

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

April 6, 2015

Regular Board Meeting

Board's Meeting Room

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Board's Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut on April 6, 2015. The meeting was called to order by Patricia Libero, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Patricia Libero, Chairwoman
James W. Morrissey, Vice Chair
Betsy Davis, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo
Cebi Waterfield

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Palmieri

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent
Matt Cavallaro Director of Finance

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Alice Obas
Jesus Yanez

B. Public Portion of Meeting

There were no public speakers.

C. REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro introduced Joanie Amato from the WHHS Math Department. Joanie explained Pi Day. They started a contest last year to challenge the students to memorize as many digits as they could of Pi and as a reward they can choose any teacher they want to pie them in the face on Pi Day. This year we had more students participate and the top student this year was also the top student last year. Last year Kara Walker had 101 digits and this year 260 digits of Pi. The second place student with 236 digits was Betsy Magana. The third place student Justina Favia had 121 digits. The fourth place student Hande Ozdemir had 105 digits. The fifth place student Samatha Dodge had 83 digits and the 6th place student Tevar Dixon had 74 digits. Pictures were taken individually of the students who were present Kara Walker, Betsy Magana and Justina Favia with Superintendent Cavallaro, Board Chairwoman Patricia Libero, and their Math Teacher Joanie Amato. Kara Walker challenged herself that next year she would 1,000 digits. Pictures were also taken of the three students together with Superintendent Cavallaro, Board Chairwoman Patricia Libero, and their Math Teacher Joanie Amato. Gift Certificates were given to each of the students. Applause for the students followed. Neil thanked the students for coming to the board meeting.

Superintendent Cavallaro said that prior to the Mayor introducing his budget to the City Council we had asked for approximately 3.5% and we received a little over 1% so there is no question we are short some money from where we would like to be for next year. Tonight we will give you the status of where we are this year and where we stand next year. This is a fluid situation and there is a month in a half to go but we felt we needed the board to have this information to have an idea of where we stand. Neil said perhaps board members can meet in small groups next week during the vacation if anyone has questions or would like to set up appointments of two or three board members we can meet.

Matt Cavallaro gave an update of where we stand this year and what some of our plans are and what we will talk about for next year. Matt passed out the budget and said we are in good shape and trending exactly where we were last year at the same time. The expenses for this budget include the next payroll and we don't anticipate any huge expenditures going forward. The biggest expenditure to hit the budget during the next three months is the payment of the SRO's which is about \$340,000.00 and we will be able to handle that number. The Special Ed tuition is exactly as it was last year and we should be able to take that number on as well. Matt asked if there were any questions. Bob Guthrie asked if benefits were trending well. Yes we are in good shape, a little bit better than last year but we are self-insured so this could change at any time or there could be nothing for the next few months but it tends to be about the same amount in May and June. Neil Cavallaro said pending everything stays the same we are looking at

about \$100,000.00 to the good but keep in mind that is a fluctuating number depending on the benefits.

Matt stated that we requested 3.1 million for next year or 3.64% and the Mayor's increase was a little over \$900,000.00 or 1.1% and this leaves us with a shortfall of 2.2 million or 2.54%. The ECS number for next year should be status quo so that \$900,000.00 that the Mayor increased the budget will help the local funding number come up but we would like to see a 50/50 split and we understand this won't happen overnight or within the year but hopefully there is a plan in place to get us closer to that 50/50 split that should be happening. Board members asked questions about the budget and received answers. Superintendent Cavallaro said on Wednesday night he will talk about our budget specifically with the City Council and this will be one of the points of emphasis. The scale has really tipped over the last ten years and it certainly can't be caught up all in one time but we need to start to emphasize that in spite of the financial condition of the town we need a plan to try to get us closer to that 50/50 mark and we know it is not happening tomorrow. Board member Jim Morrissey asked when was the last time there was a 50/50 split. There was a 50/50 split around 2006. Neil said we have relied too much on the Alliance Grant Funding and the other additional support we have received from the State and Federal Government. Now we know the dilemma that the States are in and they are telling us not to expect any money for the next two years and that will be an issue. Jim Morrissey was at the budget meeting last week and stated there is not much money to go around and it is very difficult. We would like to see more money for education and I hope we can accomplish that mission down the road but unfortunately this town is not in good financial shape and hasn't been for many, many years. Three or four years ago we had to take a million dollars out of the police pension fund to meet our everyday obligations and we were fined by the state when a payroll tax was not paid so this has been an on-going problem over the years. Hopefully we can solve this problem down the road with more economic development. Neil said they have some ideas and Matt said we aren't in panic mode yet. A further discussion took place with questions raised by board members and answered. The complete West Haven Board of Education Proposed Seven Page Budget is on the West Haven High School Website.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

The student representatives' report is attached at the end of the minutes.

Alice Obas also suggested that it would be helpful for students going through the college process to have someone at the high school specifically for college and career planning. She said this process goes on every year and takes the entire senior year. She thought it would be very important if the board could think about putting someone at the high school that could really be there for the high school seniors. Alice read a statement from one of her peers. Superintendent Cavallaro requested that Alice send him a copy for the board.

C.1.c. Board

Jim Morrissey mentioned during a previous board meeting that it would be beneficial if teachers who leave the district receive a questionnaire as to why they were

leaving. Superintendent Cavallaro said he has spoken to Jolene Barnes, Personnel Director and they are going to work on a type of exit interview. They thought this was a good idea and would keep Jim posted.

Cebi Waterfield said as a parent of a sophomore who has just started looking at Naviance she agrees with Alice Obas and said she is college educated and found it daunting to look through all the requirements and things that needed to be filled out. This might be an opportunity to utilize the relationship we have with Yale University, UNH and Gateway to have some kind of partnership to help our students and be a resource for them. Cebi also thanked all the teachers and staff who do that little bit of extra for the kids in band, chorus, drama club and coaching. These activities are keeping our kids involved in their community and keeping them out of trouble and she can't give enough kudos to them.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on March 16, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a.

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion

Discussion: Jim Morrissey abstained because he was not able to attend the March 16th meeting.

All other board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

15-26 Laura Pressnell, Special Ed Teacher – Mackrille

Effective: End of 2014/2015 year contract

Reason: Relocation

15-27 Marissa Palisoul Humphrey, Science Teacher – Bailey Middle School

Effective: End of 2014/2015 year contract

Reason: Personal

15-28 Kate Tarallo, Assistant Coach Girls' Soccer – WHHS

Effective: Immediately

Reason: Personal

15-29 Shannon Curren, Special Education Teacher – Carrigan

Effective: June 30, 2015

Reason: Personal

15-30 Deborah L. Weiss, Elementary/Kindergarten Teacher – Seth Haley
Effective: June 30, 2015
Reason: Retirement

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve items 15-26 through 15-30 inclusive

Rosemary Russo made the motion to approve

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Items 15-26 through 15-30 inclusive are approved

D.3. Leave of Absence: (Certified)

D.4. New Hire: (Certified)

D.5. New Business

**15-31 Field Trip to Quebec, Canada April 18th – April 21st 2016 for
approximately 8 – 12 students from the WHHS French class with
chaperones Gina Reichert and Anna Porto.**

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve 15-31

Cebi Waterfield made the motion to approve

Jim Morrissey seconded the motion

Discussion: Neil said this was done a year in advance so they could start the fundraising.

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Item 15-31 is approved

**15-32 Agreement between the City of West Haven Board of Education and
West Haven Community Garden for the Operation of the West Haven
Community Garden**

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-32

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve

Rosemary Russo seconded the motion

Discussion: Cebi asked if this is the same agreement we had last year. Yes exactly.

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Item 15-32 is approved

There was no further business.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.

Cebi Waterfield made the motion

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola
Board Secretary

BOE meeting 4/6/15 - Student Report

Student Government collected 63 pairs of Jeans for teen project with Aeropastel that will distribute them to local shelters.

The Integrated Science Honors classes competed against each other in "March Windmill Madness" Students in Ms. Kozlowski and Ms. Miska's classes used this inquiry and investigation skills to design and test windmill blades that produced the most voltage.

On Saturday, March 28th, STEM Project Lead the Way students participated in Yale's Code Blue program offered by the YHack team in the Yale School of Management building. Students spent the day at Yale learning how to computer program and the relationship that programming has with entrepreneurship

On March 27th, 15 girls attended the annual Girls in STEM workshop at Gateway Community College. The workshop consisted of hands-on workshops and team-building exercises led by women in STEM careers. Some of the hands-on workshops included The Ice Cream Stick Factory, Computer Codes and...Angry Birds, CSI New Haven, How 3-D Printing Can Change the World and many more! Each girl left the workshop with a better understanding of STEM careers and STEM-related materials including an activity guide, STEM career information, jeweled safety glasses, a fun t-shirt and new friends! This year, keynote speaker Rosa DeLauro addressed the audience and had the following message: Have fun, stay confident, and pursue your dreams.

On Wednesday, March, 31st, twenty of Mrs. Gina Reichert's French students at West Haven High School attended an after-school Crepe History Lesson and Crepe-Making demonstration, and then got to fill and eat their own creations.

Congratulations to the Vio's Sports Plus/Westie Blue Winter Athletes of the Year 2014-15 Gabi Prisco (Girls Hockey), Brandon Sebastian (Track), Max Padro (Swimming), and Mike Savino (Hockey)

The Spring Sports Team Parent & Student-Athlete Meeting will take place tomorrow, April 7th at 6:00pm in the Café.

The STEM program/Girls in STEM club is hosting a Guest Speaker, Calleigh Esposito, a WHHS graduate/Mechanical Engineer at Sikorsky on April 8th.

On Thursday, April 9th, West Haven High School will host the Teen Outreach Program's Concert4Change. TOP has been working with Mr. Reynold's classes this year on teen homelessness.

Spring Campus Clean Up will be held on Saturday, April 11.

Evening of Jazz at Bailey Middle School on Thursday, April 23rd at 7:00pm (items for WHEAT/WH Animal Shelter will be collected at the door)

Mark your calendar for the Spring Musical, the Drowsy Chaperone - April 30 - May 2
The 2nd Annual Westie Day of Hope will be Sunday, May 3rd in the WHHS Courtyard. Representatives from Camp Rising Sun visited WHHS last Wednesday to speak with the juniors and seniors. They also thanked us for our contributions last year, over \$1500, which paid for 1 cabin of kids to attend camp free of charge.

Blue & White: Up All Night 2015 will be held at the Jewish Community Center on June 18-19th. The Project Graduation Committee is still soliciting donations and looking for volunteers. Please consider supporting our senior class.

The PTSA hosted a Barnes and Noble Book Fair last Friday. You can still participate by visiting the online book fair through April 8th.

Website: bn.com/bookfairs

Enter Bookfair ID 11589710 at checkout