

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT 06812.

MINUTES – February 2, 2023

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

ABSENT: Greg Flanagan

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 Principal Allyson Story, and Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. January 19, 2023 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus
- B. January 19, 2023 - Special meeting - approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public spoke of the New Fairfield High School Attitudes and Behaviors Survey. Many residents spoke in favor of the survey and noted that it has the potential to help “at risk” students. Many others spoke of concerns regarding the subject matter and whether or not parents were notified about their right to “opt out.”

VI. ACTION ITEM

- A. FY 2023-24 Operating Budget, Capital Budget, and Debt Service

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the approval of the 2023-2024 Board of Education’s operating budget in the amount of \$45,551,674, an increase of 5.99% from the 2022-2023 budget, the 2023-2024 Board of Education’s capital budget in the amount of \$248,575, and the 2023-2024 Board of Education’s Debt service in the amount of \$7,064,588. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman's Report

Dominic Cipollone thanked everyone that gave their opinion either via email or in person. He noted that it is the duty of all residents to put the needs of the students first. He encouraged everyone to check in with students on a regular basis.

Mr. Cipollone thanked the High School PTO for raising almost \$4,000 for the PTO with a Bingo event. He thanked all the local businesses that contributed to this event.

B. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw thanked the Board of Education for supporting his proposed budget and thanked everyone involved in putting the budget together. He further spoke of Internet Safety workshops on March 13th at 6:30 p.m. in the Consolidated/MHHS cafeteria.

C. Student Representatives' Report

- Senior Representative Grace DeMarco spoke of the following: Underclassmen will be able to register for next year's courses from February 6th to 12th.
- Student tours of the new high school have begun.
- Winter semi-formal tickets are on sale.

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Stephanie Strazza noted that this committee met recently and discussed three new course proposals. All of the courses are ECE "Early College Experience" courses and are open to Juniors and Seniors.

E. Liaison Reports - None

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Director of Buildings and Grounds Carrie DePuy noted that the High School project is on time and on budget. There is a "punch list" for the Consolidated/MHHS School, including a leak that is covered under warranty. A grant was recently approved for radios at Consolidated/MHHS.

B. Information regarding NFHS Attitudes and Behaviors Survey

Dr. Craw noted that this survey was approved by the BOE at the last meeting, pending review of the letter that will be sent to families. This letter explained the reasons for the survey and explained the process for families coming in to view the survey and the process for opting out. Samantha Mannion spoke of the legal parameters of the survey and why it cannot go home to families ahead of time. The presentation of the results of this survey will be done in the near future.

C. New Course Proposal (First Review)

1. ECE French: Global Culture
2. ECE English: Maritime Culture
3. ECE Physics II

D. New Textbook Adoption (First Review)

1. *College Physics: A Strategic Approach*, 4th edition - Pearson 2023

IX. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report - None

B. Board of Education Policy

1. Policy 5132 - Dress and Grooming

Samantha Mannion thanked Kathy Baker for all her work on drafting this policy. Kathy Baker spoke of the policy and noted that some high school students were instrumental in drafting this policy. She noted that the changes to the policy make the dress code more inclusive for all students.

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Board of the Education Policy 5132 - Dress and Grooming. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza.

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents further spoke in support and/or concerns of the Attitudes and Behaviors Survey for the high school.

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There will be a transportation update regarding MHHS in the near future.

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Tim Blair spoke of the various opinions regarding the High School Attitudes and Behaviors survey and noted that, regardless of their opinions, everyone has the best interest of the students in mind.

Ed Sbordone noted that the Board of Finance will hold a special meeting to fill a vacancy on their board on Monday, February 6th at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. He further reminded everyone that the BOE will present their budget to the Board of Finance on Saturday, March 4th at 10:30 a.m. in person in the Community Room.

Amy Johnson thanked everyone who participated in Public Comment either via email or in person. She noted that the Middle School PTO is having a fundraiser at the Bridgeport Islanders Game on Friday, Feb. 3rd at 7 p.m. The Middle School Drama Club will be having a performance on Feb. 3rd at 6:30 p.m.

Stephanie Strazza noted that the MHHS Major Minors will be performing the National Anthem at Citi Field on April 28th. This will be the first time that this has been done in three years. Middle School students who were unable to perform in recent years due to COVID are invited back to participate. She also thanked all members of the public that participated in Public Comment.

Dominic Cipollone thanked all the BOE members and reminded everyone that they are all volunteers. He encouraged the members of the public to continue to give feedback to the Board.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. Tim Blair seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos