

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

MINUTES – May 19, 2022

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

ABSENT: Kathy Baker and Kimberly LaTourette

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, 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 Assistant Principal Allyson Story, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich 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 Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. April 27, 2022 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus
- B. May 5, 2022 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - approved by consensus

V. RECOGNITION - CABE STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli presented CABE Student Leadership Awards to Tristan Cunningham and Taylor Proto.

High School Principal James D’Amico presented the CABE Student Leadership Awards to Senior Gabriella Furnari and Junior Claire Enerson.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Thanked everyone that supported the budget that passed on Saturday, May 14th.
- Congratulated all graduates and students moving up to different schools.

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

- Thanked everyone that supported the budget.
- Announced that the Celebration of Excellence will be held on Thursday, May 26th at 4:00 p.m. at Meeting House Hill School.
- The Unified Theater will have their show on May 26th at 6:30 p.m. at the high school.
- The Senior Prom will be held on Friday, May 27th.
- Field days will be held soon.
- The STRIDES Open House will be held at their new building in Danbury on May 31st at 1:00 p.m.

C. Student Representative Report - None

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that the Business Operations/Resource Management committee met on May 19th and noted that the budget is on track with previous years. The projected deficit is lower than projected last month. No rates have been locked in for fuel.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on May 9th and May 18th.
 - The May 9th meeting was a special meeting to discuss potentially offensive comments made at prior BOF meetings.
 - The following was discussed at the May 18th meeting:
 - Voted to invite a representative from Disability Rights Connecticut to at BOE meeting to educate the Board on Disability Rights.
 - Voted to set the Mil Rate for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.
 - Voted to approve the Suspense List.
 - Voted to accept the Medical Plan.
 - Discussed the possibility to form a joint board committee for long term capital planning.
2. Parks and Recreation Commission - This meeting was cancelled
3. Safety Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on May 11th and discussed:

- Bus service - Nothing to report
- Building and Grounds - Nothing to report
- SRO updates - Nothing to report
- The food service contract is going out to bid with bids due on May 24th. This must be done every five years.
- There have been two concussions since the last Safety Committee meeting. Both of these occurred in Boys' Lacrosse.
- Safety drills in the schools are up to date.
- There has been a slight uptick in Covid cases.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. District Reference Groups - DRG

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of a recent meeting that referred to the District Reference Group (DRG). Since that meeting, Ms. Luby reached out to someone on the State and was notified that District Reference Groups are not often used anymore for comparing districts. She spoke of using growth targets to measure success and to compare the district with other districts that have similar free and reduced lunch statistics. Greg Flanagan suggested discussing the data at a future meeting.

B. Tricaster

Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes announced that the new tricaster system is in place and has been hooked up and tested. This will allow for a return to in-person meetings. She noted that this system will not allow access to Zoom.

C. Superintendent Goals

Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of her goals and gave a list of accomplishments over the last year. They include continuing to have in-person instruction through the pandemic, high quality instruction and building relationships, increase in extracurricular activities and improvements in Special Education, especially the STRIDES program. The improvement of the website and the school building projects were also mentioned.

D. 2022-2023 Budget

Dr. Sanzo noted that the budget adjustments will be made at the June 2nd BOE meeting.

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

Dr. Sanzo gave a brief update on the building projects for both CELA and the high school and showed pictures.

IX. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Strings Program - Dr. Cosentino noted that there will be a half strings teachers for the 2022-2023 school year. This will need to be increased in upcoming years as more students are involved in the program. Julie Luby spoke of the number of students in the string program and whether or not this program would take students away from the band program. This will be discussed further at upcoming meetings.

X. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for May 12, 2022, as recommended by the administration. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

B. Healthy Food Certification

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to table both motions regarding the Healthy Food Certification until more information is received. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

C. Acceptance of Donation

1. Unilock New York, Inc.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to accept a monetary donation of \$2,500 from Unilock New York, Inc. for the Girls' High School Softball team to be used as needed. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

D. Paraprofessional Leave of Absence Request - Executive Session

E. Contract of the Director of Business and Operations - Executive Session

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

XIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ed Sbordone encouraged the BOF to appoint a liaison to attend BOE meetings.
Greg Flanagan thanked the community for supporting the budget.
Amy Johnson congratulated the CAFE award winners.

**XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING
PARAPROFESSIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

**XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE CONTRACT
OF THE DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS**

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a Paraprofessional Leave of Absence request and to discuss the contract of the Director of Business and Operations and to invite Dr. Pat Cosentino into the Executive Session. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:22 p.m. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full board Board of Education the approval of Laura Linkenhoker's request for an unpaid leave of absence for 2.75 hours on May 4, 2022, 3 hours on May 16, 2022, and one day on June 10, 2022. Stephanie Strazza seconded the motion **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to pay Dr. Sanzo for 10 vacation days for June 2022. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Samantha Mannion, and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos