

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, September 12, 2017**

NOTICE: A full meeting recording can be obtained from Fairfield Public Schools. Please call 203-255-8371 for more information and/or see the FPS website (under Board Meeting Minutes) for a link to FAIRTV.

Call to Order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Marc Patten (arrived 7:42PM), Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Trisha Pytko, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 15 members of the public.

New Business

Appointment of BoE CAC Area 2 Representative

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education appoint Mr. Tom Flynn as the BoE CAC Area 2 Representative.

Mr. Dwyer explained that Mr. Flynn's term expired so the Board needs to reappoint him. The bylaws of the CAC state that the BoE has to elect this representative to the CAC.

Motion Passed: 8-0

(Mr. Patten was not in the room at this time)

Discussion of Priorities for Excellence: Facilities #2: Study and determine best use of all facilities through engaging community input on 'structural change' with the assistance of engaging an outside consultant.

Dr. Jones said structural change involves more than facilities alone; Milone and MacBroom consultants will study 10-year enrollment projections, facility usage, racial imbalance and demographics. Other cost-saving changes are being implemented including a bus transportation waitlist (for students in walk zones) and elementary enrollment confirmation. The FEA has also created a committee to bring efficiency ideas forward.

Mr. Dwyer said the Bylaws allow for the formation of an adhoc committee. A broad-based committee to study structural change would include members from the BOE, BOS, BOF, RTM, FEA, non-certified staff, and PTA.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly is in favor of the formation of this committee.

Mr. Llewellyn suggested adding high school students as members.

Mrs. Gerber: What would the timeline be? Would the result be something the Board would vote on? Would the committee bring options or make recommendations?

Mrs. Liu-McCormack suggested that ideas be presented with pros and cons.

Ms. Pytko is also in favor, and asked if the consultant would be used in the committee.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that budgets use enrollment projections. Dr. Jones added that it would be helpful to have the new committee in place before the Milone and MacBroom October presentation.

Mrs. Gerber:

- What will Milone and MacBroom will be doing? Dr. Jones said they will be providing 10-year enrollment projections and reporting on facility usage.
- If Milone and MacBroom suggested closing a school – would it be cost-based? Dr. Jones said it would depend on the information presented and expected cost savings.
- Will the meetings be public and will FAIRTV cover the meetings? Mr. Dwyer said the public meetings will be noticed. He also advised that the committee should have some provision for public comment.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said this is akin to an operational audit, but felt there should be some direction on required outcome – unlike what happened with the Communication Committee. All feasible ideas should be brought forward before January.

Mr. Aysseh said the written charge should include deadlines and should be complete before recruiting volunteers. Having a charge would prevent the group from starting and going beyond scope.

Mr. Patten agreed; a charge is needed prior to recruiting.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly disagreed; should recruit now and not wait 2 weeks for approval. Empower the Chair to reach out now to Town Boards.

Mr. Dwyer said that is his intent - to draft a commission statement by end of the week. Requested Board comments on the statement before the next meeting.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said the committee should have a balance of school representation.

Mrs. Gerber said it would be helpful to research previous elementary and middle school space usage committees that were comprised of a cross-section of different Town bodies.

Mr. Aysseh: When are the results expected? Should specify expected dates to stay on track.

Mr. Dwyer said he would like to have the results in time to help inform next year's budget cycle. There may be some ideas that cannot be implemented for several years.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly hoped an initial report would be ready by December. Dr. Jones said the district hopes to be as inclusive as possible to get great input.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack recommended being all-inclusive and inviting people who don't usually have a voice.

<i>Approval of Minutes</i>

Approval of Special Meeting Minutes of August 29, 2017

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of August 29, 2017.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of Regular Minutes of August 29, 2017

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 29, 2017.

Motion Passed: 7-2

Favor: Mr. Patten, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Ms. Pytko, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

<i>Superintendent's Report</i>

Opening of School

Dr. Jones thanked Mr. Cullen and said schools are operating smoothly. Total enrollment projections are as expected and on target, although there are some shifts.

Racial Imbalance Update

Dr. Jones updated the Board on the September 6 Racial Imbalance meeting and resolution from the CT State Board of Education. The message from the State Board suggests the problem lies with the 10 other schools, not with McKinley. The State Board approved the district Timeline and issued a resolution to include the expansion of Open Choice; this is not an affordable solution. Dr. Rasmussen has calculated that an additional 945 Open Choice students would need to be added in the first year alone, with expansion each year thereafter. The State Board questions this number, so our calculations have been forwarded to the state for their review.

Mr. Dwyer said the State Board is stuck on the legal interpretation of the old 1968 law and regulation.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked if the Board could change the law; people seem to be very happy at McKinley.

Mr. Dwyer said the State Board could change the percentage in the regulation, but not the law.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: What is their definition of their technical assistance? Could we get a copy of this year's pink sheet? Dr. Jones said she will provide the pink enrollment sheet.

Mr. Dwyer said technical assistance includes discussions with the technical committee, and assistance with calculations. Mr. Llewellyn asked about further budget insights and cuts to ECS. Mr. Dwyer said every day there are new budget proposals.

Mr. Patten: How many other Towns fall under Racial Imbalance? Dr. Jones said one other locality; it has not necessarily been resolved by towns which created plans; this could be a concern. Mr. Dwyer said some towns were in the plan implementation phase.

Ms. Pytko: When do they check whether we are in compliance? Would they take us to court? Mr. Dwyer said plan re-approval will be required in June 2019. The attorney has consistently told the commission that there are limited ways to enforce this rule but they can file a complaint that could eventually end with us in court.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: Will going to court, as some are in favor of, result in loss of funding? Mr. Dwyer said there are various ways that we rely on the State, so if we don't comply, the State could make things difficult for us.

Mrs. Gerber: What was the impetus behind the change in meal payment? Mrs. Munsell said this was not due to cost-savings, but improved data access and IC integration. Was not an easy transition.

Committee/Liaison Reports

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Policy Committee reviewed the legislative updates.

Open Board Comment

Mrs. Gerber recognized the Fairfield Living Magazine article that featured Fairfield students and their mentors.

Public Comment

Sally Connelly, Tunxis Hill Road: Encourage productive discussion on McKinley.

Dabney Bowen, Verna Hill Road: Fight Racial Imbalance in court, it is an antiquated law. Has Board considered the cost of going to court versus the cost of complying with the racial imbalance law.

Monique Sudikoff, Lockwood Road: Feels that the law may not be as antiquated as some say. Town suffers when diversity is not spread out.

Frank Sahagian, Fairfield Resident: Enrollment projections are not accurate; should redistrict to solve Racial Imbalance.

Bob Smoler, FEA: Favors committee formation; members should be experienced with business and facilities backgrounds.

John Convertito, 62 Oyster Road: Applauds committee formation; should first be about the structure. Questioned the need to involve parents on the committee before you have a recommendation. Get facts first, keep emotion out.

Christine Vitale, Fairfield Resident: Committee has a big charge and should perhaps be 2 committees; some work is more short-term; other work is longer-term

Mr. Dwyer said 10-year enrollment projections are required by the state for project reimbursement.

Adjournment

Ms. Pytko moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM

Respectfully Submitted:
Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Board of Education
Secretary