

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, August 25, 2015**

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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 7:34PM. Present were members Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, John Convertito, Paul Fattibene (arrived 7:36PM), Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Eileen Liu-McCormack and Marc Patten were absent. Others present were Superintendent Dr. David Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, and approximately 15 members of the public.

Dr. Title introduced Mr. Mike Cummings as the new Director of Elementary Education.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

Approval of Minutes of the May 19, 2015 Regular Meeting

Mr. Convertito moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to rescind the prior action considering the vote on the May 19, 2015 minutes.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she would like to start the school year on a different foot.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if a supermajority was needed for a rescission.

Mr. Dwyer said a supermajority was not needed, as prior notice was given on the agenda.

Motion Passed: 4-3

Favor: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded, that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 19, 2015.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that the minutes should be passed. Unless this is an act of pure obstructionism, anyone who wants changes to the minutes should type them up and present them to the secretary. Amendments to these minutes have not been offered or noticed to the Board; she does not understand where the error lies in these minutes to make them objectionable.

Mr. Fattibene disagreed and disapproved of the tone; Board members may have a different point of view and each member votes on their conscience. Objects to Board members with different point of view being called obstructionist.

Motion Passed: 4-2-1

Favor: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn

Abstain: Ms. Karnal

New Business

Appointment of Advisory Committee on Redistricting

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education hereby moves to establish an Advisory Committee on Redistricting per Article 2, Section 4, Paragraph B, and approve the charge as described in the Commission Statement per Enclosure No. 1.

Mr. Fattibene asked if the motion is related to the commission statement as he had some changes to recommend.

Mr. Dwyer clarified that the commission statement has been revised, Board members have received the revised version in their latest packet.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about timing; asked (1) whether there were any interim dates prior to March 2016 (2) who the committee members were (3) whether the committee would meet beyond November (4) if the committee is allowed to expend any funds, and (5) the timing of community participation.

Mr. Dwyer said the committee will set the timetable; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Patten and Mr. Convertito have volunteered; the committee would meet beyond November and the use of funds can only be approved by Dr. Title.

Mr. Llewellyn asked which firm would be used and if the BOE or the Superintendent would approve the firm, and if there would be an RFP.

Dr. Title said he would discuss the firm with the committee. He is currently researching a firm used by CES for this type of work; he would rather not divulge the name at this point. There won't be an RFP but it has to go through the Town Purchasing Department. The Superintendent is not allowed to unilaterally sign off on the contract; if a Regional Service Center has vetted the firm as a consortium bid, then we are allowed to enter into an agreement with that firm.

Mr. Dwyer said the committee would report this to the Board.

Mr. Fattibene felt the committee purpose should be more broadly stated; depending on the committee findings, there may be situations where a smaller construction project may be appropriate, or perhaps even no construction; the purpose is to have district lines to redistribute the students where seats are available.

Mr. Llewellyn agreed with everything Mr. Fattibene said.

Mr. Fattibene moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the Commission Statement and change the phrase regarding the committee purpose:

"To review and, if appropriate, recommend multiple revision options to the attendance boundaries of the elementary schools with the goal of limiting the need for construction to accommodate population needs at the elementary level" to instead read:

"To review and, if appropriate, recommend multiple revision options to the attendance boundaries of the elementary schools **to efficiently and appropriately utilize school facilities for elementary school students.**" (new language in bold)

Mr. Dwyer said he did not have any problem with that phrasing.

Mr. Convertito requested inserting language that would reflect equality amongst the schools.

Mr. Dwyer said a policy exists that has this language.

Mr. Fattibene said the wording appropriately encompasses inequities.

Motion Passed 7-0

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Ms. Karnal seconded to postpone the vote until the next meeting.

Mr. Llewellyn requested to table this item due to the 2 missing members who are slated to be on the committee. The Board postponed the contract vote because Mr. Patten wasn't there, so we should postpone so that the 2 missing members can review the amendment made to the commission statement.

Ms. Karnal said we have postponed other votes when Board members were missing, we should respect Board members not present.

Mr. Dwyer would not support postponing, he has spoken to both members and neither had any comments on the commission statement. The meeting was postponed for reasons other than absent Board members. Everyone on the Board said we should have a committee so he sees no need to delay.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the business of the Board has to go forward; this does not rise to the level of previous postponements and she is not in favor of it.

Mr. Fattibene asked whether postponement would alter the committee reporting time and was told it would, and asked if the Board members missing tonight had discussed their interest in being on the committee and was told yes.

Motion Failed 2-5

Favor: Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dyer, Mr. Convertito, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

The original motion to approve the appointment of the advisory committee, as amended, Passed: 7-0

Mr. Dwyer asked the committee members to meet as soon as possible. He will attend until a Chair is appointed. In order to avoid confusion, non-committee Board members should not sit at the table during the meeting.

Discussion of Budget Timeline

Dr. Title and Mrs. Munsell reviewed the budget process cycle as enclosed.

Mr. Dwyer asked about the pension number discussion; Dr. Title and Ms. Munsell said that it will be preliminarily discussed in December, the pension number is usually revised in January or February. Ms. Munsell added that the Budget Prep Manual is also distributed to the Board; this is used by the administrators as a guide.

Ms. Karnal said from mid-November to early December there is a lot that is being captured and she asked whether legal expense review could be added to the Budget calendar. Dr. Title explained that reporting on legal fees is different than adding them to the budget calendar; the timeframe referenced is used for internal review.

Mr. Dwyer added that the Board may offer budget suggestions in October and again in January when line items are discussed and reviewed; updates on legal fees can be requested during the quarterly financial reports.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the strategic plan budget impact discussion will be separate. Dr. Title explained that the District Improvement Plan was approved post-budget of the current year. At the September 8 Meeting, he will provide the initiatives list which will include the first-year initiatives that can be accomplished. He will advise the Board in November of any known budgetary impact items that may be significant.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the January 12 date could be moved forward as the timeframe for Board budget review is too compressed. Other districts have a less compressed schedule, some Boards get their budgets prior to the New Year. Dr. Title said that would be hard to do given the December break; he would rather explain it at a meeting and present it rather than just send it out. The Board does have budget discussions in the fall, and the AON meeting in December also helps to inform the Board. The budget is triggered by the enrollment projections, which we don't get until after the October 1 enrollment numbers.

Mr. Llewellyn said he had asked for a crosswalk of the budget quarterly financials that could be tied back to the budget book but the Board hasn't received it yet. We don't have the compilation of accounts that get us from the projected numbers to the actual numbers. Mrs. Munsell asked for clarification of this request and asked for examples of the reports he was looking for; she thought he had previously requested projections. Mr. Llewellyn said he would send her a note.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the July 9, 2015 (6:30pm) Special Meeting

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the 6:30 pm Special Meeting of July 9, 2015.

Motion Passed: 5-2

Favor: Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn

Approval of Minutes of the June 10, 2015 Special Meeting

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 10, 2015.

Motion Passed: 6-0-1

Favor: Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn

Abstain: Mr. Fattibene

Superintendent Report

Legislative Update

Dr. Title reviewed the Legislative Update as enclosed. Some main points discussed:

1. Graduation Requirements have been delayed another year
2. The SAT will replace SBAC for 11th graders.
3. Curriculum for July 1, 2016 will include computer programming and CPR and Social Media will be required in 2016.
4. Physical restraint regulations – this will be a policy after regulations are issued.
5. Professional Development for dyslexia and cultural competency.
6. Administration of antiepileptic medication and vision screenings.
7. Restrictive rules for out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for young children.
8. Parents' rights and Paraprofessional attendance at PPT meetings; this will impact schedules and training.
9. Requirement to have a MOU with the Police Department; this is in progress.
10. DCF Reporting Requirements; the policy must be updated prior to February.
11. Notification requirements for pesticide use.
12. Changes on how schools and districts will be ranked.
13. Task force on life-threatening allergies in schools.
14. Employee online privacy. This restricts ability to access private accounts.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for confirmation that the SAT will be paid for by the State; Dr. Title confirmed this.

