

F. NFAA Contract Negotiations (Executive Session)

G. Non-Union Salaries and Benefits (Executive Session)

IX. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to add to the agenda Information/Action items “Authorization of Line Item Transfers.” Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

A. 2020-2021 BUDGET

Peggy Katkocin thanked the BOF for all their hard work with the budget. She noted that members of the BOF thanked the BOE for their transparency and diligence during this process. The next step in the budget process is for the BOS to authorize the BOF to set the Mil Rate.

B. 2019-2020 BUDGET TRANSFERS

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to authorize the Director of Business and Operations to make line items transfers to the 2019-2020 education budget as may be necessary to cover expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic and that a report of such transfers made under this authority be presented to the Board of Education at the conclusion of the fiscal year. 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

X. 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 14, 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, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

B. FY 2019-2020 End of Year Budget Transfers - Discussed under Information/Action Items B.

C. Approval of Grant Application

1. SDE IDEA 611 and 619 Grant

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the application for the State Department of Education IDEA 611 and 619 grant. 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

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the BOE thanked the teachers and administrators for all their hard work and especially Kelly Burger and her students for the wonderful virtual concert. Greg Flanagan spoke of his disappointment with State Legislators for not allowing a socially distant graduation on the football field but thanked the administrators for coming up with wonderful ideas for graduations. Peggy Katkocin thanked all the boards and commissions in Town for keeping the business of the town still running during this pandemic.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING NEW FAIRFIELD ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

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

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session 8:07 p.m. to discuss New Fairfield Administrators' Association contract negotiations 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, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session 8:45 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

XV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Dominic Cipollone 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