

**APPROVED**

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ENCLOSURE NO. 1

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

SEP 13 2011

Minutes of the Executive Session and the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held Tuesday, August 23, 2011, at 501 Kings Highway East, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Board Conference Room.

1. Chairman Mr. John Mitola called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other Board members present were: Mrs. Sue Brand, Mrs. Sue Dow, Mr. Paul Fattibene, Ms. Pamela Iacono, Mr. Tim Kery and Mr. Perry Liu. Mrs. Albin and Ms. Zahn were absent. Also in attendance were Superintendent Dr. David Title, Mrs. Margaret Mary Fitzgerald and Attorney Don Houston.
2. Mr. Kery moved, seconded by Mrs. Dow that the Board of Education go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with the Fairfield Education Association (FEA) and the Fairfield School Administrators Association (FSAA).

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

3. Ms. Iacono moved, seconded by Mrs. Brand to adjourn the Executive Session at 7:58 p.m.

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

4. Chairman Mr. John Mitola called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 8:01 p.m. Other Board members present were: Mrs. Sue Brand, Mrs. Sue Dow, Mr. Paul Fattibene, Ms. Pamela Iacono, Mr. Tim Kery, and Mr. Perry Liu. Mrs. Albin and Ms. Zahn were absent. Also in attendance were Superintendent Dr. David Title and members of the administrative staff. Approximately 25 people comprised the remainder of the audience.
5. Mr. Mitola led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
6. Mrs. Brand moved, seconded by Mr. Kery that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular meeting of June 28, 2011.

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

7. Committee/Liaison Reports-

- ◆ Mrs. Brand – No report.
- ◆ Mrs. Dow congratulated Fairfield Ludlowe High School's musical group, Close Harmony, which was chosen to perform at the CAFE Convention in November.
- ◆ Mr. Fattibene reported that the Transportation Advisory Committee met to review several transportation issues, and he is not sure if an ultimate decision has been made.
- ◆ Mrs. Iacono reported that the Special Projects Standing Building Committee has been meeting regularly. She stated that she sent Board members an update regarding the Sherman project. In summary, all of the bids came back over the amount allocated through the bond resolution. The project is short money and cannot move forward unless the Town bodies rewrite the bond resolution to do a lesser project or increase the funds so the project can be completed with the administrative wing, security issues addressed, appropriate teaching spaces, a second serving line in the cafeteria and new ventilation in the building. The classroom ventilation is a code violation and, therefore, is not subject to the FEMA cap. However, because there is already a ventilation system in the APR and the gymnasium, that is a maintenance issue and would count against FEMA and go over the FEMA cap for Sherman. The SPSBC has been working with the Board of Selectmen and are waiting to speak with Jim Wendt to get further clarification on the APR and the gymnasium ventilation under FEMA. The SPSBC went before the Board of Finance to give an update on the project. The committee thought they were moving forward with asking for an additional \$1.2 million to complete the project but that was based on ventilation in the gymnasium and the APR. Since it now looks like that will hit the FEMA number, until further

clarification is received, she does not know if the committee will be asking for that piece of the project. If that is the case, the additional funding request would be around \$800,000. The committee is cautiously optimistic to get a shovel in the ground for November 1<sup>st</sup> which would mean a second serving line in the cafeteria for the start of the second half of the school year, working on the administrative wing in the new year and doing the ventilation system next summer. Ms. Iacono stated that she needs to hear from Board members this evening if they are in agreement with where the project is going.

Board questions and comments followed regarding separating the pieces that are code work and safety issues as opposed to things that come under FEMA, using the available funds to do items that would have the greatest impact on the students, and the possibility of phasing in over time. Mr. Kery stated that he does not want the APR and gymnasium ventilation to go away and wants the other Town bodies to know that if that work cannot be completed that this Board might come back to them for it. It was the sense of the Board that they support asking for the funding to complete the project

- ◆ Mr. Kery – No report.
- ◆ Mr. Liu reported that he received a report from Bill Sapone, Chairman of the Fairfield Woods Building Committee. The project will be ready for the opening of school. Inspections will take place tomorrow to secure the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy. The cafeteria should be operational and ready for opening day, the parking areas are being finished and general clean-up is underway. There will be some items that need attention after school opens. The only item where there was a mix up was the smart boards, which are now back in order and will be behind a couple of weeks. The next meeting will be Thursday at Fairfield Woods with a walk through.
- ◆ Mr. Mitola – No report.

8. Superintendent's Report-

Dr. Title introduced two new key members of the central office leadership team: Karen Parks, Deputy Superintendent, replacing Jack Boyle and Doreen Munsell, Director of Business and Finance, replacing Bonnie McWain.

Dr. Title reported on a number of projects that were completed over the summer.

Stratfield School – the library media phase is complete, the gymnasium work is complete, the exterior canopy and site work are complete, the façade work is complete, the new field is complete and the CO is expected this week.

Jennings School – two full gang bathrooms and two small bathrooms were completed.

The Early Childhood Center – the playground and resurfacing are a little behind schedule. Work has started, but it will not be ready for the start of school.

Roger Ludlowe Middle School – roof repairs are in progress and going well.

McKinley – the RTM approved \$30,000 to hire a consultant do an investigation. A roof investigation has been completed by Hoffman Architects, which basically confirmed what our roof consultant said was the problem. We are putting a temporary patch in place to stop the infiltration of water because we can't wait another year for a permanent fix. It is just a temporary solution for the year to keep it safe.

Board questions and comments followed regarding the McKinley roof leak and finding a way of streamlining the process of bringing projects to the Town bodies so the projects are not delayed and cost us additional money.

Dr. Title stated that he met with the First Selectman yesterday about budget issues. Dr. Title told him that his number one concern, aside from the total dollars the Board will be allocated, is coming up with the process. A capital summit is planned for September 20. At that summit the issue can be

raised that it is one thing to say you have an allocation of “x” amount of dollars, but equally important is the process that we all need to agree to.

Holland Hill – the oil tank is being removed.

Tomlinson Middle School – the stair tread issue is done.

Restriping was done at the high schools to designate student parking from staff parking in preparation for the new rules that will go into effect. At this time the logistics of collecting the money and enforcing the parking changes are still being worked out.

Dr. Title stated that there has been a significant change in the State law with respect to bullying. The Policy Committee will have a proposed policy for review at their September 7 meeting, and it will come to the Board for a first read at the September 13 Board meeting.

The email exchange has finally changed to \_\_\_\_\_@fairfieldschools.org. The old email address will still work.

## 9. New Business-

### A. Discussion on Understandings of Health Insurance-

Dr. Title stated that there was a lot of misunderstanding about how the health insurance medical retention fund should work, how it should be budgeted, what the Board could and could not do, what the reserve levels needed to be, etc. An agreement had been signed by the previous superintendent and the previous first selectman, and Dr. Title is trying to work out a new agreement that would respect everyone’s rights and responsibilities. He reviewed some of the main points to be included in the new agreement and stated that he will also have legal counsel review the document before bringing it to the Board for a vote.

This would replace the previous memorandum. Funds in the Board’s health insurance account will remain in the Board’s account and cannot be transferred to any Town account without Board consent. The Board agrees to fund the health insurance account based on the consultant’s projections as of November 30, and the Board will budget its contribution so as to maintain an estimated fund balance of twice the IBNR. In the event the Board experiences a favorable experience rating between November 30 and March 31, it may reduce its contribution to the succeeding year’s operating budget after review with the Board of Finance, as long as a projected fund balance at twice the IBNR is maintained. Board employees will continue to be rated as groups separate from the Town for the purpose of determining future health insurance costs. The Board will determine its contribution in its operating budget by taking the consultant’s figures and subtracting the Board’s contributions and other revenue. The Board will budget for new employee health insurance costs at the single coverage rate. Nothing in this agreement prohibits the Board from making additional contributions to the medical retention fund at any point in a given fiscal year.

Board questions and comments followed regarding what IBNR requirements we will need to meet and will the Town side be required to meet the same level over a certain period of time, revisiting keeping two times the IBNR requirement once the Town increases their funding reserve and at some point gets to 100-125%, including a separation clause in the agreement and including language that allows either party to exit the agreement and having the funds remain with that party, clearly defining what the funds would be used for, the legality of the carryover, making sure the Board is not giving up its right to its line item independence as part of this, adjusting the IBNR for the change in stop loss, including a time limit and reviewing the agreement annually.

Dr. Title stated that he is hoping to have a document for the Board to vote on at the next meeting on September 13.

## B. Discussion of Purchasing Guidelines-

Dr. Title stated that the Board of Finance is reviewing its purchasing guidelines, and it is on their September 6 agenda. Dr. Title will attend that meeting and Board members are also welcome. The Board of Finance has had purchasing guidelines in place since 1998, and they have not been revised. Under the Town Charter, all purchasing is done through the town. Whether that is in conflict with state law is another issue. Dr. Title is working with Twig Holland, Paul Hiller and others to revise the purchasing guidelines to reflect changes since 1998 and the Board's needs in terms of purchasing. He reviewed a number of items he would like to see changed: (1) an increase in the bid limit and the quote limit. Currently, any transaction over \$1,000 needs to have three quotes and anything over \$7,500 needs to go out to bid. (2) the ability to participate in cooperative, regional or consortium purchases. With the current guidelines the Board of Ed is not allowed to participate in cooperative, regional or consortium purchases unless they have advertised in the newspaper in Fairfield, which means we cannot participate and take advantage of cooperative buying arrangements, and end up paying more for some products that could be bought through a consortium. (3) an exemption to the bidding for items that are clearly sole source, copyrighted and available directly from the publisher, such as textbooks. If for some reason the publisher doesn't bid or the bid is defective, we end up paying a third party to produce a textbook and it costs more money. (4) some flexibility in emergency/urgent circumstances where an exemption can be granted on some of this purchasing. The revision of the purchasing guidelines is not something the Board of Education takes action on but he wanted to bring it to the Board's attention.

Board questions and comments followed.

### 10 Public Comments and Petitions – None

### 11. Open Board Comment –

Mrs. Brand asked if at the next Board meeting the Board could get a recap of how everything worked out with all of the reductions.

Mr. Mitola announced that Jack Boyle's official last day in the office was today. Mr. Mitola thanked him for his many years of service to the district; it was a pleasure working with him. Ms. Iacono stated that she knows Mr. Boyle secretly snuck out of the building and asked Dr. Title to pass along the Board's gratitude for his service.

### 12. Ms. Iacono moved, seconded by Mrs. Dow that the Board of Education convene to Executive Session at 9:08 p.m. to discuss Superintendent Evaluation.

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

### 13. Mr. Kery moved, seconded by Mr. Liu that the Board reconvene to Public Session at 10:22 p.m.

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

### 14. Mr. Kery moved, seconded by Ms. Iacono that this meeting of the Board of Education adjourn at 10:25 p.m.

Motion carried: 7:0:0.

Pamela Iacono  
Vice Chairman/Acting Secretary