

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, September 6, 2018,
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – September 6, 2018

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

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon, High School Principal Dr. Richard Sanzo, Business Manager Craig McClain, Pupil Personnel Director Andrea Einhorn, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, and Selectman Khris Hall

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. August 16, 2018 - Regular Meeting - approved by consensus
- B. August 22, 2018 - Special Meeting - approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - Approved by consensus with the addition of a an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education and the State Police and moving Action Item E “Ratification of the Paraprofessional Contract” to after Executive Session.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Pat Bower spoke of a possible email breech and transparency.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

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

- At a recent Town Meeting the Town approved the expenditure of \$120,000 from the surplus of the 2017-2018 budget for a police officer in New Fairfield Middle School. She thanked the School Safety and Security Committee for all their hard work with getting this accomplished.
- Read a resignation letter from Board of Education member Douglas DeRito. In this letter, Mr. DeRito thanked everyone involved with the education of students in New Fairfield. Mrs. Katkocin and several BOE members thanked Mr. DeRito for all his hard work during his tenure on the Board of Education. (Such letter to be attached to the minutes of this meeting)

- B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:
 - Kindergarten Registration will be held in November this year. Students will be invited in the spring for a visit and an assessment.
 - There will be a District Facebook page as part of the Communications Plan.
 - The process for allowing photographs of students will change. Parents will now be required to opt out of they don't want their children to have their pictures published.
 - Dr. Cosentino will start an electronic newsletter that will be open to all community members.
 - Thanked the staff for a great opening to the beginning of school.
- C. Student Representatives' Report - None
- D. Committee Reports
 1. Curriculum - Kathy Baker noted that this meeting was held on August 27th and discussed the Panorama Community Survey, the Grades 6-12 Math Curriculum and the Vision plan.
 2. Communications/Community Outreach - Cancelled
 3. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that there are eight policies on tonight's agenda for the first reading.
- E. Liaison Reports
 1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on August 27th and approved recommending additional appropriation of \$120,000 for an additional SRO for the Middle School.
 2. School Security and Safety Committee - Samantha Mannion noted that this committee met a lot over the summer. She thanked Dr. Cosentino for all her help on this committee. She noted that security items have been broken into three tiers in order of importance. The majority of the tier one initiatives have been completed with little or no expenditures. The committee is putting together a lighting plan and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education and the State Police. Rick Regan thanked this committee for all their hard work.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. School Safety Advocate Position - Dr. Cosentino spoke of this position and the challenge of securing the buildings after school hours and on the weekends. Samantha Mannion spoke of the job description for this position. Surrounding districts will be contacted for comparison to their Safety Advocates.

B. New Fairfield Public Schools Capital Projects - Dr. Costentino provided a list of Capital Improvement needs for the high school and Consolidated School. Many of these recommendations come from the Office of Civil Rights, the NEASC report or the Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross. She spoke of some improvements that would need to be done in order to comply with the American with Disabilities Act and the recommendation to prepare an RFQ (request for qualifications) for these projects. There was a brief discussion of the possibility of bonding for these projects.

Phil Ross spoke of the Action plan for these projects. High School Principal Dr. Rich Sanzo spoke of the NEASC survey and the need to put a plan in place.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to allow the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino to move forward with an RFQ for a Capital Improvement Plan. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

C. Board of Education Policies (First Reading)

1. Policy 3517.3 - Site Access/Closed Campus
2. Policy 5114 - Appendix
3. Policy 6159 - Individual Education Program/Special Education Program
4. Policy 6161.3 - Comparability of Services
5. Policy 6163.3 - Live Animals in the Classroom
6. Policy 6163.32 - Live Animals in the Classroom-Service Animals
7. Policy 6171 - Special Education
8. Policy 6146.11 - Grade Weighting and Class Rank

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to suspend the rules regarding Policy 3517.3 - Site Access/Closed Campus and vote to approve this policy as written. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Samantha Mannion explained that the change to this policy was necessary to be in compliance with the safety auditors. It includes a statement that all visitors must leave the school campus as soon as their business is completed.

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 August 30, 2018, as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

There was a brief discussion of some of the open positions. Pupil Personnel Director Andrea Einhorn spoke of the difference between school social workers vs. school psychologists.

There was a brief discussion of the Personnel Report and it was decided that Dr. Cosentino will simplify this report.

B. Panorama Community Survey

Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon spoke of the advantages of giving a Family Engagement Survey and a Social Emotional Learning survey and gave an overview of these surveys. This survey is administered by a company called Panorama Community Survey. He spoke of examples of questions and gave suggestions of when to offer this survey. There was a brief discussion of the uses of these surveys and the response rate. This survey was last administered in New Fairfield in 2015. It was noted that the district is required by the state to give a survey regarding bullying and this survey would include this.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the surveys by Panorama Education for the New Fairfield Public Schools. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

C. Acceptance of Donation

1. Prime Time Fitness

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the donation of a Fitness Station with an approximate value of \$3500 from Prime Time Fitness. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Dr. Sanzo noted that this piece of equipment was given from Prime Time Fitness and put in the weight room. Kimberly LaTourette thanked Lauren and Pat Toth from Prime Time Fitness for this donation.

D. Memorandum of Understanding with State Police - Executive Session

E. Ratification of the Agreement between the New Fairfield Board of Education and the New Fairfield Paraprofessionals of CSEA, Chapter 141 SEIU Local 2001, CTW-July 1, 2017-June 30, 2020 - Executive Session

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - John McCartney thanked Doug DeRito for all his work during his tenure on the Board of Education. He also thanked the entire Board for Education for working so well together. He noted that the Board of Selectman now includes the Personnel Report in their agenda and made that suggestion to the BOE.

X. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - The Board members made the following comments:

Rick Regan - Spoke of the public comment made by Pat Bower regarding a potential email breach. Mr. Regan noted that if there is any criticism regarding this, it should be made to the entire BOE and not just the Chairman.

Kimberly LaTourette - Spoke of the wonderful pictures on Twitter regarding the opening of schools.

Ed Sbordone - Thanked Doug DeRito for his tenure on the BOE. There was a brief discussion of the process for filling his vacancy.

Samantha Mannion - Thanked Doug DeRito for his service and encouraged members of the public to consider volunteering for a spot on the BOE.

Dominic Cipollone - Thanked Doug DeRito. Spoke of the improved transparency on the Board.

Greg Flanagan - Thanked Doug DeRito. He agreed with Mr. Regan regarding any criticism should be directed to the entire board and not just the Chairman.

Kathy Baker - Thanked the High School administration and staff for a warm welcome for freshmen.

Peggy Katkocin - Thanked Doug DeRito and noted that he will be missed on the Board.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING PARAPROFESSIONAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE STATE POLICE

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:44 p.m. to discuss the paraprofessional contract and the Memorandum of Understanding with the State Police and to invite Dr. Costentino into the Executive Session. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:11 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the draft of the MOA with the understanding that is being reviewed by counsel and there may be slight modifications, and to authorize the Superintendent to sign the MOA in final draft. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to recommend to the full Board to ratify the Agreement between the New Fairfield Board of Education and the New Fairfield Paraprofessionals of CSEA, Chapter 141 SEIU Local 2001, CTW - July 1, 2017-June 30, 2020 and to authorize Board Secretary Kimberly LaTourette to sign the contract. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

***Douglas J. DeRito
96 Gillotti Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812***

September 6, 2018

Ms. Pamela J. Dohan
Town Clerk
Town of New Fairfield
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812

Dear Ms. Dohan,

This letter is to advise that as of today, September 6, 2018, I have made the decision to step down from my position as a Member of the Town of New Fairfield Board of Education.

Since joining the Board of Education, I have experienced a lot of good change in the direction of our school district. I have seen active participation from the community to effect positive change, all in the interest of providing the finest in educational opportunities for all students.

As I step off the Board of Education, I want to thank first and foremost the Administration, our Teachers, our Para-Professionals, those who work so hard to maintain the public assets and provide a safe and exceptional environment for our children; and all those who served voluntarily to provide our children's needs. It takes an entire community to capitalize and provide the finest in educational opportunities for all our students. We have been blessed with some very dedicated professionals and our children are better off because of everyone's efforts. I hope I have played a small part in concert with my fellow residents and professionals in positioning our District for continuous improvement.

Secondly, I want to thank all my fellow Board members, past and present, that I have had the opportunity and honor to serve alongside. There is no doubt New Fairfield has had exceptional, dedicated fellow residents who have worked hard toward providing continuous improvement in our school district and who managed our tax dollars in a fiscally responsible fashion.

With the new level of transparency that the Board had worked on and now experiencing, along with a new Superintendent who is working hard toward continuous improvement, this is a good time to step

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aside and allow another resident to step in to assist in continuing our efforts to improve our educational opportunities for all students.

I will cherish my time as a Board member and know the District is in good hands to achieve continuous success. Thank you to all who have been a mentor or supporter of my personal efforts. It has been a wonderful experience for me personally and thank everyone for their support.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. DeRito

Cc: Town of New Fairfield Board of Education Members
Dr. Patricia Consentino, New Fairfield Superintendent of Schools
Republican Town Committee Chairman