

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 20, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

MINUTES – May 20, 2021

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, 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, Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca and Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel.

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.

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 6, 2021 - Special meeting - approved by consensus.

B. May 6, 2021 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus with the addition of revising the motion regarding the Pool Locker Room at the High School to clarify that it is a BOE motion.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - approved by consensus

V. RECOGNITION - CABA STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS AND WCSA

STUDENT AWARDS - Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli and High School Principal James D’Amico presented many students with CABA Student Leadership awards and WCSA Student awards.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Noted that the BOF has finalized the budget and sent a recommendation to the Board of Selectman. There will be a Town Meeting on May 27th to set the date for the Budget Referendum.

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

- Wished good luck to the Lacrosse, Baseball and Track teams.
- The Celebration of Excellence will be held next week via Zoom.
- Senior Prom will be held this Saturday, May 22nd.

C. Student Representatives' Report

Junior Representative Cayden Walker reported on the following:

- The play "Working" will be streamed by the NFHS players on Fri-Sun, May 21st - 23rd.
- Senior Prom will be held this Saturday, May 22nd.
- The Seniors are currently working on their SEE projects.
- Congratulated CIA Scholar Athletes and SWC Leadership Award recipients.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on May 20th and discussed:

- Budget vs. Expenditures which are in line with previous budgets.
- It is projected that there will be an approximate \$135,000 budget deficit. This is much lower than originally projected.
- The School Lunch program was discussed as an information item.
- The Eversource Energy Opportunities Program and the Healthy Food Certification was discussed and is on tonight's agenda as Action Items.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF completed the final mark-up of the budget on May 12th. There will be a Town Meeting on May 27th to set the date for the referendum. He encouraged everyone to vote at the referendum.

2. Parks and Recreation Committee - Kim LaTourette noted that the meeting of May 10th was cancelled due to a lack of quorum. Anyone interested in activities should refer to the Parks and Rec page on the Town's website.

3. Safety Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on May 12th and everything is working well. They discussed Bus service, Tools for Schools, the SRO update, concussion update and Food Service.

4. School Security and Safety Committee - This subcommittee will meet on June 14th at 7:00 p.m.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Vaccination Clinic for Students 12 years and Older - Dr. Cosentino noted that she met with many New Fairfield personnel regarding the possibility of a vaccination clinic for ages 12 and over. It was decided that since there are already many clinics in the area, it is not necessary to hold one in New Fairfield at this time.

B. Board of Education Policies (*First Reading*)

1. Policy 4212.42 - Drug and Alcohol Testing for Bus Drivers
2. Policy 5141.4 - Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect or Sexual Assault
3. Policy 6159 - Individualized Education Program/Special Education Program
4. Policy 6171 - Special Education

C. Board of Education Policy (*Second Reading*)

1. Policy 5118.111-Tuition for Students and Staff members

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

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo gave an update on the school building projects. He noted that he and Dr. Cosentino met with the State to get approval for the high school project. Approval to put the project out to bid is expected within the next two weeks. A formal grant commitment was received for the Pool/Locker room portion of the project.

Bids for the Consolidated project are due on Tuesday, May 25th. There is a PBC meeting on Tuesday, May 25th to discuss the Consolidated School bids and the bus lot location.

E. Progress Update on Superintendent Goals

Dr. Cosentino gave a brief overview of her goals which include reopening plans after COVID, portraits of a graduate and the best ways to use the American Relief Plan and ESSER III money.

There was a brief discussion of traffic patterns and the possibility of being able to combine bell schedules for the High School and Middle School.

IX. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS

A. 2021-2022 Budget Update - Ed Sbordone noted that the Board of Finance included a \$644,000 reduction to the Board of Education operating budget as part of its final budget mark-up. The reductions to the budget are recommended by the administration and will be alternatively funded through ESSER funds or the non-lapsing fund.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board to reduce the 2021-2022 Board of Education operating budget by a total of \$644,000 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, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

B. American Relief Plan ESSER III - Dr. Cosentino spoke of grant money that will be received for from the American Relief Plan and ESSER III grants. She spoke of the specific positions throughout the district that could be hired with these funds. She spoke of the possible challenge of filling these positions as other districts will be looking for similar positions. There will be a special BOE meeting on Thursday, May 27th to further discuss this.

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 13, 2021, as recommended by the administration. Stephanie Strazza 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. Eversource Energy Opportunities Program

Dr. Sanzo spoke of upgrades to the Middle School gym to make the HVAC systems more efficient and to add LED fixtures. The cost of this project is approximately \$122,000 with a rebate from Eversource and Greenleaf Energy Solutions that will bring the price of the project down to approximately \$75,000. It is expected that this upgrade will save approximately \$16,000 per year in utility costs.

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board to authorize Dr. Sanzo to sign the Eversource Energy Efficiency Services Letter of Agreement for Project # CT21P00634146 Middle School Gym. 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

C. Health Food Certification

Dr. Sanzo spoke of this program and noted that the benefits would not outweigh the restrictions and thus would not be worth participating in this program.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups. **OPPOSED:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Dr. Sanzo noted that the following motion would exempt beverages from compliance and would allow for the sale of beverages at after school events. Participation in this program was recommended.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board that the Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The “school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the beverage sales. 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

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Stefanie Marlow thanked everyone for the transparency throughout the year and keeping parents informed. She further noted that she appreciates the mask regulation for the beginning of the year.

Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli invited Board members to log into the Middle School Presentations on Sustainability on June 10th and 11th.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Kathy Baker asked for a list of improvements to the district that have come about due to COVID. Stephanie Strazza asked for an update on Literacy Programs.

XIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Stephanie Strazza thanked Dr. Pat Cosentino, Julie Luby and Karen Fildes for the Zoom presentation regarding COVID. She asked everyone to be patient with the regulations, especially the mask regulations in the schools for the fall.
- Kathy Baker thanked everyone for all the activities planned for the High School Seniors.
- Greg Flanagan also thanked everyone for the activities for the Seniors. He suggested the Board put an article in the Town Tribune with information about the budget.
- Dominic recommended that the classrooms be well ventilated for the last days of the school year due to the heat. He further spoke of ways to spend grant money and the need for transparency with parents.
- Samantha Mannion reminded everyone that the NFHS players will present “Working” virtually this weekend and encouraged everyone to see it.
- Ed Sbordone spoke of the timeline for the budget process and encouraged everyone to get out and vote.
- Kim LaTourette thanked everyone for the amazing school year. She encouraged taxpayers to get out and vote.
- Rick Regan spoke of the first concert of the year for the High School Band. He thanked the Booster Club for everything they have done, especially for the Seniors.
- Peggy Katkocin thanked everyone for a successful school year.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 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