

DRAFT Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, August 29, 2017

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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 7:37PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Marc Patten, 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.

Public Comment

Jill Vergara, Sherman: Support of Sherman bus loop project.

New Business

Facilities Plan and Waterfall Update

Mr. Dwyer said the waterfall chart enclosure shows various projects spread out over 10 years; the town-wide goal is to stay under 10% of the overall operating budget. The facilities plan was adopted in 2015 and is revised as needed. It is also reviewed at the Board of Finance Capital Planning Workshop.

Mr. Cullen reviewed the Facilities Plan booklet, summary sheet and waterfall chart. Completed projects are reflected in the waterfall chart; changes to the waterfall chart are reflected in the summary sheet. An important note is that 61 district portables have been reduced to 12. Updated 10-year projections will be completed by Milone & MacBroom.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked about the high cost of the emergency lighting project. Mr. Cullen said the high cost for one school stems from an automated system that lights up when replacement is needed. The high cost deterred implementation at other schools.

Mr. Llewellyn: Why pay a contractor to test the emergency lighting? How many lights are tested? Mr. Cullen said the fire department requires testing of emergency lighting; this is done in-house at the elementary level; a contractor is paid \$18K to annually test the emergency lights at the 5 secondary schools. Testing might require ladders and lifts to reach inaccessible areas; he will provide the exact number of lights that are tested.

Ms. Pytko: What is the duration of the roof extension warranties? Mr. Cullen said the roofing company Garland has provided several options including a roof warranty extension of 10 years, and the possibility of doing a roof replacement that will include a 20 or 30-year warranty.

Mr. Llewellyn: Is the \$975K a 10-year all-inclusive or are there deductibles? Mr. Cullen said it is all-inclusive, and with the district's PM program, it is possible to add another 5 years to that.

Mr. Llewellyn: Is the Secondary IT CAT 6 Project from a Town bid? Mr. Cullen said yes, but there is new pricing. Elementary schools were all done last year and next year's proposal is for the secondary schools.

Mr. Patten: Will this alleviate the internet congestion? Mr. Cullen said no, this is an upgrade from CAT 5 to CAT 6, and includes new wiring that will update the duplex outlet to a quad 4-pronged outlet, mostly to accommodate the projectors.

Ms. Pytko: Why does it cost more to do the FLHS tennis courts than the entire parking lot? Mr. Cullen said the tennis courts project includes expansion joints, a sub-base, leveling, fence and net installation, drainage and coating.

Mr. Llewellyn asked for the repair costs for the Warde air conditioning unit and the Fairfield Woods elevator for the last five years.

Mrs. Gerber: Will the FLHS emergency generator replacement fall within the 15-20 year window by 2022, which is when it is scheduled to be replaced? Mr. Cullen said yes.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that the waterfall chart is a dynamic document. Numbers change and the Town Finance Department might request a change to stay on track. Keep in mind that a project that is on the list still requires Town approval before moving forward.

Mr. Aysseh questioned whether the \$1.5M Holland Hill seed money should be included on the summary of changes sheet. Mr. Cullen said he will add it.

Mr. Llewellyn asked whether that change would affect the bottom line. Mr. Cullen said yes, on the summary sheet, but it is already included on the waterfall chart.

Ms. Pytko referenced page 20 in the booklet – she expected to see more in reimbursement. Mr. Cullen said the reimbursement rate changes very little, roughly 24.5% for eligible items. Mr. Dwyer said that amount falls within the percentage range of what is deemed eligible reimbursement.

Mrs. Gerber referenced a previous Facilities Plan, showing Holland Hill at \$12M, the original reimbursement amount was lower at \$3.393M, and it is now \$4.7M.

Mr. Llewellyn

- Referenced the 16-17 reimbursement rate at 18% and requested reimbursement rates by line item. Mr. Cullen said roofs and windows get reimbursed at lower rates.
- Asked for an updated color-coded summary chart that includes missing items.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: What is the process for moving forward?

Mr. Dwyer said the Board may decide whether a revision should be voted on as an agenda item.

Ms. Gerber said the Board last approved the Plan in June 2015; it was later presented with updates that the Board did not vote on.

Mr. Dwyer said he would like to report to the Board after the Capital Planning Workshop. Mr. Cullen added that the Plan is also dependent on new enrollment projections.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: Why are older reimbursements listed as estimates? Mr. Dwyer said the state numbers are not final until the project audit is complete; this is a long process that impacts the town. Mr. Cullen added that the reimbursement rate for 13-14 is an actual number, with 5% retained until the audit is complete.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack: What years have we not received reimbursements? How at risk are we for not receiving reimbursements? Mr. Cullen said reimbursement has not been fully received for TMS, which was completed in 2007; he will get the total amounts not received.

Mr. Dwyer said the Town issues bond anticipation notes, which result in cash for the project, but it is not fully bonded until the project is complete.

Mr. Llewellyn asked for a table, by year, of what is outstanding, what is anticipated, what has been received and what has been paid.

Mr. Dwyer said that with the opening of school, the staff may not be able to get this information right away.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly questioned the expenditure for new enrollment projections. Dr. Jones said the state requires 10-year projections for construction projects; the most recent 10-year enrollment projection was completed in 2010 by MGT. The district will use the consulting services of Milone and MacBroom for the 10-year enrollment projections since they have already done a lot of work with Fairfield and are familiar with the demographics and racial imbalance issue.

Mr. Aysseh asked that the difference of \$1.24M for Holland Hill be added to the summary sheet. Mr. Cullen said he will review and add.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack: Does the chart reflect a 504 build for Mill Hill? Was an exercise ever done for Mill Hill that wasn't a 504 build?

Mr. Dwyer said a 504 and 462 build was done for both Holland Hill and Mill Hill. He reminded the Board that these are planning documents.

Mrs. Gerber: Will these draft documents be posted online? Mr. Cullen said yes.

Mr. Llewellyn asked that numbers from both charts be bridged. Mr. Cullen said he will review the waterfall so that it mirrors the summary change sheet.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the summary sheet was very useful and asked if there were many changes in the Facilities Plan. Were the statements of need the same? Mr. Cullen again reviewed the changes and said the statements of need were mostly the same.

Mrs. Gerber said a few projects were moved from 19-20 to 20-21, but after a quick scan did not see many changes.

<i>Approval of Minutes</i>

Approval of Regular Minutes of June 27, 2017

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 27, 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

Approval of Special Meeting Minutes of July 31, 2017

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 31, 2017.

Motion Passed: 9-0

<i>Superintendent Report</i>

Dr. Jones introduced new staff including Executive Directors Rob Mancusi, Colleen Deasy, and Darla Miner, as well as announcing Mike Cummings as the Chief Academic Officer. She is excited about working in concert with the new team. Convocation went very well and Fairfield is ready to open the doors for a new school year. Enrollment numbers are being monitored very closely; the projected vs. actual as of today was within two students.

District Priorities

Dr. Jones reviewed the School Priorities for Excellence enclosure and said it includes important work that is continuing; the document was formerly entitled District Initiatives. In addition to Instructional Program, School and Team Improvement, Leadership Capacity, and Resources - two sections have been added: Facilities and Safety/Security.

Additional categories within the Instructional Program include Expressive, Personal, Physical, Social, and Civic Development, which are derived from the District Goal.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:

- What is happening with the CMT Science assessment in 5th and 8th grades? Will the state provide results for the piloted 5th and 8th grade Science Assessment? Mr. Cummings said the CMTs will be replaced with the pilot Science assessment and he will check with the state on how results will be provided.
- Is DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) different from ESS (Effective School Solutions)? Dr. Jones said yes; ESS is before Outplacement; DBT is more about giving teachers a skillset to help diffuse situations. It may also include a Mindfulness class plus other modules for students. This will be explained more fully in the future.
- Why is the partial ECC PK move not on this list? Will a PK classroom at Stratfield be reflected on the enrollment sheet? Dr. Jones said the focus is on what the program will look like when it is placed outside of ECC. An ECC class will be next to the PK class at Stratfield; we are still determining the best way to reflect these numbers.
- Is the district designing a data warehouse from scratch? Dr. Jones said this is part of IC and the district has a very talented tech staff; the webmaster is building what teachers are saying they want and need.
- Why aren't dates included on all priorities? Dr. Jones said continuing priorities do not have dates.

Mrs. Gerber:

- Is the outside consultant for structural change, as listed on page 3, referring to Milone and MacBroom? Dr. Jones said yes; this is contracted through CES. This is all part of the enrollment projections and an October report is expected.
- Will community engagement take place after the report? Dr. Jones said yes, she would like to share the report as soon as it is available.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack:

- Regarding Math implementation - requested information regarding differentiation strategies by level, implementation consistency, and the home connection.
- Is music composition, previously cut, going to be reviewed as part of the curriculum? Dr. Jones said this is teacher-driven, rather than administration-driven.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:

- How will the District Success Plan be tied in with SIPs? Dr. Jones said the main goal is SRBI. The district leadership has accomplished so much within the District Improvement Plan; the group is ready to re-set it and further refine the work.
- When is the District Improvement Plan up for a vote? Mr. Dwyer said this is a review year; the review will take place over several meetings. Assumes any significant changes will require a vote.
- What impact will the 6-day rotation have on Specials, is there a budget impact? Mr. Cummings said Art averaged a 2 hour decrease over the course of the year; instructional time for Music and PE increased. FTE details were provided during the January budget meetings in the form of a grid.

Mrs. Gerber added that the overall budget cost was .2 FTE, roughly \$14K. Over the course of the year, instructional minutes for Art increased in KDG by 120 minutes; decreased in grades 1-3 by 120 minutes, and decreased in grades 4-5 by 60 minutes.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:

- Will any social media platforms replace IC? Dr. Jones said one of the challenges with IC is the time it takes for the message to get to everyone; this could take up to 30 minutes. Another instant platform, such as Facebook, can be very useful. IC is not overused, for example, pictures of the solar project will be on Facebook, but will not be messaged through IC.
- Who is maintaining the social media? Dr. Jones said both she and the webmaster are posting. IC messaging is done by various people, depending on what the message is.
- Under Facilities, #2 - Is there a consultant beyond Milone and MacBroom? Dr. Jones said no.

Mr. Dwyer added that a Structural Change Committee will be formed, which will allow for a consultant if needed.

Budget Update

Dr. Jones said the state does not yet have a budget. The six different budgets put forward do not include anything for teacher pension. Excess cost funding is a concern. We are making every effort to be conservative and cautious.

Mr. Dwyer added that the Board has money in reserves for the potential residential costs and possible reduction of excess cost.

Mr. Llewellyn: Was any money transferred to the Town from last year's budget? Mrs. Munsell said the June 30 balance was approximately \$80K, and was \$1400 when it closed in July. A final report will be given in the fall.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack: Is \$2M the maximum potential budget hit? Does this include any money for teacher pension?

Mr. Dwyer said the budget impact could be higher than \$2M. Mrs. Munsell said there is currently \$2.3M in reserve - \$1.2M in excess cost differential, \$1M in DDS residential, and \$129K for expected pension shortage.

Mr. Dwyer said the Town has not included any of the \$9M pension cost in the budget.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack: How can pension payments be made without a budget? Mr. Dwyer said the state's rainy day fund has been fully depleted; the Town has fully funded its pensions.

Education Legislative Summary

Dr. Jones highlighted 2017 statutory changes affecting school districts that may have a budget impact and include the following. Of these, universal preschool would have the largest impact:

Alternative Educational Opportunities for Expelled Students

Student Data Privacy

High School Graduation Requirements

Creation of Biliteracy Seal

Services for Gifted and Talented

In-School Suspensions

Physical Restraint and Seclusion Training

Professional Development Requirements

Uniform School Calendars

Teacher Certification

State-wide Examinations

Universal Preschool

Summer Work and Projects Update

Mr. Cullen reviewed the list of completed projects at each school and said 90% of it is from the 16-17 budget. There was an enormous amount of work completed in just 9 weeks.

Mr. Dwyer noted that several projects are on hold with a 10/1 date, pending the budget. He is thankful to Mr. Cullen and his staff for all the summer work in preparation for 10,000 students.

Central Office Organization

Dr. Jones reviewed the Central Office organization and is excited about the changes. Executive Directors lead departments; Directors lead programming and now have expanded job descriptions. Great work has resulted from this structure.

Mr. Dwyer asked Board members to continue to make requests through the Superintendent.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack: How should this work operationally? Whom should parents contact for specific issues? Dr. Jones said parents should always go through the flow of the school starting with the teacher – this is specifically the central office layer.

Ms. Karnal asked about the Art and World Language Coordinators. Dr. Jones said they report to Ms. Miner.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: Will the Special Education department be moved around? Will the organizational chart be discussed in Policy? Dr. Jones said that special and general education are viewed as one. The executive team will work together on multiple issues, including professional development and legal issues. The organizational chart falls under administration regulations.

Mr. Dwyer said if a policy revision is needed, it will be placed on the agenda.

<i>Committee/Liaison Reports</i>

Ms. Pytko reported that the first meeting for SEPTA is September 27.

Mr. Aysseh reported that Holland Hill is moving along; the goal is to have bids in by March and begin construction immediately thereafter. The ultimate goal is to have doors open in August 2019.

Mrs. Gerber said the FLHS windows are 70% complete; the remaining 30%, which are the more complicated windows, will be completed next summer. The OHS fence is a work in progress and should be complete by Thursday.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the priority for the Policy Committee is to address changes in statute. Future policy items at this time are booster clubs, use of social media by staff and political activities in schools.

Adjournment

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:55PM

Submitted by Jessica Gerber, Fairfield BOE Secretary