

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**April 1, 2019**

**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

**Board's Meeting Room**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on April 1, 2019 in the Board's Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT. The meeting was called to order by Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 6:18 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

James W. Morrissey, Chairman  
Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair  
Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer  
Lauren Aceto  
Patrick Leigh  
Patricia Libero  
James W. Morrissey  
Karen Pacelli  
Rosa Richardson  
Rosemary Russo

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

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

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**PRESENT:**

Sumedha Chowdhury  
Brendan Carew

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Russo welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for staying after the previous meeting ended. She then asked three times if anyone would like to address the board this evening during public session. There were no speakers. Public Session closed at 6:20 PM.

**REPORTS**

**C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools**

Superintendent Cavallaro said next month we will have Seth Haley and Forest give their presentations. Neil said he thinks the nicest thing is the support given by the number of people who have come to support their fellow staff members when they give presentations. This says a lot about the teachers in our school district.

The bid for the cafeteria roof at Bailey should go out this week. Rosa has asked how the city is going to pay for it and Neil believes they are in the process of putting together a bonding package. This is an emergency purchase which can be approved right away but he doesn't know the particulars but does have that commitment from the city. Patrick Leigh asked if we bond out do we get the 77% or is that different. No we will not get the 77% for that you have to submit the paperwork for a renovation or addition project. We are not doing the whole roof just the entire cafeteria roof area. Chairwoman Russo asked if the rest of the roof was fine. Neil said it is not in warranty but there are no leaks that we know of. Most of our roofs currently are without warranty. Rosa Richardson asked what this is going to cost or a rough estimate. The scope of this work and the bid was put together by an engineer with some rough estimates but until you put it out to bid....Rosa understands this but can you give her an idea of what the rough estimate is. Not today but Neil is sure he can get it for her. Rosa said it may be worth us patching it and putting it out so that we can get reimbursed and have the whole roof done. If the cost is going to be comparative to bonding out just this portion and our 23% is going to be that for the whole roof wouldn't it make sense. Neil said it would but it would make sense on eight other buildings as well. Neil said the way that works is if we filled out the form and the paperwork we wouldn't know until the end of this legislative session whether or not we are approved for the project. If you do an addition you are a year out but with a roof they would let you know by the end of a session then you normally can proceed. Rosa asked what has been done as a temporary measure currently. Neil said we have a tarp on the roof.....Rosa said like a lot of other city buildings including the garage. Rosa would like to recommend to the board that we at least check into that option. Neil said remember this you are responsible for educating kids in buildings owned by the city. The city's job is to maintain and/or to do those types of long range projects. Neil just wanted to make that clear. Rosa said she is very much aware of that however she said if the whole building is going to be 23% of the 77% that we are going to get back from the state then it would clearly be worth looking into that. Do you understand what I am saying now? Matt Cavallaro doesn't disagree but the timing of it.....Rosa said but the end of the session is when? Patrick Leigh and Matt Cavallaro stated last year it went on until September. Neil said here is the other problem right now you are talking about March. If we were to do an entire roof project you would need to bid it out now because by the time we get word that we can do the entire roof it would be very difficult to get it completed in the course of a summer which is when roof projects have to be done. Neil said he is not disagreeing with what she is saying he just.....Rosa said point of interest Madam Chair, I would like it put on record that this is the result of never having a plan; we are always dealing with crisis management and she would like this in the minutes please. Neil said he thinks that is an excellent point. Rosa and I have been talking and it is one of the things that tomorrow as the budget hearing takes place at Bailey at 6:30 he plans on addressing this to the City Council. He feels we are in better shape than we have been with a five year budget plan in place but that is not taking.....Rosa is not saying let's go

on a spending spree; let's be rational. Neil said there needs to be a plan where you start investing money into your schools because if not you will see more and more of things like this happening and you will, as you are saying, piece meal a job and that is what you are doing. No one can disagree with your intention Rosa and the message that you are sending... she knows.... but the reality of it is we do pay more because at the end of the day when you wait for something to break it always costs you more than when you plan ahead... exactly alright thank you.

Bob Guthrie agrees with Rosa in principal but the problem working against us, and Neil touched on it, is the calendar. First we don't know when the legislative session will end; then we don't know exactly when the approval will take place, which puts us into another winter season before we get started. Rosa understands and that is why she wants to make it clear in the minutes that this is the end result when we deal with crisis management and it is not us as a board; the city in general.

Patrick Leigh asked from the time it goes out to bid do you know how long it takes for the bid process to land a bid and then when we expect work to start and finish. Matt Cavallaro said the bid responses are due on April 7<sup>th</sup> and as soon as we get the bids back there will be interviews, if there are multiple quality vendors, and then we will probably choose someone within the next ten days. A further discussion took place about the lack of asbestos on the roof and that usually there isn't any on roofs.

Pat Libero said a few years ago we did a to-do list from the maintenance department and Mike McGrath was here. We have a list of how old things are but the problem was we never had the money to back it up. We didn't have a rainy day fund but we knew what needed to be done and she is sure this list needs to be updated. Matt Cavallaro said we update it every year and submit a five year capital plan. Neil said this has worked to our advantage because when we first notified the mayor and the finance department they said have you ever put this in. We were able to go back to the plan which was approved by the board last year and we said this is what we have submitted to you. Patrick Leigh asked if the board could receive a copy of what the five year plan said and what projects are listed along with their priority. Matt will get it out to the board. Patrick said perfect thank you.

Chairwoman Russo understands what Rosa is saying and she would much rather see a new roof but the problem is right now and it has to be fixed. Rosa said she knows but it is just very frustrating. Rosemary agreed and the staff there is very frustrated because it rains on them. Neil said they have done a really good job of trying to reorganize but it is a big inconvenience. Chairwoman thanked everyone for all the input.

Patrick Leigh asked if work could be done while kids were in school. Neil said prior to drawing up a final contract we will meet and get a timeline with the contractor. You are not abating but the problem when you do a roof is the bad tar smell that would be the issue. We will figure this out once we get a contractor and they will probably do what they can to keep it from leaking but we are only about 10 weeks away from the end of school too.

Dr. Druzolowski said there are a lot of field trips going on this time of year. We try to spread them out all year but we also make sure that all children who want to go will go. We try to subsidize as much as we can for any of them. The most recent trip that incorporated a lot of kids was Cinderella at the high school and we had all the 4<sup>th</sup> grades attend and they had a great time. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade also benefited from attending the New Haven Symphony and they do something for the kids every year so we were right there getting the tickets for them. Winkle of course provides the transportation with very little help from us. You will see a lot of field trips but we do go through a very intense screening process; we don't just sign off.

The principals are busy looking at their day to day data as well as everything else. They are looking at creating their objectives for their building for next year, updating their school improvement plans, and letting Anne know what their resource needs are. These are the types of things you will see the principals and children doing right now. The Art Festival is a month going on. Neil said we had Dr. Cordone here at the last board meeting to explain that.

Superintendent Cavallaro said we are putting together a pretty ambitious five year plan and if we were to lease computers we would be able to implement a full program in grades kindergarten through grade 8. We want to make sure what that includes. It would include bringing the labs up to date and adding a set of computers in all of the classrooms K – 8 and we are in the process of finalizing that. It is about \$250,000.00 a year and it is a five year lease and after the five years we would own the equipment and as long as we keep budgeting that amount a year we can redeploy and put in new equipment. Karen Pacelli asked if they get them all at once. Yes because it is a lease and we pay the company \$250,000.00 a year for five years so that will be nice. Rosa said but at the end of five years they will all be five years old. Right but as long as we keep putting the \$250,000.00 aside annually we will be able to release the debt and do a new lease with new equipment after five years. Many board members made comments and felt that this is the right way to do it.

Superintendent Cavallaro said we have been talking about a new schedule and a roll out plan for the high school and Dana has done a wonderful job. She has worked with all the staff at WHHS to try and accommodate everyone and to make sure every person has their free period and their lunch. Neil knows she is excited about it and has been looking forward to implementing and in his opinion it will be the first of many major accomplishments in her tenure as principal of WHHS.

Dana didn't do a power point on the screen because it would be too hard to see the detail numbers on the page so she passed out a colored print out to the board members, Superintendent Cavallaro, Dr. Druzolowski and Matt Cavallaro.

Dana said she has been trying for years to change the schedule because 43 minutes is really not enough time to get the kind of instruction that we need to do and the kind of assessing that we need to do. It is not enough time to do performance based learning and individual conferencing which is a big focus for us right now. We wanted to gain

instructional time and that is something that is really difficult to do within the parameters of our contract and we think we finally have gotten that accomplished. Dana discussed how the schedule works and how it looks. She talked about a sample student schedule and a sample teacher schedule along with some of the benefits which follow below.

1. 26 additional instructional minutes per class over a seven day period.
2. Additional collaboration time (daily average increases from 16 minutes to 25 minutes).
3. Fewer transitions (also eliminates traffic caused by 60 min math).
4. ALL STUDENTS have lunch.
5. Rotation into 80 min block allows for flexibility in teaching, flex grouping etc.
6. Equity in class sizes (possible without labs and double math period).
7. Rotation allows students to be seen at different times of day/issue of tardy to period 1.
8. Equity across disciplines.
9. Equity in teacher free/lunch.
10. Maintains elective selection.

Questions were asked by board members and answered by Dana. The board gave thanks.

#### **C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report**

The Student Representatives Report will be found at the end of the minutes.

#### **C.1.c. Board**

Jim Morrissey attended the Founder's Day Unsung Heroes last week and it was a very well run event and listening to the speeches of the people who were nominated for the awards was so impressive. Unfortunately there were many heart wrenching stories. What these unsung heroes do on behalf of our children amazes Jim. It is not just about them being in school during normal business days but that they take the time out to spend time with the children and their families after hours on week nights and weekends. Jim can't thank them enough for what they do. They go above and beyond their job and as a board member he wants to say thank you. All who were honored that evening are amazing people with amazing stories of what they do on behalf of our children.

Rosa Richardson said a standing ovation for Carrigan's Shrek Jr. that had her in stitches; it was so much fun and it is absolutely amazing the talent our students have. Rosa also attended Cinderella which was amazing. The voices on our kids are totally amazing. Whatever we do we have to find a way to keep those programs going because they are awesome and we have the talent.

Patrick Leigh said last Wednesday we had the privilege of going to the high school and taking a tour of the progress that is taking place. The last time we were there it was basically a skeleton of what the building was going to be and to see it now really brought it to light especially that stage and that is awesome. To see the soundproofing in the band room, the brickwork and the view from the media center and see right into Long Island Sound so it is really nice.

Karen Pacelli also had the privilege of going to Founder's Day and wanted to congratulate all the people who won but it also goes to the schools too because it is all part of what they attributed to the schools.

Bob Guthrie had the opportunity to go on the tour of the high school and also attended Founder's Day. Bob said one thing he doesn't miss about that are the skits as the night seems to go along much quicker minus the skits. Bob also attended Carrigan's Shrek Jr.

Pat Libero toured the high school and Ken Carney was able to take her earlier because she had something to do later and it was really nice. The kids from the Carrigan Jazz Band that have mostly taken lessons for two years and some for one year were amazing and then she went to Bailey that has a percussion band which is incredible. Pat said she wants to video tape them and show it to the board and say we need instruments. The teacher said we received this, this and this and that is why we were able to do the percussion band. She and the kids are really excited and they are amazing with what they are doing so there are nice things heading toward the high school. Pat also saw Shrek Jr. and brought Evan to both Shrek and Cinderella and he liked both of them. Patrick did a great job as Pinocchio in Shrek and they did a nice job, as always, with Cinderella. Pat can't wait for the auditorium; it is incredible and it will be a great place to have plays.

Sue Walker also took a tour of the high school and the changes between the last time and this time were amazing. She can't wait to see shows in that auditorium. She is sorry she retired when she saw the new media center because that is going to be beautiful and she can't wait to see it when it is done. Sue enjoyed the presentations tonight. Every school has brought different things to us in different ways and it has been really nice to see a teacher or teachers being honored from each school or a program and it has been very nice. Sue also saw Cinderella which was fantastic and we have very, very talented students at the high school. Margi Maher brought out the best in those kids as she always does and it was a wonderful experience.

Chairwoman Russo said she has to agree with all the board members that the events since our last meeting have all been spectacular. Founder's Day, The Unsung Heroes, and the tour of the high school everything has really been impressive. She thanked Dana because she was able to bring her class to see Cinderella and it was beautiful and the kids really enjoyed it. It was great plus she had five helpers from the high school which she wishes she could have every day in her classroom. Laughter. Thank you all for everything that you do; things are looking good!

## **D.1. Approval of Minutes**

**D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting** held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on Monday, March 18, 2019 at 7:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Special Meeting minutes D.1.a. Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion: Jim Morrissey abstained because he was not present at the meeting.

Pat Libero said she was present at the Special Meeting but her name was not listed. That correction has been made to the minutes.

All other board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

**D.1.b. 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 Monday, March 18, 2019 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting minutes D.1.b.

Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve the minutes

Patrick Leigh seconded the motion

Discussion: Jim Morrissey abstained because he did not attend the meeting.

All other board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

**D.2. Resignations: (Certified)**

**19-10 Donna Kosiorowski RN**, Supervisor, School Health Services and  
504 Coordinator

Effective: June 30, 2019

Reason: Retirement

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item #19-10

Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve the minutes

Bob Guthrie seconded the motion

Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said he has worked with Donna for a long time and she is extremely professional and conscientious and does her job very well. Donna will be missed because she brings a lot of unique credentials to the position. She currently holds a teaching certificate and a 092 administrator's certificate which is why she is able to supervise and oversee the 504 meetings. We have begun the process and have been working with Donna but it is going to be a difficult position to replace. If we do something different with the position it will be because of her skill set and trying to find somebody or more than one person to make up for that skill set. Once we come up with a plan if we can't replace her we will explain it but it will be really difficult. Rosa Richardson stated that those are tough shoes to fill and she will be missed.

All board members were in favor

Motion passes.

Chairwoman Russo wished Donna a lot of luck in her future plans. Superintendent Cavallaro said that 504 has really become a big deal and takes up a lot of time. Karen Pacelli asked if she does this for the district. Superintendent Cavallaro said yes she does if a child needs extra services or extended day or extra medical attention she is involved.

**D.3. New Hire: (Certified)**

**D.4. New Business**

**F. Informational**

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to adjourn  
Rosa Richards made the motion  
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion  
All board members were in favor  
The meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola  
Board Secretary

The Student Rep Report follows.

**BOE Student Rep Report**

**April 1, 2019**

1. WHHS Theatre Workshop put on a production of the play Cinderella this past Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, as well as a show for all the fourth-graders Thursday afternoon. Congrats to them for putting together such a great show!
2. The WHHS Science Olympiad Team competed at the state competition this past Saturday and ranked well in several events. Congrats to them!
3. There is a half day this Wednesday for professional development.
4. The Spring Concert for the WHHS Band will be on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you all there!
5. The Jazz Concert at WHHS will be on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you all there as well!