Mr. Dwyer asked why the SAT was not specifically mentioned in the legislative update; Dr. Title said that was due to the timing of the governor's announcement.

Ms. Karnal asked if graduation requirements can be discussed in the Policy Committee, even though they will be mandated by the state; immediate changes should be addressed. Dr. Title said the committee sets its own agenda, but it wouldn't be productive to discuss this until the state's requirements are set. The district will be moving ahead with the Capstone Project, even if not mandated by the state as it will be a tremendous value for students.

Mr. Convertito asked about page 12, alternative education – would this affect the Walter Fitzgerald Campus? Dr. Title said it would, but until we have guidelines there is no impact.

Mrs. Gerber asked about page 15 – Preschool Programs – does this impact us? Dr. Title said no.

Public Comment:

Tina Brown, Quaker Lane: Concerns on SAT prep classes.

Lisa Davy, Fairfield: Concerns on special education items.

Summer Construction Update:

Dr. Title said the amount of summer work that was undertaken and completed is phenomenal. Detail cannot be provided on the security upgrades, some are being phased in. The Capital Non-Recurring projects have come in at or under budget. Mr. Cullen said it has been a summer with many contractors working very hard. As soon as approval is given to enter new PO's for July 1, the work begins and projects continue throughout the summer. He gave a brief overview of some of the projects and referenced his detailed handout:

1. Burr – The gym stage dividing wall replacement came in under-budget, and allowed for re-use of the curtains.
2. Dwight - Septic system replacement. This was a difficult project that was a low bid and provided excellent results. The Health Dept. was very satisfied.
3. Holland Hill – New school sign.
4. Jennings - Boiler replacement project included emergency asbestos abatement work.

Mr. Convertito asked if the final cost included abatement and was told yes. It also included the consultant.

5. McKinley – New HVAC dehumidification system.
6. Mill Hill – Much needed painting.
7. OHS - New windows, new gym and new flooring.

Mrs. Gerber asked if there was any damage to the parking lot where the portable gym was placed; Mr. Cullen said minor patching was needed.

8. Riverfield – Large renovation project will open on time, several parts may be blocked off.
Dr. Title said he plans to have building committee chairmen attend the next 2 meetings to provide more detail on the Riverfield, Osborn Hill and Fairfield Ludlowe High School projects.
9. Fairfield Woods Middle School – Boiler room oil fuel tank project is in progress.
10. Roger Ludlowe Middle School – The field retaining wall project is complete.
11. Tomlinson – Too much water was going into the drains and overflowing into the cafeteria. A newly installed sump pump is working well.
Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if there was an issue with the snow and was told no.
12. Fairfield Ludlowe High School – The turf project is going very well despite the heat. The new product is a big improvement.
Ms. Karnal asked when this project was targeted to be completed and whether the loud banging has ceased. Mr. Cullen said it was scheduled to be completed this summer, however, there may be some issues with the cafeteria; it is a matter of getting the fire and health department issues met. The project is not considered complete until all change orders have been processed. Dr. Title said the students will still be accommodated for the first day of school; the new schedule will allow for lunch.
Mr. Convertito asked what the issues were. Mr. Cullen said it was nothing of concern; he didn't have the punch list with him.
13. Fairfield Warde High School – Finishing the roof replacement project. Dr. Title also mentioned the new hot water system and the rebuilding of the baseball infield.
14. Walter Fitzgerald Campus (WFC) and Central Office had minor items.
Ms. Karnal asked if the WFC offices did not have any air conditioning. Mr. Cullen said the air conditioning units were not working well to cool the areas; 2 classrooms and 2 offices were provided with air conditioning.

