

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

MINUTES – October 17, 2024

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, High School Principal James D’Amico, High School Assistant Principal Scott Rohwedder, Director of Building and Grounds Phil Ross, Selectman Tom Perkins, Permanent Building Committee Chairman Don Kellogg and Scott Pellman from Colliers Project Leaders

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. October 1, 2024 - Regular meeting - Approved by consensus.
- B. October 8, 2024 - Special meeting - Approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to add BOF update under the liaison reports. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- Selectman Tom Perkins asked for an update on the water situation at the high school.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone noted that the new cell phone policy will go into effect soon. He spoke of the benefits of reducing cell phone use. He further spoke of the possibility of looking into the criteria and standards for students to take AP classes.
- B. Superintendent’s Report - Dr. Kenneth Craw spoke of the following:
 - Spoke of Curriculum and Instruction updates. He thanked Dr. Woleck and some high school students for participating in focus groups about curriculum.
 - Thanked the K-5 Elementary teachers for starting the new Elementary Literacy Program.
 - The Library Media Center at the Middle School is now open.
 - Parent/Teacher Conferences for Grades K-8 will be held on Nov. 6, 7th and 8th.
 - PSAT’s will be held for Sophomores and Juniors on October 24th.
 - The STRIDES Open House will be held on November 5th.
 - There was a very successful Professional Development Day on October 4th. The next one will be on November 5th.

C. Student Representatives' Reports

Senior Representative Emilia Sedlak spoke of the following:

- Yearbooks are currently for sale.
- The Wellness Center is open for students after school from 2:15 to 3:35 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- The BETA Club is hosting a Drive-By Clothing Drive on October 19th from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the high school parking lot. All clothing collected will be donated to schools in the Dominican Republic.
- Spirit Week will be held the week of Oct. 21st.
- Registration for Winter Sports opened on October 1st.

Junior Representative Ella Skogstrom spoke of the following:

- The National Honor Society has begun tutoring after school.
- PSAT's will be held on October 24th.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences at the high school will be on Thursday, Oct. 24th and Friday, Oct. 25th.
- The Homecoming Dance will be held on Saturday, October 26th.
- The new cell phone policy will go into effect on October 28th.
- The deposit for the Junior Trip to Washington, DC is due on Oct. 31st.
- The last day of the marking period is Friday, November 1st.
- A mock Presidential Election will be held on November 1st.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on Oct. 17th and reviewed budget vs. actual and everything is on track. There is a surplus of approximately \$200,000 for fiscal year 2023-2024. The subcommittee reviewed legislative rules for depositing surplus money into non-lapsing accounts. They discussed the contracted services and negotiations for plowing and mowing services. The STRIDES lease was discussed.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF Capital Subcommittee met on October 7th with the main topic of discussion being the Middle School. This subcommittee will meet again on October 28th. The Medical Subcommittee met on October 16th and discussed medical claims and the possibility of promoting "Wellness Initiatives" for employees. This subcommittee will meet again on November 14th.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Carrie DePuy noted that the propane project has been approved by the PBC and it is hopeful that this project will be complete ASAP.

Phil Ross spoke of water leak that happened late at night on October 16th. He spoke of the process of fixing the water pump. He clarified that there was heat at the high school and noted that the issue was strictly the water pump. He further clarified that the water is tested regularly and there are no issues.

B. Legislative Update

• High School Graduation Requirements

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck spoke of Legislative changes for high school graduation requirements, specifically the State requirement for the class of 2027 that no longer requires the one credit mastery-based diploma assessment (SEE Project). It was noted that Boards of Education may continue to require it for their respective districts. The second change is that the Personal Financial Management and Financial Literacy one-semester class can now be counted towards the students' STEM requirement beginning with the Class of 2027. Dr. Woleck suggested that these topics be reviewed at the Curriculum subcommittee meetings for future consideration.

- School Climate

Dr. Woleck spoke of new School Climate legislation beginning with the 2025-2026 school year that requires districts to develop a new School Climate Policy that includes a School Climate Survey for students, school employees and families and must develop a School Climate Improvement Plan and the BOE must establish a Restorative Practice Response Policy.

- CT General Statute 10-248a Non-Lapsing Account

Carrie DePuy spoke of the new law that states that surplus funds can be deposited into a non-lapsing account as long as it does not exceed 2% of the budgeting appropriation for education of the prior fiscal year.

C. Board of Education Policy (Second Reading)

1. Policy 6172.3 - Educational Instruction under Parental Direction (Home Schooling)

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 October 11, 2024, as recommended by the administration. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

Dr. Craw noted that Stephanie Rufini is leaving New Fairfield to take a job as an Assistant Principal in another district. He wished her well in this position.

B. STRIDES Lease

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the STRIDES Lease as presented. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

C. Acceptance of Donation

1. Fitzpatrick Media Group, LLC

MOTION: Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the Fitzpatrick Media Group, LLC donation of \$1,000 to be put towards the construction of a new storage shed at Rebel Stadium. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

There was a brief discussion of the timeline for this project.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Tom Perkins spoke of concerns with using the same material for the propane that was used before.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairman Dominic Cipollone spoke of the Clothing Drive at the high school to be held this Saturday, October 19th. He noted that the donations will be sent to the Dominican Republic with students from the UConn School of Medicine during their mission trip. He encouraged residents to donate clothing if possible.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos