

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, November 21, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – November 21, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, High School Principal James D’Amico, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli and Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOTION:** Rick Regan made a motion to move agenda item VI Public Participation ahead of agenda item III Election of New Board of Education Officers. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -** Jennifer McPartland announced that the fall play at the high school “*It’s a Wonderful Life*” will be held on Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm.

**IV. ELECTION OF NEW BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICERS**

Dr. Cosentino asked for nominations for officers who will serve for a term of two years.

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan nominated Peggy Katkocin to serve as Chairman of the Board of Education. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion.

There were no other nominations for Chairman, and Peggy Katkocin was elected unanimously. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan nominated Dominic Cipollone to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board of Education. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion.

There were no other nominations for Vice Chairman, and Dominic Cipollone was elected unanimously. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion nominated Kimberly LaTourette to serve as Secretary of the Board of Education. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion.

There were no other nominations for Secretary, and Kimberly LaTourette was elected unanimously. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

## **V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A. November 6, 2019 – Regular Meeting – The minutes were approved by consensus with the adding of “and coverage of the BOE meetings” to the end of the Board member comment by Rick Regan thanking the Town Tribune and specifically, Sarah Opdal, for the election coverage.

## **VI. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Stephanie Strazza made a motion to amend the agenda to add Action Item F “Reestablishment of the Special Education Ad Hoc Subcommittee.” Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to amend the agenda to Information Item E “Discussion of Middle School Health and Physical Education Classes.” Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

## **VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chairman’s Report – Peggy Katkocin noted that:

- There was an issue with water testing for lead and copper at Consolidated. The Water Pollution Control Authority has agreed to pay for the testing of the faucets and they will be completed next week.
- There was a discussion among Board members regarding subcommittee assignments. Peggy Katkocin will send out assignment lists to members.
- There was a brief discussion of whether or not the Communications/Community Outreach subcommittee was still necessary. It was decided to keep it on the calendar for every other month if needed.

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

- Received a thank you note from the Danbury Band-Aids thanking the high school for letting them use the field.

- Wished everyone a happy American Education Week.
  - Congratulated Marty Morgan for being inducted by the Connecticut Chapter of the US Lacrosse Hall of Fame.
  - The Thanksgiving Day football game will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> at New Milford.
  - Students at all schools are collecting food, blankets and money for families in need.
- C. Student Representatives' Report  
Senior Representative Sophia Liguori noted that:
- The Fall Play "It's a Wonderful Life" will be held on Friday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm.
  - Rebel Challenge kicked off last week.
  - Congratulated many high school students for being selected for the Western Regional Music Festival in January.
  - Winter Sports start December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- D. Committee Reports
1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that they met on November 21<sup>st</sup> and discussed budget vs. actual as of Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>. It was noted that the payroll budget and special education budget are very tight and are being closely monitored. As a result, all other costs are being capped. The Google Reconciliation report for the first quarter was reviewed and there were no unauthorized access to the system.
  2. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that there are many policies on tonight's meeting for first and second reading and one policy on the agenda as an action item.
- E. Liaison Report
1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the Board of Finance met on November 20<sup>th</sup> and discussed:
    - The High School/Consolidated school projects and noted that they would like to have the PBC Chairman speak at an upcoming meeting.
    - The 2020 Calendar of BOF meetings and approved. The budget presentation for the BOE and BOS will be held on Sat. March 7<sup>th</sup>.
    - The BOE budget surplus vote for the fiscal year 2018-2019 was tabled until more information is received regarding the HVAC for the Middle School.
    - There will be a budget workshop between the BOE and BOF on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.
  2. Parks and Recreation Commission - Kim LaTourette noted that the Parks and Rec commission cancelled their meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Upcoming events will be the Turkey Run on 11/24, Santa's Workshop and Light Parade will be held on 11/30 and registration forms for the Great Light Fight are available in the Parks and Rec office.
  3. Permanent Building Committee - Ed Sbordone noted that the PBC met on November 13<sup>th</sup> and finalized the Owner's Rep RFQ/RFP that is due back on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The RFP for the four architect firms were sent out with interviews scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup>.

4. Safety - Ed Sbordone noted that this committee met on November 21<sup>st</sup> and noted that an outside company will be coming in to train the staff on security. They also discussed bus service and a concussion update. It was noted that a permanent SRO has not been hired but there is always an officer at the Middle School. It was noted that all schools will have epi-pens available in the nurses' offices and all cafeterias.
5. School Security and Safety Committee - The last meeting of this committee was cancelled. The next meeting will be held on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

### VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Projects Update - Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo noted that the PBC issued the RFQ/RFP to the Owner's Representatives and RFP four selected architect firms. Presentations will be on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm. BOE members are encouraged to attend these interviews. The Owner's Representative interview will be held the following week. It was also noted that the district received notification from DAS (Department of Administrative Services) that both projects have been placed on the priority list for state reimbursement.