Public comment:

Lisa Davy, Fairfield Resident: Questions on Walter Fitzgerald and Central Office space; concerns about overnight parking signage at schools.

Racial Imbalance Update:

Dr. Title said McKinley is out of compliance with respect to racial balance. The State has approved our request to defer the Racial Imbalance Plan. This will be a major undertaking that will be in the District Improvement Plan. Is there a feasible solution with redistricting that will solve the problem? If the answer is no, then we will probably go back to the State and look for other ways to achieve the goal. The existing plan is helpful but is not enough; it stays in place until a new or amended plan is in place. The plan will be brought to the Board; he has already discussed with McKinley PTA Executive Board. This is a difficult issue that also involves looking at school capacity. This could work in sync with the redistricting consultant; we may need to get updated numbers on building capacity.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the updated capacity report would be prepared by the CES consultant. Dr. Title said yes; this firm did the same in Greenwich and it took 2 years. The firm is well respected by the State. The firm will not make any decisions – they are data analysts and gatherers. The firm will not be MGT.

Mr. Fattibene asked whether there will be any special meetings to engage the community and Dr. Title said this will be up to the Board.

Mr. Dwyer said the Town-Hall meeting format could be used again.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly agreed that this was a great idea. Dr. Title added that redistricting is only one of the options and the State would expect consideration of that.

Mr. Fattibene suggested the Pre-K program be revisited so that an equitable program is provided for all, preferably at no cost.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly mentioned that the Pre-K program is not ineffective but the net effect is not enough. Dr. Title said the program is within 3% of compliance.

Committee Liaison Reports

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the CAFE Policy Audit is in process.

Mr. Fattibene said there have been several referrals to the Transportation Committee.

Open Board Comment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Town-Hall meeting is a great idea and she requested a timeframe for the meetings.

Mr. Dwyer said that as soon as enough information is known he will provide a timeline; it is premature to set a date now.

Mr. Llewellyn mentioned that the legal fees report that was received shows that the fees are close to double what was budgeted and the fees are not all due to the labor contract. The Board has received letters regarding concerns with litigation spending; there are FOI request that have been outstanding for months; it would be good to get FOI requests completed including the FOI request of FOI requests and outcomes. It would be interesting to see what people are requesting and how long the responses take.

Executive Session

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that the Board of Education hereby moves to enter into Executive Session under CGS 1-200(6)(A) to discuss personnel matters; under CGS 1-200(6)(E) to discuss confidential student expulsion records under CGS 1-210(b)(17), and invite Mrs. Parks and Mrs. Leffert to attend as appropriate.

Motion passed 7-0

The Board went into Executive Session at 9:40PM.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:25PM.

Mr. Convertito moved, Ms. Karnal seconded to add an item to the agenda regarding Dr. Title working in a position outside of the school district.

Motion Passed 7-0

Mr. Convertito moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board allow Dr. Title to accept a paid teaching position at Sacred Heart University on his own time on Saturdays and one Friday for the fall semester.

Mr. Convertito said Dr. Title was approached by Sacred Heart University to teach a graduate class for the fall semester on his own time and per his contract, Board approval is required.

Dr. Title asked if a separate motion would be required for teaching during the spring semester and was told yes.

Mr. Dwyer expressed discomfort for approving how Dr. Title spends his free time and he gave the example of Dr. Title being paid to call a hockey game, and asked whether that should be an agenda item for approval as well.

Mr. Llewellyn read from the contract and said Board approval for paid employment is specifically stated in the contract.

Mr. Fattibene said the Chair should not feel uncomfortable complying with the contract.

Mr. Convertito moved to call the question; Mr. Dwyer said this was not necessary.

Motion Passed 7-0

Adjournment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:35PM

*Respectfully Submitted by
Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Board of Education
Secretary*