

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, February 14, 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 7:36PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:40PM), Marc Patten, Donna Karnal (arrived 7:40PM), Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Anthony Calabrese, Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, student representatives Catherine Behjati, Ashley Agrello and Brittany Shuster, and approximately 10 members of the public.

*Student Reports*

Ms. Behjati reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School: Warde and Ludlowe culinary students served a Valentine's Day Luncheon at the Senior Center, paid for by a PTAC grant; this week is Random Acts of Kindness Week with each day featuring a different theme; 17-18 course selection is underway.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked how students will participate in day 5 of the Random Acts of Kindness week, as school is not in session. Ms. Behjati said students can thank staff each day.

Ms. Agrello and Ms. Shuster reported for Fairfield Warde High School: course selection is taking place; the LMC re-design project has 5 teams competing; Black History Month is being celebrated with a special daily bulletin, bulletin board and morning announcements; the Debate Team had a great match with three 1<sup>st</sup> place wins for Varsity and one first place for the Individual Speaker category; 173 students participated in the American Mathematics exam; student council is planning a Warde "Can You Do It" day.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if there were any reports on sports. The students mentioned the combined hockey team senior night and the Warde dance team competition.

Mrs. Gerber added that the FLHS Boys 4x800 Indoor Relay won Class L Championship.

Mr. Calabrese said the Warde Boys and Girls Basketball teams will be in FCIACs.

*New Business*

*Approval of Holland Hill Ed-Specs*

Mr. Dwyer said the intent of having revised ed-specs was to match the current Holland Hill (HH) plan in a clear format. He asked Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly to discuss her technical changes.

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Patten seconded that the Board of Education approve the Holland Hill Ed-Specs as enclosed.

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly referenced Enclosure 1a, page 4 – Why was the bullet with the replacement/installation of lockers removed? Mr. Morabito said that was crossed out in error.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to add back the deleted bullet point on page 4 – "replacement/addition of lockers to accommodate increasing enrollment.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if all the lockers are being replaced and whether the lockers were actually used. Mr. Cullen said lockers are used; they are rusting inside and must be replaced.

**Motion Passed: 6-3**

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, page 2 – should the reference to the dedicated science room be removed? Mr. Cullen said the issue came up for McKinley and Burr to have a science room/lab but the idea didn't really take off. The science rooms are not used as specific science rooms. The science/lab classroom is difficult to use as a general classroom with all the extra equipment, such as an eye-wash station. This reference should be removed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded, to delete the word "science" on page 2.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack – are we certain that we won't need it? Why was this originally included? How much is being saved by doing away with this? Could we use the science rooms as regular classrooms? Concerned with consistency; would like some flexibility in ed-specs to keep this. Dr. Jones said she would not recommend having a lab – this is more suited for high school students; elementary schools shouldn't be using any chemicals that would require a fume hood; fume hoods are not less than \$10K. Mr. Cullen said he can get the exact savings amount. Mr. Dwyer said the MGT report may have identified it as a deficiency and was therefore included in the ed-specs.

Mr. Llewellyn – If this was in the ed-specs but not built, were ed-specs amended and forwarded to the state? Mr. Morabito said no, this was not required in the process. Mr. Quinn added that the science room was listed in Riverfield's ed-specs, but central office determined that it was not needed.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- Page 7 – under the Common/Core Spaces – will the two staff workrooms include a copy room? Mr. Morabito said yes; one is a faculty dining area and one is a copy room; this was not a change. Mr. Quinn had a similar question and said he was satisfied with this explanation.
- Page 4 – where in the document is the reference to the secure entry vestibule? Mr. Morabito said it was erroneously crossed out and should be added back in.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to add back the deleted bullet point on page 4 – "Addition of secure entry vestibule and increased security measures."

Ms. Karnal questioned about items being added back in – she felt she should be looking at a proper document without cross-outs and said the process was a fiasco.

Mr. Dwyer said the quick-turn-around of the document resulted in a few missed points; the BOF will review this on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Dr. Jones added that she feels confident that we are on the same page; she would like to see these approved to avoid delay. Amendments are part of the normal process.

**Motion Passed: 8-0-1**

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

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- Page 4 – uncomfortable with the final blue bullet - much of what is listed is already present. Dr. Jones said that while rooms may exist, they may be moved – this is still in concept.
- Page 5 – Should sinks only be for new classrooms? Mr. Morabito said existing general classrooms already have sinks and no change is required.
- Page 6 – Why are there 2 LA rooms, thought some rooms were for shared space? Mr. Morabito said shared space is at the discretion of the principal.

Mr. Llewellyn asked the square footage of the following offices; answers (in square feet) are from Mr. Morabito; approximately 750-800 square feet is a normal size classroom. Dr. Jones said these spaces are all used as work areas and shouldn't be labeled as offices.

IIT Office – 120

Psychologist Office – 288

Social Worker's Office – 125

Gifted Teacher Room – 323. This is also a teaching space for up to 5 students.

Language Arts – 281. Combined with Speech.

Spanish Office - 164

Mr. Dwyer added that these are flexible work spaces and may be used differently each year. Dr. Jones agreed. Mr. Quinn noted that Riverfield has 15 resource rooms that vary by size. The committee's job is to provide the space; the staff decides on its use.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, page 7 – why a 6-bus queue? Mrs. Cretella said this will be needed for 3 large and 3 small buses. In the afternoon, 1 bus goes to Wakeman.

Mr. Llewellyn confirmed with Mrs. Cretella that there is no change in enrollment that is driving the bus queue.

Mr. Dwyer – How many parking spaces? Mr. Quinn said 92-100 parking spaces.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- Why isn't solar included in this work? Mr. Morabito said the state grant for solar is a competition that takes place in March and April; he anticipates participating next year.
- How to ensure that we meet the June 30 deadline? Can you walk the steps backward? Mr. Morabito said the filing by June 30 will include three standard resolutions, ed-specs, and full-funding for the project. The building committee brings forward the funding request which goes to the BOS, the BOF and the RTM before June 30.

Mr. Llewellyn

- Questioned the reimbursement rate and said the Board should consider that it might be zero; he referenced a document that outlined a new state procedure. Mr. Morabito said the reimbursement rate is based on the submission date of June 2017. The rate for 2017 has already been established and is published.
- What was the reimbursement rate for Riverfield? Mr. Morabito said 26.79; repairs are usually not reimbursable.

- What is the current budget, and what will be the true number and reimbursement rate? Mr. Quinn said the project is currently at \$18.553M and is expected to go down further. Reimbursed monies go back to the Town. Mr. Dwyer added that the average reimbursement is 20-21%, but hard to tell until filings are complete. Mr. Quinn said the preferred timeline is May 3 - BOS, May 4 - BOF and May 22 - RTM, but if that is not possible, then May 31 - BOS, June 6 - BOF and June 26 - RTM.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said the renovation has to happen but she is concerned with the expansion. Would like the Building Committee to make reductions and wants the 504 to be reconsidered.

Mr. Dwyer said the majority of the Board feels it should be built to a 504 and should last 30-50 years.

Mr. Patten

- What is a resource room? Mr. Quinn said resource rooms encompass all support services. Mrs. Cretella added that resource rooms are for students and small groups.
- Thought the Board voted to include page 9 definitions from the previous meeting packet? Mrs. Gerber checked Mr. Calabrese's handwritten motion and said page 9 was not included.

Mr. Dwyer

- Should the size of the KDG classroom be changed from 1000 +/- square feet? Mr. Cullen said no; some KDG classrooms are 800 sq. feet.
- What is the number of computer seats referencing? Mr. Morabito said it was reduced from 28 to 25, matching the maximum classroom size.
- Is the staff dining room described in 2 different ways? Mr. Morabito said yes, it is a faculty working room and dining area.
- What is the large office supply space? Does it meet the spec? Mr. Morabito said yes; it is the custodial supply storage space and office.
- Funding of the KDG playground repair/replacement was discussed – the ed-specs as they are would make the playground part of the plan. Mr. Cullen said initially the playground was to be repaired and moved to accommodate construction. After it was determined that the playground would be in the way of the construction and due to it being rusty – the decision was made to demolish and replace it at a cost of approximately \$100K-\$120K.

Mr. Calabrese asked what KDG students are currently using in lieu of the playground. Mrs. Cretella reiterated that the KDG playground that was demolished was not safe and not up to code. Currently, the KDG students are using the lower playground.

Mr. Dwyer asked the Board if the playground should be part of the ed-specs or put into the operating budget.

Mr. Patten – Thinks it should be in the ed-specs. How old was the playground? Mr. Cullen said one piece of equipment was from 1959. Mr. Quinn said if the Board wishes, the building committee will put it back in.

Mr. Calabrese agreed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for clarification of the language – regarding the area being disturbed by construction. Mr. Quinn said there are 2 separate things – the area is being used for construction, and the equipment needed to be replaced.

