

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – September 19, 2019**

**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, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, Selectman Khris Hall, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh

**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. September 5, 2019 – Regular Meeting - approved by consensus with the following change regarding the School Start Time: “Rick Regan noted that if the referendum for the building project passes, the School Start Time subcommittee will disband until 2022.”

B. September 16, 2019 - Special Meeting - approved by consensus.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** - approved by consensus

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

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

- Noted that the Grandparents Breakfast at Consolidated School was very nicely done and well attended.
- Thanked everyone who attended the Public Hearing regarding the proposed building projects held on September 16<sup>th</sup>. She encouraged anyone that has any questions to speak to either the Superintendent or BOE members.

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

- Thanked Administrators and staff for wonderful Open Houses in all schools.
- Reminded parents of Consolidated and Middle School students to make sure that their physical reports are turned in.

- Fall sports have begun.
  - Substitutes are needed for all schools. Anyone interested can call the Human Resources Department or look on the district website.
  - Administrative meetings are held twice a month. Julie Luby led that last meeting regarding “high quality instruction.”
  - There will be a school wide emergency drill on Wednesday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>.
- C. Student Representatives’ Report  
Senior Representatives Sophia Liguori noted that:
- The Senior Barbeque will be held on Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> immediately following the school wide emergency drill.
- D. Committee Report
1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this committee met on Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> and discussed a summary of budget vs. actual numbers for the first two months of the fiscal year. They are in line with the budget. They spoke of Special Education and there are no major concerns. The Building/Facility Use Form will be available on line starting in January.
- E. Liaison Report
1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> and unanimously approved the school project resolution. They met again on September 18<sup>th</sup> and discussed the BOE surplus for 2018-2019 which is approximately \$207,000. The BOF policy is to give back up to 50% of the surplus. The BOE voted to ask the BOF for 100% of the surplus back. The BOF tabled the approval of this until more information is received. The BOF also reviewed and revised the Town’s debt policy and will present this to the BOS next week.
  2. Parks and Rec Commission - Kimberly LaTourette noted that the Parks and Rec Commission is in the process of rescheduling their September meeting.
  3. Permanent Building Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that PBC met on September 10<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the draft RFQ (Request for Qualifications) if the referendum for the building project were to pass. This will be finalized at the PBC meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>. If the referendum passes, the RFQ will go out on October 7<sup>th</sup>.
  4. School Security and Safety Committee - Samantha Mannion noted that this committee will meet on Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

## **VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

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

Dr. Cosentino thanked everyone who came to the Public Hearing regarding the building projects on September 16<sup>th</sup>. She noted that there will be a Town Meeting on Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup> to set the date for the referendum. It is expected to be Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. She encouraged everyone to vote.

Chairman Peggy Katkocin spoke of the building projects and referenced educational building specifications that were approved by the BOE in June of 2019. This report is available on the Town's website and contains detailed information. She encouraged anyone with questions to check this report.

BOE Member Dominic Cipollone spoke of the process for the building projects and noted that it has been very transparent from the beginning. He asked everyone not to read the negative comments on social media but to rely on the experts for answers to any questions regarding the project.

BOE Member Greg Flanagan spoke of a design for Meeting House Hill School from 2009 and noted it was very similar to the proposed designs for the high school and Consolidated School.

Dr. Cosentino reminded everyone that all facts regarding the project are available on the district website.

B. Superintendent's 2019-2020 Smart Goals and Action Steps

Dr. Cosentino spoke of her Smart goals and action steps. She showed a spreadsheet that highlighted priorities, action steps and Smart Goals. She gave highlights of her goals so that the public knows what she is working on. Some of the highlights include improving student achievement, specifically in the Math department, data analysis, professional development, goals for Special Education studies, school safety, and defining the roles and responsibilities of staff members.

C. School Security Update - Executive Session

**VIII. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for September 12, 2019, 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

B. Acceptance of Grant

1. Italian American Committee on Education

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the acceptance of the Italian American Committee on Education Grant in the amount of \$3,000 for the purchase of educational materials for the World Language program. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

C. International Field Trip

1. Panama

High School Teacher Kim Salta spoke of a proposed trip to Panama for a minimum of 12 students during Spring Break in April, 2021. This trip is available for sophomores thru seniors. There was a brief discussion of possible grants or fundraisers to help students defer the cost of the trip.

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the international field trip to Panama as presented. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

D. New Fairfield High School Graduation 2020

Dr. Cosentino gave a brief description of the process for determining which schools get first choice for using Western Connecticut State University for graduation.

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of June 13, 2020, as the graduation date for the NFHS Class of 2020. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

E. Say Something Free Anonymous Reporting System - Executive Session

**IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - John McCartney thanked the Board of Education for all their hard work and for working so well together.

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

- Samantha Mannion noted that the Open Houses at the schools were remarkable.
- Ed Sbordone spoke of upcoming vote regarding the building projects and encouraged everyone to learn the facts and not rely on social media.
- Kimberly LaTourette thanked the PTOs at the various schools. She especially enjoyed the MHHS picnic and complimented the Middle School on the schedule change
- Rick Regan noted that he set up his Power School account and encouraged everyone to look up “password manager.” He also spoke of the negative effects of vaping.
- Dominic Cipollone commended the Middle School for a wonderful Open House.
- Greg Flanagan noted that the Middle School Open House was very well organized. He specifically thanked Dr. Cosentino for focusing on the Math curriculum. He also thanked John McCartney for the very positive public comment about the BOE.

## **XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:03 p.m. to discuss School Security and Safety and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino and Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich Sanzo into the Executive Session. Dominic Cipollone 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 at 8:25 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board that while the Board recognizes that the Say something Anonymous Reporting system will remain available 24/7, the New Fairfield Public Schools will actively monitor the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on school days and that such monitoring hours be communicated to the community by the administration. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board to direct the Board attorney to negotiate changes to the MOU between Sandy Hook Promise Foundation and New Fairfield Public Schools and related terms of service as recommended by the Board attorney. To further recommend to the full Board to direct the administration to investigate an alternative anonymous reporting system if the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation and New Fairfield Public Schools are unable to reach an agreement on changes to the aforementioned MOU and terms of service. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 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

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos