

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2019,
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – April 9, 2019

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, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Incoming High School Principal James D’Amico, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Athletic Director Mary Stolle, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, First Selectman Pat Del Monaco, Selectman Khris Hall, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh, BOF member Anthony Yorio, PBC Chairman Pete Viola, PBC member Mike Del Monaco, PBC member Olga Nanocchio and Rusty Malik (Quisenberry Arcari +Malik)

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A.** New Fairfield High School Educational Specifications and Design Concept Implications
- B.** Consolidated School Educational Specifications and Design Concept Implications

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo spoke of the many problems and challenges to both the High School and Consolidated School buildings. He gave a brief history of each of these buildings noting that there have been some upgrades and additions to both buildings but there are still many issues that impact learning and may affect the accreditation. He spoke of a deadline of June 30th for getting the grant application to the State. This grant would allow the district to seek reimbursement for these projects. If the June 30th deadline is not met, the district would have to wait another year resulting in a delay of the project and an increase in the projected costs of approximately 4-5% per year. He spoke of a recent meeting with DAS and it was noted that it is unlikely that the State will give reimbursements for renovations of buildings that are not worth renovating.

Dr. Sanzo explained the purpose of Educational Specifications and noted that they are the written justification for the project. These documents will need to be approved by the Board of Education before being sent to the State. He spoke of specific ideas for the buildings including grade configurations, special education space needs and safety and security components.

Rusty Malik from Quisenberry Arcari Malik (QA+M) spoke of the existing conditions and design implications. He spoke of the challenges and problems with New Fairfield High School and noted that it is currently energy inefficient with upgrades needed to the auditorium, pool and locker rooms, and the elevator, among other things. He noted that the mechanical, electrical and plumbing components are past their useful life. He spoke of four options for the building project and gave a cost estimate along with advantages and challenges for each.

<u>New Fairfield High School</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Cost to taxpayers</u>
<u>Option 1</u> - Piece meal basis- One item at a time (Not favored by the State)	\$50-\$60 million with no state reimbursement	\$50-\$60 million
<u>Option 2</u> - Renovations- Difficult to do while it is occupied. Typically 36 months.	\$60-\$65 million with no state reimbursement	\$60-\$65 million
<u>Option 3</u> - Renovations and Additions	\$65-\$70 million with no state reimbursement	\$65-\$70 million
<u>Option 4</u> - Build new school. Tear down existing school once new one is built. Can possibly leave the pool and gym- No disruption to education.	\$70-\$80 million before State reimbursement	\$52-\$58 million after State reimbursement

Mr. Malik gave a brief history of the building of Consolidated School and spoke of some renovations and additions that were done in the past. He explained some problems and challenges with renovating the existing building. He spoke of four options for the building project and gave a cost estimate along with advantages and challenges for each.

<u>Consolidated School</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Cost to taxpayers</u>
<u>Option 1</u> - Reconstruction and renovation- challenge of where to put students during construction.	\$39-42 million with no state reimbursement	\$39-\$42 million
<u>Option 2</u> - Tear down part of the building and renovate part of the building with reconstructing the parking lot- challenge of where to put students during construction.	\$47-\$50 million with no state reimbursement	\$47-\$50 million
<u>Option 3</u> - Build a new school on site- The challenge is that the lot has limitations	\$49-\$52 million with no state reimbursement	\$49-52 million
<u>Option 4</u> - Build new school at MHHS property. Tear down existing school once new one is built.	\$32-\$35 million with no state reimbursement	\$23-\$26 million after State Reimbursement

Dr. Cosentino spoke of the advantages of building a new school at the Meeting House Hill School property and noted that this would solve the current parking issues at Consolidated. She spoke of economies of scale between the two schools and the sharing of special teachers, paraprofessionals and custodial staff.

Members of the Board of Education asked questions and gave comments regarding the proposed project. It was noted that furniture and demolition are included in the cost estimates. Parts of the new Culinary Arts facility at the high school can be moved to the new location. The new schools will be in compliance with Security and Safety initiatives. Detailed designs and cost estimates will be provided to the Board of Education at their April 23rd meeting. There will be a special Board of Education on Tuesday, May 7th at 7:00 p.m. to further discuss the project.

There will be tours of the buildings for taxpayers on Monday, April 30th at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 4th at 10:00 a.m. Residents are encouraged to attend the BOE meetings and/or send questions and comments to nfboe@newfairfieldschools.org

Public Comment

Many members of the public gave their opinions and asked questions regarding the proposed project. Specific comments and questions included:

- Concerns of the project seemingly rushed.
- Possibility that the State will not come through with the grant money once the project is started.
- Buildings being too small if enrollment goes up in the future.

Suggestions included:

- Giving the taxpayers a detailed account of how this would affect their tax bill.
- Have the BOE and the Administration communicate with State Legislators about the possibility of reimbursement for renovating existing buildings.
- Put information about the project on the district's website page.
- Have the BOE agree on one recommendation for getting started that can be presented to the public.

Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross gave a brief history of the two buildings and gave examples of the advantages of constructing new buildings.

Dr. Costentino spoke of the timeline for the grant and noted that the district is not committed to a project just by applying for a grant. She spoke of her willingness to meet with taxpayers to give information.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 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