Ms. Karnal

- Asked about the number of bathrooms. Mr. Morabito said 4 staff bathrooms, 2 large gang bathrooms, 2 smaller gang bathrooms, 8 classroom bathrooms/single toilets, the nurse's office bathroom, and the kitchen staff bathroom, which is not for public use.

- Are any marked as transgender bathrooms per CT law? Mr. Quinn said that they will do that – while these are schematic drawings, the bathrooms will be marked appropriately.

Mr. Dwyer asked if all of Mr. Quinn’s requests for clarification had been addressed and was told yes.

**Vote on the motion “that the Board of Education approve the Holland Hill Ed-Specs as enclosed, and amended on pages 2 and 4” passed: 6-2**

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

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

*(Mrs. Liu-McCormack was not present.)*

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the project could be bid with a non-state vendor. Mr. Quinn said that it must be bid with a prevailing wage, which means union, to get any type of reimbursement. If he could get cheaper vendors with the same quality – he would.

*Approval of Minutes*

*Approval of the Minutes of the January 17, 2017 Special Meeting*

*Approval of the Minutes of the January 24, 2017 Special Meeting*

*Approval of the Minutes of the January 26, 2017 Regular Meeting*

Mr. Dwyer asked the Board to vote on all three sets of minutes at one time; the Board agreed.

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 17, the Special Meeting of January 24 and the Regular Meeting of January 26, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 6-2**

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

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

*(Mrs. Liu-McCormack was not present.)*

*Superintendent Report*

Dr. Jones thanked Mr. Quinn for his work on the Holland Hill project. The district had its first snow day on Thursday; the roads on Friday were not as clear as expected. She thanked the PTA for the wonderful Riverfield assembly with Tom Chapman; she also attended the ice-hockey game. The Racial Imbalance Plan work continues with the timeline task. On the budget-side at the state level, the district must stay engaged - the impact to Fairfield is enormous. The retirement numbers being discussed are equivalent to 122 teachers over a 2-year period; the special education grant may be reduced and also flow through the town-side. On a positive note, the PTAC approved a grant for Mind-Up, a fabulous program that provides seed money for teacher training on student stress and anxiety. The Ludlowe/Warde Basketball game takes place tomorrow night.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly – What is the rationale for the movement of the special education money? Dr. Jones said she wasn’t sure. On paper, it will look as though the Town is getting additional money, but doesn’t show the negative impact to the school side.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked about scheduling the Town Hall forum and requested clarification on the Hearing for Racial Imbalance.

Mr. Dwyer said that the state BOE, BOE, and Town attorneys agreed that public comment at a regular Board meeting satisfied the Hearing requirement on Racial Imbalance. However, the BOE attorney has suggested a separate Hearing for the upcoming discussion on the Racial Imbalance Plan to occur at 7:00 pm prior to a regular meeting.

Mr. Llewellyn – Will the Hearing be limited to 30 minutes before a BOE meeting?

Mr. Dwyer said no. The BOE meeting will start immediately following the Hearing; people will not be cut off.

*Committee/Liaison Reports*

Mrs. Gerber said the BOF sent the OHS walkway project back to the BOS due to new information that was received; at this time, it is not moving forward in terms of funding.

Ms. Pytko said SEPTA is hosting a silent auction fundraiser on April 1 at Anna Liffey's.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the PTAC, in addition to sponsoring the Valentine Lunch and the Mind-Up program, they approved a grant for a clay table at McKinley. Additionally, the PTAC coordinated efforts with all schools to participate in the Random Acts of Kindness week.

*Open Board Comment*

Mr. Dwyer said bathroom labeling is an important issue and should be addressed. He requested input regarding scheduling the Town Hall forum which is in the by-laws to occur twice per year.

Mrs. Gerber said evenings are preferable; she suggested Board members respond with open dates for March and April.

Mr. Dwyer referred to the budget process and said the BOE will wait for the RTM to adopt a budget before reacting.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Board may want to consider an additional meeting if cuts are needed; it is hard to discuss sizeable numbers all in one night.

Mr. Dwyer said a special meeting could occur between the first and second meetings in May. He also mentioned the possible need for executive sessions regarding personnel issues and discussion of superintendent progress.

*Adjournment*

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

**Motion Passed: 7-0**

*(Mrs. Liu-McCormack and Mr. Patten were not present.)*

Meeting adjourned at 9:40PM.