

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 7:00 pm at the Community Room at 33 Route 37.

MINUTES – January 5, 2023

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

ABSENT: Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, New Fairfield High School Principal James D’Amico, New Fairfield Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary School Assistant Principal Steven Groccia and Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross

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. December 15, 2022 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone spoke of the following:

- Had a great visit to the Middle School and thanked everyone involved.
- Met with Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross regarding the flooring in the hallways and the cafeteria in the Middle School and noted that it needs to be replaced.

B. Superintendent’s Report - Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw spoke of the following:

- Welcomed everyone back from Winter Break.
- Spoke of the many accolades earned by Meeting House Hill School. He thanked the entire staff for all their hard work.
- Spoke of professional development for Middle School and High School Math teachers.

C. Student Representatives’ Report

Senior Representative Grace DeMarco spoke of the following:

- The second quarter ends on January 20th.
- SEE Project proposals for Seniors are due by January 9th.

D. Committee Reports

1. New Fairfield High School Start and End Time Ad Hoc - Kathy Baker noted that this subcommittee met on January 5th. The purpose of this meeting was to gauge parent's thoughts on a possible later start time for the high school for the 2024-2025 school year. There were about a dozen parents in attendance.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on December 21st and discussed the 2021-2022 surplus. No decision has been made regarding the BOE request for the surplus.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Reading Waiver Update

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of a state mandate that required districts to pick a Reading Program from an approved list of programs. A waiver can be sent to the State if the district is able to prove that they are compliant with all the requirements for reading curriculum. The subcommittee has decided to send the waiver to the State.

B. New Fairfield Public School 2023-2024 Draft Calendar

Dr. Craw reviewed the draft calendar for the 2023-2024 school year. It was noted that school will start after Labor Day due to the opening of the new high school. This is the first reading for this calendar and will be voted on at a future meeting.

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

Samantha Mannion gave a brief description of this policy.

1. Policy 5132 - Dress and Grooming

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

High School Principal James D'Amico showed updated pictures of the new high school and spoke of the many different spaces in the school. The pool, gym and cafeteria from the existing high school will be kept. The footprint of the current building will become a parking lot. It was noted that this project is on time and under budget.

Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross spoke of the Consolidated School project. He spoke of modifications of the traffic patterns. Signage should be done soon. A commission of the heating system will begin this month. A lot of work on the punch list was done over the winter break. Demolition for the existing Consolidated School is expected to begin in the Spring. It was noted that this project is under budget.

E. Capital Improvement Plan

Dr. Craw spoke of the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan and noted that the plan is to take care of the current buildings. He noted that the Middle School is 28 years old and is in the most need for capital improvements. This capital improvement plan allocates approximately \$400,000 for the Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year and an additional \$130,000 district wide.

Phil Ross gave an update on what was done this year, including an update on the heating and ventilation system at the Middle School. The underground oil tank needs to be replaced at the Middle School and flooring needs to be replaced in the cafeteria in the Middle School. District-wide projects on the capital plan are the dump truck, transportation van and the air conditioning at MHHS.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Budget Expenditure Surplus

Dr. Craw noted that the BOE voted to ask the Board of Finance for approximately \$500,000 from the surplus for capital items. Of this \$500,000, approximately \$360,000 is from the BOE expenditure surplus. It was noted that at their December 21st meeting, the BOF discussed other needs in the Town that may require surplus funds. They asked the BOE to make a list of priorities of what they would do with approximately \$90,000 of surplus funds.

Phil Ross noted that the highest priority projects would be air conditioning at MHHS, flooring at the Middle School, dump/plow truck for building and grounds. It was noted that items that are not covered with this surplus will be in the BOE requested budget for 2023-2024.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board to authorize the Superintendent to present to the Board of Finance at their January 18th meeting the following list of items for available surplus funds in priority order. They include the installation of AC units at three MHHS classrooms (\$33,000), the dump truck (\$60,255) and the flooring in New Fairfield Middle School (\$62,000) and NFMS HVAC commissioning (\$10,000) for a total of \$165,255. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

Ed Sbordone noted that the total cost of these projects would amount to approximately 46% of the expenditure surplus for 2021-2022.

B. District Priorities and Goals 2022-2023

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board adoption of District Priorities and Goals 2022-23 as presented. Stephanie Strazza seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

C. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for December 22, 2022, as recommended by the administration. Stephanie Strazza seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

D. Board of Education Policies

Samantha Mannion gave a brief overview of this policy.

1. Policy 1312 - Public Complaints

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of Policy 1312-Public Complaints as presented. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

E. New Course Proposals (Second Reading)

MOTION: Stephanie Strazza made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the following courses to be offered at New Fairfield High School: 1. Explorations in Data Science 1, 2. Explorations in Data Science 2, 3. Financial Algebra, 4. History of Mathematics: How Math Shapes the World Around Us. Tim Blair seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - Board members wished everyone a Happy New Year.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos