

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**MINUTES – September 21, 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, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino and Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel

**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. September 2, 2021- Regular meeting - approved by consensus

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to add agenda item Information Item VIID “Covid Update.” 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

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ashley O’Brien asked about religious exemptions for vaccinations for her children. It was decided that Mrs. O’Brien will contact Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby privately regarding this situation.

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

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

- Thanked everyone involved in New Fairfield Fair Day on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>. She specifically thanked Dr. Sanzo for providing pictures and diagrams regarding the building projects.

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

- Thanked everyone who volunteered at New Fairfield Fair Day.
- Thanked all staff members for stepping up and putting in extra effort due to COVID. She reminded everyone that we are still in a pandemic and encouraged everyone to be flexible.

- Expressed sincere condolences and prayers to the Vengalli family on the passing of a 2012 New Fairfield Alumna Nicole Vengalli.

#### C. Student Representative Report

Senior Representative Cayden Walker spoke of the following:

- Reminded everyone that parking permits are required for everyone at the high school and there will be consequences for anyone who parks illegally.
- Many students with permits have noted that the parking spots at the high school have not yet been numbered which is causing some confusion.
- Student Council is planning a Homecoming Dance for some time in October. This is the first school-wide event since the pandemic has started.
- Many students and staff members sent thoughts prayers and notes of condolences to the Vengalli family on the passing of Nicole.

#### D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on September 21<sup>st</sup> and discussed monthly summary of budget vs. actual expenditures and encumbrances report for the first two months of the fiscal year. He compared expenditures to prior years and there are no major concerns at this time. There was an update of the Capital Improvement Plan. The BOF voted to put 100% of the BOE surplus in the Cap and Non non-lapsing account. The amount of this surplus is approximately \$118,000. The current balance in the non-lapsing account is approximately \$1.41 million that can be used for future year's projects. The subcommittee also reviewed the logistics of the building projects.

#### E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on September 15<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the budget surplus for the fiscal year 2020-2021. They approved the \$118,000 surplus to go to the BOE Capital and Nonrecurring account. The vote for the town surplus was tabled until a future meeting. The next meeting of the BOF will be held on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

2. Parks and Rec - Kimberly LaTourette noted that Parks and Rec met in person on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Events discussed included New Fairfield Day, Halloween Trick or Treat and the Turkey Run.

3. School Safety and Security - Samantha Mannion noted that this subcommittee will meet on Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.

## VII. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### A. Transition Program (STRIDES Program)

Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz gave an overview of the Transition Program and noted that this is the first year that New Fairfield Public Schools has an in-district program.

Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel spoke of the STRIDES Program (Striving to Reach Individual and Diverse Education Success). She introduced the staff for this program and spoke of the events and goals for STRIDES. She thanked everyone for the support and help with getting this program started.

### B. Quarantine School Update

Julie Luby shared data regarding cases of COVID in the district. She noted that so far this year, 148 students have been in quarantine school. Members of the Board asked questions of Ms. Luby regarding State COVID regulations. There was a brief update on COVID spreading due to sports. An update will be given at a future meeting.

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

Dr. Rich Sanzo noted that construction is moving along with both projects. There was a meeting with JCJ and the design team about furniture, fixtures and equipment for the Consolidated Project. The site clearing work at the high school has begun. The parking spots will be numbered in the near future. Logistics for a temporary bus lot is being discussed. The first meeting of OAC (Owner, Architect and Contractor) was held today.

D. COVID-19 Update - Discussed during Quarantine School Update.

**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 15, 2021, 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

**IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Amanda Lombard noted that the Meeting House Hill School PTO received a grant from Eversource that was used to provide books for each MHHS student.

Michelle O’Gara thanked the district for the STRIDES program and is looking forward to hearing updates about it.

**X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ed Sbordone asked about getting an update on the 2022-2023 budget schedule.

Dominic Cipollone asked for an update on when Curriculum will be available on the website.

**XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Rick Regan encouraged everyone to look at the new website. He thanked Dr. Fildes for including him on the website committee.

Kimberly LaTourette thanked everyone involved in the new website.

Samantha Mannion encouraged everyone to attend the Policy Subcommittee on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Dominic Cipollone expressed condolences to the Vengalli family.

Greg Flanagan expressed condolences to the Vengalli family.

Peggy Katkocin expressed condolences to the Vengalli family.

Kathy Baker noted that a scholarship has been set up in memory of Nicole Vengalli and checks can be sent to the high school. She noted that anyone attending the home football game this Friday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, is encouraged to wear light blue in memory of Nicole. She further reminded parents to talk to their children about what is appropriate on social media.

Stephanie Strazza expressed condolences to the Vengalli family. She further spoke of the possibility that Pfizer may be approved for emergency use for children ages 5-12 by the end of October.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 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