

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 7:00 pm in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – February 15, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone,

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Pupil Personnel Director Maria Kennedy, High School Principal James D’Amico, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner and Athletic Director Mark Ottusch

Broadcast Coordinator Quintin Flower explained the procedures 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. January 24, 2024 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus
- B. January 30, 2024 - Special meeting - approved by consensus
- C. February 1, 2024 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to amend the agenda to move Action Item B “Demolition of Consolidated School” ahead of Information Items. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

The agenda was approved as amended by consensus.

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone reported on the following:
  - Spoke of the successful Field Fees committee meeting and the cooperation among everyone that uses the fields.
  - Spoke of the Education Cost Sharing Grant Sherman tuition and asked for a future discussion between the BOF and the BOS as to why these funds go to the Town instead of the BOE.

B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Kenneth Crow

- Noted that Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck has started her tenure in New Fairfield and welcomed her to the district.
- Thanked everyone that participated in the very successful Strategic Planning.
- There will be no school for students on Friday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, Monday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>. Friday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> will be professional learning days for the staff.

C. Student Representative Reports

Senior Representative Brennan Hearty noted that:

- No School for students on Friday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, Monday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be a college planning night for Juniors on February 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Juniors will be taking the SATs in the near future.

Junior Representative Emilia Sedlak noted that:

- Yearbooks will be available for purchase from now until April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Thanked everyone involved in planning the very successful "Student Equity and Action Team" workshop.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on February 13<sup>th</sup> and discussed the year-to-date budget summary. To date, there is a trend towards a deficit in Special Education. This will be monitored closely. The PBC is currently getting bids for demolition of the old Consolidated School. The subcommittee met in Executive Session to review the transportation contract.

2. Field Fees - Ed Sbordone noted that this committee met on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following items that are in the five-year capital plan.

- 2024-2025 Stadium Turf/Track replacement- \$600,000 is requested in the upcoming budget.
- 2026-2027 Stadium lighting replacement - \$440,000.
- 2028-2029 Rebel Field Turf replacement - \$450,000.

The committee discussed the need to replace the track and noted that it needs to be done at the same time as the turf. They reviewed three quotes for the turf and track replacement.

The committee also reviewed the field fees per athlete and heard from several youth organizations regarding the field fees. It was decided that this the newly updated fees should be reviewed further for possible amendments. The previous fee scheduled will be in place until the committee can review this further.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Parks and Recreation Commission - The Parks and Rec Commission meeting scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> was cancelled.

**Demolition of Consolidated School**

Scott Pellman from Colliers Project Leaders spoke of the process for going out to bid for the demolition. The drawings for the demolition do not include the bus lot. It is anticipated that this will go out to bids in April. It was noted that the fields can still be used during the abatement process.

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board that the Board of Education certify that the Consolidated Early Learning Academy Phase 2 Demolition and abatement of existing school final plans and project manual as prepared for bidding and dated December 13, 2022, and the professional cost estimate, dated December 15, 2023, have been reviewed and approved for this project on the dates shown above. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone.

## VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Temporary Bus Parking Lot Update - Dr. Craw noted that the conference with the Land Use judge scheduled for Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to inclement weather. There is no information about rescheduling at this time.

B. Board of Education Policies (First Reading)

1. Policy 4121 - Substitute Teachers
2. Policy 5118 - Nonresident Students

C. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Update - Athletic Director Mark Ottusch gave information about the stipend position that was requested in the 2024-2025 budget. The stipends will be used for administrative support, game management coordinator, and site support staff. There was a discussion of additional costs and it was noted that Pay to play has increased to \$150 per sport per athlete. Gate receipts also offset the athletic costs.

## VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the Personnel Report for February 8, 2024, as recommended by the administration. Kim LaTourette seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone.

C. New Fairfield High School Graduation 2024

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of June 21, 2024, as the graduation date for the NFHS Class of 2024. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone.

D. Board of Education Policy- Suspension of the rules (referring to Policy 1330)

1. Policy 1330 - Use of School Facilities

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to suspend the rules referring to Policy 1330. Kim LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone.

**MOTION:** Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of Board of Education Policy 1330 - Appendix B as presented, until further review. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone.

**IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** - None

## XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Sue Huwer spoke of many concerns regarding the solar project and asked that the Board discuss this at a future meeting.

Greg Flanagan asked for more information regarding the allocation of Sherman tuition revenue.

Kim LaTourette encouraged everyone to attend the budget presentations and subsequent meetings to get correct information regarding the budget.

Ed Sbordone spoke of his disappointment that no Board of Finance members attended this meeting and encouraged attendance in the future.

**XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING ATTORNEY CLIENT MEMO PERTAINING TO BOARD GOVERNANCE**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:03 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Attorney Client memo pertaining to Board Governance and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw into the Executive Session. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:28 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos