

Tuesday, December 10, 2013
REGULAR MEETING Minutes

Voting Summary:

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 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, John Convertito, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, John Llewellyn and Marc Patten. Others present were Dr. Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, student representatives Ethan King and Bill Moeder and approximately 25 members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 26, 2013.

Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Organizational/Regular Meeting of November 26, 2013” Mr. Llewellyn stated he wished to amend the minutes, as did Mrs. Liu-McCormack. Mr. Dwyer asked them to submit their amendments in writing to the Secretary in advance so that they could be checked with the tapes. Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone consideration of the minutes until the next Regular Board meeting. Motion passed 9-0.

Old Business

Approval of the 2014-2015 Student Calendar

Mr. Convertito moved/Mr. Patten seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the 2014-2015 Student Calendar as proposed”.

Ms. Karnal moved/Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to amend the calendar and change the first day of school to Wednesday, September 3, 2014, and the last day of school to Tuesday, June 16, 2015.

Motion failed 3-6 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against)

Mr. Llewellyn moved/Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to extend the meeting to 11:30PM. Motion passed 5-4 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against)

Mr. Convertito moved to call the question. Motion failed 4-5 (Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn against)

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Ms. Karnal seconded to amend the calendar and extend February break in the following way: move the professional development day for elementary teachers from February 12 to February 13; move the professional development day for all certified staff from February 13 to February 19, and add February 17 and 18 as vacation days; and also to move the last day of school to Monday, June 15.

Motion failed 3-6 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against)

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the calendar and move April break from April 13-17 to March 30-April 6, and move the Conference Day to the 8th. Motion passed 5-4 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten against)

The main motion to approve the 2014-2015 Student Calendar as amended passed 5-4 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten against)

Discussion and Approval of Board of Education By-Laws

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone this item to a Special Meeting called by the Chair at a date to be determined within 60 days. Motion passed 9-0

Adjournment

Ms. Karnal moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned 11:28PM.

Detailed Minutes:

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 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, John Convertito, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, John Llewellyn and Marc Patten. Others present were Dr. Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, student representatives Ethan King and Bill Moeder and approximately 25 members of the public.

Student Reports

Mr. Moeder and Mr. King reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School; Fairfield Ludlowe High School earned 2nd place in the state for the Class LL Michael’s Cup, an award recognizing athletic success as well as player integrity off the field, and coaches were also recognized; the basketball team has a new head coach, John Dailey; the key club had a successful Operation Hope drive; the Shakespeare Project play was a success; and the Candlelight concert will be taking place.

Mr. Dwyer stated that the Board met in Executive Session regarding school security issues; he thanked Chief MacNamara for the work that has been done to safeguard students and staff, and also thanked the First Selectman for his support.

Chief MacNamara thanked Dr. Title, the Board of Education, and the First Selectman for working together to improve school safety; in addition to responding to recent incidents, the police department works daily to improve school safety.

Presentations

Presentation of Secondary Business Curriculum and Textbook, Ms. Stefanie Cole

Dr. Boice gave an overview of the Business Curriculum and stated the curriculum documents state what the students should be able to know and/or do at course completion; they are based on state and national standards as well as 21st century skills; and introduced Ms. Stefanie Cole, Business Teacher and Curriculum Liaison, as the presenter.

Ms. Cole walked the audience through a Powerpoint presentation and stated that the Business Department is very broad; opportunities are available in grades 9-12; Business courses are electives and students must see the value and want to enroll; courses are open to more than one grade level at a time; enrollment in these courses has doubled since 2009; the focus is on real world skills such as remaining within budget, public speaking, and utilizing presentation software. FLHS 2012 graduate and current Marymount Manhattan student, Nina Carter, spoke in support of the curriculum. Focus Group parents Mr. Morton, business owner, and Mr. Downie, Fairfield University Associate Professor, spoke in support of the curriculum.

In response to Mr. Convertito, Mr. Paul Zhitomi, FWHS Business Teacher, explained that game design and robotic programming are included in the Business curriculum as they are both software driven.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested enrollment history for each class several years back and a sample of materials used in lieu of a textbook.

Board Questions followed: Ms. Cole stated that the textbook is not a college level text, non-fiction is introduced in the curriculum as book excerpts; business ethics and societal impact are studied; there is no carrying cost year to year, only if books need replacement; there is no special training or extra staffing required; there is an effort to bring in speakers and keep in touch with former students; the list of prerequisites is in the Program of Studies; enrollment is consistent at both high schools; and administrators determine whether a course runs, which depends on multiple factors.

In response to Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Tom Reindel, FLHS Business Teacher, stated that a textbook wasn't necessary for the course 'Introduction to Investing and Finance' as there are free materials online.

Mr. Convertito requested the impact on FTE's; asked if course reductions were needed, which 2 courses would be let go; and requested data regarding whether Business courses were 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th choice for those enrolled.

AON: Review of Health Insurance Projections and the Affordable Care Act

Dr. Title introduced the AON health insurance consultants for the Town and the BOE, Mr. Carlton Lindgren and Mr. Erik Fiedler, and stated that AON provides critical projections and also did all the work behind bidding out the health insurance.

Mr. Lindgren reviewed the enclosures for projections and trends; stated the stop-loss amount is \$300,000 per member per 12 month period; currently the experience is better than expected and ahead of budget.

Mr. Llewellyn requested a copy of the utilization document.

In response to Board questions, Mr. Lindgren responded that the increase in CVS Caremark is driven by activity; the Affordable Care Act is a new expense and the Transitional Reinsurance fee will go down and then go away; he would never recommend that a group this size be fully insured; that \$300,000 is still the best individual stop-loss amount; there is no limit on the aggregate cost; the BOE has had multiple good high-claim years.

In response to Ms. Karnal, Mr. Dwyer stated that the employee contribution is determined by seven different union contracts.

Mr. Lindgren stated that the premium for the stop-loss insurance goes up every year and depends on the vendor's pool of stop-loss and past experience; the 7.5% trend used is due to prior experience and the Board's reserve position.

Mrs. Liu McCormack requested a history of large claim payouts.

Ms. Munsell reviewed the Medical Retention Fund enclosure and stated there must be enough to cover the IBNR (Incurred but not Recorded); Mr. Dwyer stated the Board of Finance follows this closely in order to keep the AAA Bond Rating for the Town.

In response to Mr. Convertito, Mr. Lindgren explained that 'HAS', is a High Deductible Health Plan with Health Savings Account; in terms of savings it would depend on what the Town/Board would cover. Dr. Title stated that any change would have to be accomplished through negotiations with bargaining units.

In response to Ms. Karnal, Mr. Lindgren stated that 1400 employees have health insurance; Dr. Title stated that teachers are the biggest group, and the premium cost share for the current year is 20% for the PPO, which most people are on. Ms. Karnal asked if there were a way to reduce the 80% share that the Town pays; Dr. Title stated that contract arbitrators look at state counterpart costs during the negotiation process.

Board discussion continued regarding the IBNR fund balance; Mr. Fattibene stated his concern regarding the declining net balance over the last 5 years.

Mr. Fiedler referred to enclosure 4, and spoke to the impact of the Affordable Care Act to the BOE from 2011 through 2018; in addition to multiple employer requirements for coverage and fees, the preliminary estimate of the Excise Tax is \$1.9 million in 2018.

In response to Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Fiedler stated that only the employee must be covered. Dr. Title stated that some employees, such as substitute teachers, might work 30 hours a week and will require coverage; the issue is that beginning in 2015, single coverage must be offered and the look-back period may be the 2014-2015 year. Mr. Fiedler stated that the penalty is \$3000 for each member that receives a subsidy on the exchange; this may be less expensive than providing coverage

for that temporary employee; many employers are struggling to comply with this due to the administrative complexity.

In response to several Board questions, Mr. Fiedler stated that if no coverage is offered, then the district must pay out \$2000 per employee; if health coverage is offered and the contribution exceeds the 9.5% of income, and the employee gets a subsidy from the exchange, then the penalty is \$3000

In response to Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Lindgren stated that out of the Connecticut school districts he has projected for, Fairfield has the lowest tax implication; one way to reduce this is to shift the cost away from the employee contribution and reduce the plan value; Mr. Fiedler stated that the plan risks being out of compliance if too lean; there must be a balance.

Approval of Minutes

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Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Organizational/Regular Meeting of November 26, 2013.” Mr. Llewellyn said that requests he had made for information in the previous meeting were not recorded in the minutes and stated he wished to amend the minutes, as did Mrs. Liu-McCormack. Mr. Dwyer asked them to submit their amendments in writing to the Secretary in advance so that they could be checked with the tapes.

Mr. Llewellyn requested that all Board requests be noted in the minutes. Mr. Fattibene requested that any amendment to the minutes be submitted to the Chair in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone consideration of the minutes until the next Regular Board meeting. Motion passed 9-0.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked for clarification regarding interpretation of what is said versus an omission; specifically an omission in the October minutes. Mr. Dwyer clarified that the minutes are not intended to be a transcript of the meeting; he reiterated that proposed amendments to the minutes should be submitted in writing in advance; and stated that the request to amend the previously approved October minutes will be on the January agenda.

Superintendent’s Report

CSDE Career and Technical Education CTE Assessment Award

Dr. Title congratulated Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Ms. Donna Huber for the CSDE Career and Technical Award, recognizing FLHS for being ranked first in the area of Textiles and Design from the Connecticut Statewide CTW Assessment for 2013. Mr. Fattibene also highlighted the award; it distinguishes the Fairfield district from others.

Pension Update for 2014-2015 Operating Budget

Dr. Title spoke to the projected pension expense as provided to the BOE from the Town; this number may change if an update is received.

Mr. Dwyer congratulated Dr. Title on his nomination to join the Suburban School Superintendents, an elite national association whose purpose is to improve the quality of educational opportunities, programs, and services for children, staff and parents in member districts.

Old Business

Approval of the 2014-2015 Student Calendar

Dr. Title noted that one change was made, an elementary early dismissal date was moved to February 12th; the April break remains the same in order to coincide with CES; this allows students in half day programs such as RCA to get a spring break and also saves \$3500 on transportation costs.

Mr. Convertito moved/Mr. Patten seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the 2014-2015 Student Calendar as proposed”

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Mr. Convertito moved to call the question. Motion failed 4-5 (Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn against)

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Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the calendar and move April break from April 13-17 to March 30-April 6, and move the Conference Day to the 8th.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that this addresses the community concerns with athletes, college visits and AP exams. Mr. Patten stated that the March 30-April 6 week overlaps with Passover, possibly restricting travel for anyone who celebrates Passover; he stated he will not support this.

Public Comment on Amendment:

Nancy Haberly, Duck Farm Road, stated that SBAC testing is occurring this year during March, April

and May.

Motion passed 5-4 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten against).

Public Comment on Main Motion:

Christina Marson, North Cedar Road, recommended moving the teacher start date for teachers to remain in the classroom 2 days after the children leave.

The main motion to approve the 2014-2015 Student Calendar as amended passed 5-4 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten against).

Discussion and Approval of Board of Education By-Laws

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone this item to a Special Meeting called by the Chair at a date to be determined within 60 days. Motion passed 9-0

New Business

Presentation of Fairfield BOE Proposed Capital Non-Recurring Projects 2014-2015

Dr. Title stated that the Board of Education has 2 other mechanisms to obtain funding to keep schools upgraded and are separate from the operating budget; a building committee and full-blown project process and Capital Non-Recurring projects; the 2 projects that were originally included to come before the Town this year are the partial roof replacement at Mill Hill and the North Stratfield boiler replacement; the Fairfield Warde High School boiler replacement was moved up to this year due to its failure; if the Board approves the proposed Capital Non-Recurring Projects for 2014-2015 at the next meeting, these can advance to the Town bodies for approval.

Mr. Cullen stated that the booklet is set up to answer all the questions and includes the 14 points justifying projects and photographs. Mr. Dwyer stated that the Town has a waterfall chart to track capital projects; whenever a project has changes, the waterfall is adjusted.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly requested the savings amount from the Dwight boiler replacement; Mr. Llewellyn requested a payback period based on the efficiency differential and the average burn.

Mr. Dwyer stated that due to the hour there will be no public comment, and the proposed BOE meeting dates are now final; committee assignments have been made.

Adjournment

Ms. Karnal moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned 11:28PM.

Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Board of Education

DRAFT

Secretary