

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

October 5, 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 October 5, 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 member Rosa Richardson asked for a moment of silence for a former Board of Education Member Treva Hackley who was very instrumental not only in education but also in youth sports for girls and the implementation of the women's sports programs in our schools. Chairwoman Pat Libero said Treva was also a para and big in PTA. Pat thanked Rosa for this information and asked for a moment of silence for Treva Hackley.

Before starting the public portion Board Chairwoman Pat Libero welcomed the two new student reps; Andrew Gordan and Evelyn Fabian to the board. Applause

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Patricia Libero, Chairwoman
James W. Morrissey, Vice Chair
Robert Guthrie
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Betsy Davis, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Egolum
Mark Palmieri
Cebi Waterfield

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Anne Druzolowski
Matt Cavallaro Director of Finance

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Evelyn Fabian
Andrew Gordan

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairwoman Libero welcomed everyone to the October 5, 2015 board meeting and asked if anyone would like to address the board. There were no speakers during public session.

C. REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro welcomed Andrew and Evelyn to the Board of Education and stated that he tells all of the student reps when they first arrive that he feels that sometimes the elected board takes the student reps more seriously than they take him, Dr. Druzolowski and Matt. This is because you come at this from a very different place. The board members like to know what the students are always thinking and how things are going at WHHS and if you have any ideas we want your input and we want to hear how we can make things better. Superintendent Cavallaro read a letter from Pam Gardner explaining how the student representatives were chosen. All sophomores were given the opportunity to express interest via their social studies class and 13 students were interested and were provided additional information and an application. Five students completed the application and writing sample and feedback was solicited from the entire faculty based on the six pillars of character. A committee interviewed the students and it was a difficult decision as all five students are certainly in the category of best of the best that West Haven High School has to offer. Andrew Gordan and Evelyn Fabian will be joining Susie Beyl as student reps and we look forward to their input. Applause.

The Bailey feedback on their block scheduling will take place during the first board meeting in November.

All the Alliance Districts are given the opportunity to apply for an entitlement and West Haven would get approximately 1,700,000.00 from the state to do repairs and maintenance projects which fall outside of the school construction grant. We want to parlay the money we are getting with our high reimbursement rate of 76% from the State Department of Education. Some things are eligible and some things aren't eligible. We called a consultant who worked for us before to put together a package. Carrigan is a priority which needs a lot of work addressed; most importantly a new roof, windows, doors and some things are eligible and some aren't. We have sat down with Kevin McNabola and Vin Amendola because there is some bonding involved and when the administration moves forward with a bonding package the roof at Carrigan was going to be included. We think we will be able to accomplish about \$7,000,000.00 or \$8,000,000.00 worth of work but the City would have to bond up to 1,300,000.00. With the savings we are going to generate with solar panels and other efficiencies this will generate a positive cash flow from year one on so there would be no net increase to the budget or negative impact to the budget. Roger LeFleur will be at our next meeting to explain how this will work from the Alliance point of view which the board would have to approve and then we would take it to the City Council because they would have to finance the bonding for the project. We are very excited about this. A further discussion continued.

Matt Cavallaro gave a short presentation on where we ended the year and where we currently are with the budget. Matt said the audit started about a month or so ago and we haven't dug into the financials yet it is more fact finding and compliance now along with free and reduced lunch applications. One of the grants we are looking at is the School Readiness Grant to make sure that the sites we are in contract with are sites that the state deems qualified. We are very confident we will end the year with a balanced budget. We don't think we will have the adjustments we had last year because we left the purchase order system open longer this year to try to help with the late billing from some of the special ed case schools we have. We are very confident that our budget will be balanced. This year our budget is on track. The summer ordering for the teachers went well and is within budget. Right now the invoices are rolling in and we may do a procedural spending freeze which has nothing to do with where we are with the budget it is to make sure we pay the bills in a timely manner because with only two people in the business office and with 500 teachers the invoices start to really mount up. The teachers have only had three paychecks on this budget and we feel like we are in a very good situation. There are things we always are worried about like special ed tuition; we don't see that number going down and benefits. We are self-insured so if we have some significant illnesses that number could go very high very quickly and we are keeping an eye on this. As of right now we are in a very good spot.

Neil discussed the homeless situation where we are getting requests from people with kids coming in from as far away as New Britain who may have to be transported to or from new Britain every day and this is something we are dealing with on a regular basis. Our principals are very diligent about checking residencies and making sure people are coming in with the right paperwork. Dave Russell does a really good job with this and contacts the state when we aren't sure. The state usually takes the part of the student and this becomes a costly expense. We are running into this more and more and this is something you should be aware of as well. A further discussion continued.

Jim Morrissey asked Matt if they saw a surplus on last year's budget or a flat line. Matt thinks it will be a flat line right to the number.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

Evelyn Fabian and Andrew Gordan gave the student rep report which is attached at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board

Jim Morrissey stated how sad and shocked he was to hear about Treva Hackley tonight. He has known Treva for so many years and his prayers go out to her and her family.

Last month a school bus leaving Seth Haley was rear ended in front of Mackrille School. Fortunately there were minor injuries and two children were taken to the hospital. Superintendent Cavallaro followed one of the students there because they couldn't reach the parents. There were no other injuries. Jim said the staff at Mackrille came out to help the teachers, principal and the nurse all did a wonderful job helping with the children and he wanted to commend them for their fine work. The staff at Seth Haley came out also

and they did a great job making sure the children were taken care of. Neil said the fire department did a great job and Jim said also the police department. Chairwoman Pat Libero asked what happened to the person driving the car. Neil said when he went to the hospital with the child he was watching the woman was taken out in a neck brace and she looked like she had been hurt but he didn't know the details. Pat said this was very scary and thanked Neil.

Jim Morrissey discussed the testing results that had recently come out and wanted a follow up. He felt the results were not that great and thinks we could do better. The 11th grade results were really low and he wants to know what we are going to do to improve the testing scores in that particular grade. Superintendent Cavallaro stated that Anne Druzolowski has already had a couple of meetings with each of the department heads at WHHS and there will be a regular schedule of meetings and you and any board member are welcome to attend these meetings. We will be ready for a presentation and we can get you a schedule of the when the meetings are taking place. Jim thanked Neil and said he had one more item to discuss. With regard to the consultant coming in for Carrigan, Roger LeFleur, is he getting paid from the grant money? Neil said yes there is a fee which he would take out of the grant which is permissible. Is that a state fee or something like that? Neil knows it is a percentage but is not sure how it works and you are welcome to ask him at the next meeting. He has agreed to take the proposal to the board as far as what the Alliance Grant proposal would be and take it to the City Council so they would understand what they would be bonding and up until that point there is no fee for the work that he would do. It would only be if the project goes through and he would be the person who would help us go out and seek the best proposal and best plan and follow the project through and complete most of the paperwork through the completion of the project. Jim thanked Neil and just wanted to know how much he would be charging per hour or what percentage he would be taking. Neil said Mr. LeFleur would be able to answer this but we haven't gotten that far yet.

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 September 21, 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

Rosemary Russo seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

15-120 Joany Guzman, World Language Teacher – Spanish – West Haven High School

Effective: September 18, 2015

Reason: Personal

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve resignation item 15-120
Bob Guthrie made the motion
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion
Discussion: All board members present were in favor
Item 15-120 is approved

D.3. New Hire (Certified)

D.4. New Business

15-121 Approval of an 8th grade enrichment excursion to Rhode Island and Massachusetts from June 1st to June 3, 2016.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-121
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the items
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
Discussion: Dr. Cordone stated he met with interested parents last week and went over the proposal and what the itinerary. He answered any questions the parents had. It is basically the same trip that we offer every year. We are using the same organization that has been booking it for us including the safety precautions for the night time security.
Bob Guthrie asked if there was a cap on the number of kids that you can accept. No, not really. Rosa Richardson asked what the ratio would be. Neil said our board policy is 10 to 1 and Dr. Cordone said we usually run 8 to 1 for this trip.
All board members present were in favor
Item 15-121 is approved

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion
The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola
Board Secretary