

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, February 16, 2016**

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 Special Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:34PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:37PM), Marc Patten, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Anthony Calabrese, Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. David Title, Ludlowe student representatives Mihir Nene and Isabella Frango; Warde student representative Brittany Shuster; members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 20 members of the public.

Student Reports

Mr. Nene and Ms. Frango reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School. 8th grade parent night, superlative photos and the dodgeball tournament all happened recently. The a Capella concert and sophomore dance take place soon; juniors will be taking the SAT instead of CAPT.

Mrs. Maxon-Kenelly confirmed that the a Capella concert includes middle school students as well and said it will take place on Friday at Tomlinson Middle School.

Mrs. Gerber congratulated the student representatives for their superlative awards.

Ms. Shuster reported for Fairfield Warde High School. The Coaches for Cancer event raised over \$1K, the CAPT Science test for all 10th graders takes place on March 3, the solar panels will be completely installed shortly, and course selection is wrapping up.

Mr. Dwyer asked about the costumes at the recent basketball game and was told it is a senior tradition that is just for fun.

Presentations

Superintendent Search Process

Mr. Rader, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), thanked the Board of Education for its membership and he hopes to continue the good relationship. He has made this presentation over 55 times to various Boards and is well-versed in what questions might arise. He reviewed the Superintendent Search Guide that he had provided and emphasized a few key points:

- Encouraged the Board to use Dr. Title as a source of information until the candidates are named.
- Encouraged the Board to do as much as possible in front of the public and to update the public regularly.
- Recommended that the Board appoint itself as a whole to be the search committee. The Board, as agents of the state, will uphold confidentiality.
- Encouraged the Board to hire a consultant for the search process. The consultant will facilitate the search process and handle all the paperwork. Recommended consultants include CES, CABE and NESDEC.

Ms. Pytko asked for names of other recommended consultants and Mr. Rader said he could provide those.

Mr. Dwyer asked if a Massachusetts search firm could be used and Mr. Rader said yes, although CT has some unique aspects to it that may be better understood by a CT search firm.

Ms. Karnal asked if multiple candidates might be represented by the same search firm and was told yes. Mr. Rader said the best place to advertise is the Education Week magazine, which can be expensive.

Mr. Patten asked if a search firm could represent more than one district and was told yes. Mr. Rader added that the consultant works for the Board not the candidate.

Ms. Karnal said the Board has the right to have a contract clause that defines exclusivity of candidates; she expressed concern about the number of qualified candidates within CT, given the number of searches. Mr. Rader said having a clause like that would be limiting and inadvisable.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about the number of active searches within CT, and how many have concluded within the last few years. Mr. Rader said approximately 15 are active; CAPSS will have the number for the last few years.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked if the Board could have two advisors; one to focus within CT and one nationwide. Mr. Rader said having 2 separate firms with 2 contracts could create conflict; he would recommend choosing 1 firm and working with CABA in a collaborative agreement.

Mr. Rader added that the selection process averages 5-6 months and the cost is approximately \$20K. He mentioned other aspects of the search and stressed the importance of a unanimous vote when appointing the superintendent.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked about specific factors that may have influenced (Westport superintendent) Dr. Landon's decision to accept a position in CT after working in NY. Mr. Rader said he could not comment on that.

Mr. Patten asked about staff roles during the search and Mr. Rader said they should be consulted.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that all paperwork would be handled by the consultant.

Mr. Dwyer and Ms. Karnal thanked him for his informative presentation.

Racial Imbalance

Dr. Title referenced the enclosures and provided some history on racial imbalance. He introduced Mr. Zuba and Mr. Gallagher from Milone and MacBroom. The firm was hired to aid the district in resolving the racial imbalance at McKinley.

Mr. Zuba said Milone and MacBroom has been doing annual enrollment projections and facility utilization work for the last 15 years; the bulk of their work has been within Fairfield County including Greenwich, Trumbull and Milford. Work is predicated on October 1 enrollments. Mr. Zuba and Mr. Gallagher presented the Conceptual Redistricting Options for Racial Balance Plan with the following highlights:

- Projections are based on district and individual school projections. Projection assumptions, demographic, housing, and birth trend data are used.
- Elementary capacity and facility utilization were researched and projected out to 2026.
- BOE approved "Redistricting: Guiding Principles" were adhered to.
- Preliminary redistricting scenarios A, B and C were not viable long-term solutions.
- Conceptual redistricting scenario D focused only on racial imbalance at McKinley, and resulted in impending imbalance for Holland Hill.
- Conceptual redistricting scenario E would move 560 K-4 students and conceptual scenario F would move 773 K-4 students.

Ms. Pytko thanked the team for their presentation and asked if new construction with affordable housing was considered, given that there are many possible multi-family tear-downs that could be converted to condos. Mr. Zuba said this would not be likely to happen with 10 years, although there is growth there. Typically, that housing is tailored to young professionals and does not generate a lot of students, although he could not speculate on the possibility of future tear-downs.

Mr. Patten said there is a wealth of data in this report; it was focused on 15/16, but the Holland Hill and Mill Hill projects wouldn't be finished for several years. Mr. Gallagher said this is understood; data from previous years is used for the persistency ratio. Mr. Zuba advised that the state understands the rationale; projections can be revisited when school construction is complete.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly mentioned that the question is more a manner of how it is presented to the state, and is not really an issue for the consultants. Mr. Zuba agreed; this is a planning tool and is the best available analysis.

Mr. Patten asked if a model was created for the second pocket redistricting that was mentioned in Option D; he would be interested in seeing that. Mr. Zuba said this was not fully vetted and not presented.

Dr. Title added that further conversation about viable options is needed. He recommends presenting this report to the state and requesting more time for other options; the community does not want redistricting and the numbers are actually improving. One approach may be to have something attractive at McKinley to draw other families there on a voluntary basis. He reminded the Board that Milone and MacBroom were only tasked with solving the racial imbalance problem at McKinley.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked why no reference to the Jennings portable or class sections? Is there any need for tangible evidence that the community does not want redistricting? Mr. Zuba said portables were only counted when used for core academics. Dr. Title said the section level of detail was not discussed. He will ask the state if it needs additional evidence regarding community sentiment on redistricting; but Board sentiment is important as a reflection of community sentiment.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned this plan is an academic exercise and there is no intent to implement it.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked how many other districts are out of compliance. Mr. Zuba said the compliance report is released in May; he guessed fewer than 5 are out of balance at 25%. The state recognizes this is a moving target and compliance takes time; the state is looking for a good faith effort.

Mr. Llewellyn asked:

- Is pocket redistricting not a viable solution? Mr. Zuba said the best result was 24%; it is predicated on moving those students to Holland Hill which does not have brick and mortar space.
- Is it possible to move students to another school? Mr. Gallagher said no – then it would not be a contiguous district; the highest minority population is on the Holland Hill border.
- On page 9, to what do you attribute this Birth-K trend? Mr. Zuba said there are different drivers in each community, but this same trend has been seen in 5 or 6 other communities.
- What are your confidence levels around the biggest drivers? Mr. Gallagher said the regression analysis was 85% in the drivers of home sales and unemployment.

Mrs. Gerber thanked the team for the detailed work. Scenarios D, E and F impact the middle and high school feeder structure and the public should be aware. There may also be additional costs with possible grandfathering and busing.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the current functional capacity of FLHS was used. Dr. Title said the pre-addition capacity was used.

<i>New Business</i>

Approval of the Superintendent Search Committee

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education be appointed as the Search Committee for the purpose of conducting a Superintendent search.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of the FWMS Partial Re-Roof Educational Specifications

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve the FWMS Partial Re-Roof Educational Specifications.

Motion passed: 9-0

Approval of the Fairfield Public Schools – Security Project Educational Specifications

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the Security Project Educational Specifications.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that the ed-specs appear differently due to the security aspect.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly questioned whether it followed the state format. Mr. Morabito said the state is in agreement with the format.

Motion passed 9-0

Approval of the Dwight UI Energy Opportunities Project

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve the Dwight UI Energy Opportunities Project, as enclosed.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about the actual savings on other similar projects that were done. Mr. Morabito said the actual savings have been correct as indicated.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if this impacts the budget. Mr. Morabito said this may impact the following year due to the implementation timeline.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about the payback period and Mr. Morabito said under 4 years.

Motion Passed 9-0

Approval of the Osborn Hill UI Energy Opportunities Project

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve the Osborn Hill UI Energy Opportunities Project, as enclosed.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about the payback period. Mr. Morabito said 36 months.

Mr. Patten asked why the shorter payback period? Mr. Morabito responded that Dwight will also get a solar panel project.

Motion Passed 9-0

Approval of Dwight Re-roof Project TMP-051-GTLZ

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Patten seconded that the Board of Education accept the Dwight re-roof Project TMP-051-GTLZ.

Mr. Llewellyn asked what is the final reimbursement? Mr. Morabito said approximately 25% of the total cost; he will check on the exact number; this was recently filed and has not yet been received.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked how old is the roof and what is the guarantee period? Mr. Morabito said the roof is just a few months old, as it was recently completed in September; the guarantee is 20 years.

Motion Passed 9-0

Approval of the Osborn Hill Project, 051-0124

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that the Board of Education accept the Osborn Hill Project, 051-0124 as complete.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked what is the hold up with the connector? Mr. Morabito said the committee is meeting with the Town attorney to determine final dollars. After that is decided, it will go out to bid.

Mrs. Gerber added that the building committee is meeting this week.

Mr. Llewellyn asked why the project falls under code violation. Mr. Morabito responded that state filing rules put remediation in that category.

Motion Passed 9-0

First Reading of Policies for Deletion

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the CABA audit found several redundant policies and recommended deletion. Other policies will be re-codified to be consistent with CABA. She asked the Board to submit any questions or comments prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Dwyer said the vote will occur at the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the January 12, 2016 Special Meeting

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 12, 2016.

Motion Passed: 7-1-1

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

Oppose: Mr. Llewellyn

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack

Approval of the Minutes of the January 19, 2016 Special Meeting

Ms. Pytko moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 19, 2016.

Motion Passed 7-2

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Approval of the Minutes of the January 26, 2016 Special Meeting

Mr. Patten moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 26, 2016.

Motion Passed 7-2

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Approval of the Minutes of the January 28, 2016 Regular Meeting

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 28, 2016.

Motion Passed 7-2

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Superintendent Report

Dr. Title spoke about his recent retirement announcement. He has a tremendous interest in the district - both personally and professionally. He would be very happy to play a role in the transition, is optimistic about the future of the school system and he is interested in seeing the district grow.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if there are any issues from Town meetings? Dr. Title said the financial report has been presented to the Board of Finance and there were no issues. However, the excess cost grant is reduced in the governor's budget by \$8 million and may be reduced in Fairfield by \$250K if approved by the legislature, but this won't affect the current year. Action on the IT server room has been postponed.

Mr. Dwyer said the capital projects are still on the RTM meeting schedule, except for the IT server item.

Mr. Patten asked is there one more healthcare report? Dr. Title said this is updated monthly now, there will be 2 more months of projections. After the RTM vote, there is still a 3-month unknown.

Committee/Liaison Report

Mr. Dwyer said he will be a liaison to the Holland Hill building committee as opposed to being a voting member; this also impacts the SPSBC to have a liaison rather than voting position.

Open Board Comment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly encouraged all Board members to attend the a Capella night at TMS on Friday. Tickets will be available at the door.

Mr. Dwyer is unavailable for the 2/22 RTM committee meeting and confirmed that Mr. Patten will attend.

Adjournment

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

Motion Passed 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 PM

*Respectfully submitted by
Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Public Schools
Board of Education
Secretary*