Dr. Sanzo announced that PBC Chairman Pete Viola has stepped down and thanked him for all his years of service to the PBC and the Town of New Fairfield. George Martignetti has been elected to be the new Chairman of the PBC.

B. Board of Education Policies (Second Reading)

1. Policy 1331- Smoke Free Environment
2. Policy 3432/3433 - Budget and expense report/Annual Financial Statement
3. Policy 4112.5/4212.5 - Security Check/Fingerprinting
4. Policy 4112.51/4212.51- Employment reference checks
5. Policy 4122 - Student teachers
6. Policy 4131- Staff Development
7. Policy 5114 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process/Referral to the police
8. Policy 6111 - School Calendar
9. Policy 6142 - Basic Instructional Program
10. Policy 6159 - Individualized Education Programs/Special Education Program
11. Policy 6172.1 - Gifted and Talented Student Program

C. New Course Approval (Second Reading)

1. Human Genomics

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to suspend the rules to move this item to a vote for tonight's meeting. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to move the approval of the high school course Human Genomics to Action Item G. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN**

**FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

D. Board of Education Policies - (First Reading)

1. Policy 5141.214 - Student Sunscreen use
2. Policy 5144.4 - Discipline - Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students

E. Middle School Health and Physical Education Classes

Kim LaTourette spoke of her concerns regarding Physical Education classes in the Middle School and specifically the crowds of students in the class and the safety issues of having class in the cafeteria. There was a lengthy discussion of the logistics of this. Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli spoke of the Sports Ed model. It was decided that the Middle School Physical Education teachers will attend a BOE meeting to discuss this in the near future.

**IX. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for November 14, 2019, 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, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

B. Board of Education 2020 Regular Meeting Dates

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2020 Board of Education Regular and Board of Education Subcommittee meeting dates as amended. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

C. Board of Education Policy

1. Policy 5118 - Nonresident Students

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Board of the Education Policy 5118 - Nonresident Students as presented. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone.

D. Approval of Grant Applications

1. Perkins Grant Secondary Continuous Improvement Plan

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the application for the Perkins Grant. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone.

E. Approval of unpaid Leave of Absence Request - Executive Session

F. Special Education Ad Hoc Subcommittee

There was a brief discussion of the Special Education Ad Hoc subcommittee and it was decided to reinstate this committee on a bimonthly basis and will establish a scheduled at the next meeting.

**MOTION:** Stephanie Strazza made a motion to recommend to the full Board the reinstatement of the Special Education Ad Hoc subcommittee. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone.

G. Human Genomics

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to approval the new course Human Genomics. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone.

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - John McCartney congratulated everyone that was reelected to the Board of Education at the recent election. He thanked everyone that ran for a seat and encouraged all residents to get involved and to attend meetings.

**XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** - Members of the Board discussed the following:

- Stephanie Strazza thanked everyone for reelecting her to the Board. She has visiting a lot of Kindergarten and first grade classes and is very pleased with the Foundations program that started last year. Thanked the staff at Meeting House Hill School and Consolidated for a wonderful Veteran's Day celebration.
- Kathy Baker attended a forum at Fairfield Wood Middle School on November 7<sup>th</sup> about the dangers of vaping. She noted that Connecticut is trying to change laws at the State level regarding vaping.
- Greg Flanagan wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.
- Dominic Cipollone spoke about Teacher conferences in the Middle School and encouraged parents to attend conference with their children's teachers. He also reiterated the need to have Math instruction every day.
- Rick Regan thanked the Fine Art Boosters and parents for Senior Night at the Football game last week. He also asked about the possibility of getting an update at meetings regarding the Math curriculum.
- Kimberly LaTourette spoke of the amazing job done by all the schools to celebrate Veteran's Day.
- Ed Sbordone spoke of the budget process and noted that this is a very important budget year and encouraged board members to take a careful look at the budget.
- Samantha Mannion spoke of the study regarding the benefits of having Animal Assisted Therapy in the schools and encouraged all schools to participate.
- Peggy Katkocin wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:37 p.m. to discuss an unpaid Leave of Absence request and to invite Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby into the Executive Session. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the unpaid leave of absence request for Jennifer Roche per Section 7.6 of the secretaries' contract from December 5, 2019 until January 2, 2020 as recommended by the administration. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos