

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
West Haven High School Cafeteria

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on August 19, 2019 in the Cafeteria of West Haven High School, 1 McDonough Plaza, West Haven, CT. The meeting was called to order by Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 6:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

Chairwoman Russo welcomed everyone to the last meeting before the school year begins. As you can see we have many things happening in our school district that we are excited about. Before we begin public session we would like to take a Moment of Silence for us to remember Dave Russell who passed away last Thursday. Dave was a dear friend to many and certainly a champion to West Haven and the many children of West Haven. He was committed to education; not only was he a teacher and principal but he was also a member of this board where he served as Chairman. Dave also was elected to City Council on two different occasions. Dave spent the last years of his career as Director of the Adult Ed Program. Dave had a way with students of all ages and will truly be missed but will live on in the memories of many. Please take a moment for Dave now. Thank you. We will now move on to the public portion of the meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Lauren Aceto

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES
PRESENT:**

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairwoman Russo asked if anyone would like to address the board.

Dana Paredes, 54 Barbara Lane thanked the board members who came out to Westies on Wheels last week. We had a great turnout and had to move it indoors because of the weather. We gave out backpacks and have a few left. Dana thanked everyone for their support leading up to today with the unveiling of our new building. She is unbelievably excited to be able to show you around. This new building is gorgeous and she can't thank everyone enough for their support. The board gave thanks.

Anthony Krzeminski, 1 Robart Street in the Allingtown section. On 7/29 he was turning from David Street and he stopped just before the exit for Forest School because he thought it was a dirt bike and was surprised it was a riding mower that he thought was going to come out of the school area and hit his car. The biggest surprise was a person was sitting on the front of the mower with no protection with a blower in his hand blowing the grass and dirt onto the street. This is a serious OSHA Violation and if you fell you would probably get injured and go on Worker's Comp and we would end up paying for all the medical bills. Mr. Krzeminski would like this to be looked into and handled. He has already called the person in charge of the grass etc. for West Haven but he never received a call back. Mr. Krzeminski would like someone on the board to look into this matter and get back to him. If this continues the board will be responsible and he will end up paying as a taxpayer. Thank you. The board gave thanks. Superintendent Cavallaro said Chris Everone is here and will look into this tomorrow. Chairwoman Russo asked three times if anyone would like to address the board. There were no other speakers. Public session closed at 6:10.

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro said he is happy to report that our schools are in pretty good shape and ready to open. The focus has been on getting the high school ready. The Business Network Group sent us a report today and they are in good shape as far as the delivery of the new computer carts in the computer labs and everything will be completed by the end of September. The current labs are in good shape and in working order so there will be no disruption of education. They will be replaced on an evening shift. We are very pleased with the work here and in the rest of the buildings as well.

Superintendent said to address Mr. Krzeminski he can't make any excuses and we will certainly look into it but during the last meeting I acknowledged that our grounds were not in the best of shape. We basically have a whole new crew that we hired due to a real large retirement. The grounds look a lot better but we certainly will have to take a look at some of the new hires. They seem to be working hard and doing a good job of getting caught up but we will look into that complaint.

We still have a couple of open positions with the internal bidding process and hiring outside but we have done a pretty good job of getting a custodial team and maintenance crew in place.

The Bailey roof will be started tomorrow and completed by Friday. Neil was told it is a 3 or 4 day job at best. Our administrative team did a remarkable job this summer as we

filled approximately 40 teaching positions, 15 to 20 non certified positions, some para positions and we are ready to go. As of this morning we may need a science teacher and we may need a part time district wide speech pathologist which we can contract out for if needed for now. We need two nursing positions both of those positions were filled and they resigned for higher paying positions. There is a paraprofessional position to be filled which should be filled by the time the school year starts as well as a med tech position. We do have some food service jobs where there is the most turnaround so it is not unusual; we will have a team in place but we are always looking for food service workers. We have offered the final maintenance position and we may have a five hour custodial position as a result at Bailey. We are in really good shape to open and the most important thing is that teachers are in place. Tomorrow is orientation for new teachers and we have over 40 people. We start with coffee and at 8:00 AM and the program begins at 8:30 AM tomorrow at Savin Rock School. We will try to acknowledge any board member who is present.

Superintendent Cavallaro gave the board members an article from the New Haven Independent with a head line which stated that Magnets Seek \$2,250 Tuition From Suburbs. This is something we knew may be coming Rose Russo and I have spoken a lot about it over the last couple of weeks. As a board and as a city we need to be vigilant on this and keep an eye on this and frankly we need to do something. As of last week we were put on notice that the New Haven Board of Education has written a letter to the Commissioner of Education, which they are required to do, to receive permission to start charging tuition to districts that are sending students. A few years ago the legislation said you have to give a year's notice so we expect if the Commissioner grants permission all of the sending districts will receive a certified letter on September 1st notifying New Haven's intent to start charging tuition. In the first year alone September 1st 2020 we have approximately 860 kids in Magnet Schools times \$750 which is the first year assessment which is about \$640,000.00 and by the third year it goes to \$2,250.00 which almost a 2M dollar bill that would be assessed to the city of West Haven. Some of our dilemmas are 1. Can we afford it? 2. Do we have the room to take the kids back? 3. How do you tell people who have been out for a long time that we are not paying any more you have to come back? Superintendent Cavallaro was asked to comment because we have the largest number of kids in the Magnet Program. Yes New Haven can charge but he believes that it is a short term solution for a much larger problem. A lengthy discussion took place with board members making suggestions, asking questions and answers being given along with some decisions on what we should do next. Superintendent Cavallaro thought there were good questions asked and he will do the best he can to keep the board informed and hopes the questions will continue because this is going to impact us. This is something that we must watch. The board gave thanks.

Bob Guthrie said the Department of Public Health keeps inquiring of local school districts that they are compliant with the Public Act requiring that CPR be taught to our students. Do we fall under compliant or the non-compliant side. Superintendent Cavallaro said we do this in the Health Classes. Bob asked if the current makeup of our shops have the ability to make picnic tables. He said this would actually help another city department. Park Rec struggles for some with the Playground Camps. So if there is a

way for those shops to make them the kids would get experience and Park Rec would have tables for their summer camps. Superintendent Cavallaro said the ability he would say yes and an after school program to actually raise a little money would certainly be something we should consider. Bob said we could talk with Park Rec about this to serve both needs. Bob then said a lot of districts are trying to cut down on food waste and send stuff home with kids in need. He asked if we have a lot of waste with food that could be sent home? He knows Meg tries to keep a handle of this. Chairwoman Russo just met with Meg about this because Marilyn Wilkes has contacted her and Neil about different sustainability in West Haven and she met with Meg and there are things we are already doing. Rosemary is meeting with another person with the state to see what we can do along those lines but Meg is already doing a lot of this. Bob then asked what was the construction that occurred on the corner of Woodmont and Benham Hill? He didn't recall seeing this come across our agenda; who approved it. Superintendent Cavallaro said that is a rain garden in the corner of the property. The city received a grant from the University of Connecticut. Abdul the City Engineer was involved and Chris Everone has monitored it and it has been completed now. It is out of the way. Chris said it has been in the works for about three years. Abdul thought Pagels would be the best place to locate this and it is kind of a collaborative effort. Students from UCONN came down and they showed up and started doing it. Bob said so that was approved by the Engineer not the Superintendent, not the board, not the Mayor? We saw the plans for this but didn't expect it to start it a week before school. It is a City Project. Rosa said it is a City Project on Board of Education property though. Mr. Carney said Rosa it is a City Project on City Property and you guys have a new \$75,000.00 roof going on that the city paid for and that rain garden was put there by the city and it is city property; you have full use of the property but at the end of the day the city pays all the major upkeep and they build the new schools. Bob is not familiar with the purpose of this will it become an attraction for mosquitoes or a risk for kids. No the answer is no on both questions. We are having a serious drainage problem that is getting worse and worse and we when we installed the rain garden on this property we take the runoff which would normally go down the city streets, clog your sewers, take sediment with it and create a mess. It goes to the rain garden and slowly recharges the ground water. If this thing works we will be looking at something helpful to us. (I could not make out the actual words used.) Bob Guthrie just has concerns about students getting hurt and also impacting the ability of our grounds for getting stuff done in a timely manner. Chris Everone said there is no issue that is why it is over there not really impacting the school of playground and it is maintenance free. Bob asked if we know the cost of that was start to finish. Mr. Carney put in smaller raingardens and they run between 20 and 25 thousand. He doesn't know what the cost is for this but it is huge. Dwight Knowles asked if notification was sent to homeowners as he lives right past the street and no one told him about it. Rosemary Russo said it was a City Project so it was up to the City. Mr. Knowles said with something like that the homeowners should have been notified. Pat Libero said you should go to the City Council with this not us. Mr. Knowles said this affects my property. Mr. Carney said you will have less water on your property because of it. Chairwoman Russo told Mr. Knowles that he should approach City Council with your concerns. Pat Libero said with the success of this one it might be a good idea to get the word out with more publicity.

Dr. Druzolowski looks forward to seeing the board members tomorrow if they can come to meet our 39 new teachers.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

There will be no reporting from the student representatives until September. Brendan Carew will be returning next year and the two new student reps will be Mackenzie Gardner and Anthony Vendrella.

C.1.c. Board

Superintendent Cavallaro said just so everyone knows the Student Reps were not allowed to come to the building. The building will be cleared Wednesday. The summer abatement is still under the order so the kids can't come into the building.

Sue Walker went to the Westies on Wheels and enjoyed being there. She also went to the distribution at Savin Rock and it was great to see the faces of the kids as they received their backpacks. Dana and the faculty and student helpers that showed up did a great job and it was a wonderful event. Patrick Leigh is super excited for the school year to resume especially with the new building. He is glad to see everything is completed as we saw all the stages progress. Driving in here today it is beautiful. Jim Morrissey said to Ken Carney they will start on the Bailey Cafeteria Roof tomorrow. Yes correct and by the way it is a three day job for the roofing part of it but there are some drains that we have added and that will happen on the weekend or at night when the kids aren't in school. The reason that job was so delayed is because the high bidder of \$125,000.00 protested the bid saying that he should have gotten the bid against the guy who was \$70,000.00 so the bid was put on hold for two months because of that. OK was it in court or anything? No. A further discussion took place. Jim Morrissey said if we have some bad weather will they work through the weekend. Yes it is a small job and they want to knock it out so I believe they will. You believe they would or are they going to do it? I believe so. Jim said he doesn't want to start the school year with the roof not being completed. We don't want that and we fought against that. Jim asked Mr. Carney to find out for this board that this will be done on the weekend if there is bad weather. Superintendent Cavallaro said he thought Chris Everone had them put something in writing. Chris said they were supposed to get us over something but he hasn't received it yet but we will find out definitely tomorrow. Jim wants to make sure this will be finished by the opening of school because there has been a tarp on the roof since last February. For the safety of our staff and our students I want to make sure that this is completed by the beginning of school. Please have somebody get back to the Superintendent and board with an update. If possible please paint the speed bumps by the girl's gym to let people know there are speed bumps there and this will stop speeding cars. The additional parking at Savin Rock School is a great help. Superintendent Cavallaro said there will be some fencing there also so kids can't run into the parking lot. Where the basketball court was there were sinkholes so we moved the court and next year we will refurbish the other side. This is really phase 1 of a larger project. Jim wished are staff and students a safe year this year and we look forward to a new school year. Patrick Leigh is concerned about the road out front being a little narrow and he can definitely see there will be box trucks and school buses so he wants to make sure that the traffic pattern will work. Mr. Carney said when we finish the tour

today we will step outside with Mr. Conte and we will show you that there will be no issue. Superintendent Cavallaro said student parking will be very limited this year and we have 80 spots at the Savin Rock Conference Center we are setting aside where we will run a shuttle bus to and from school for student parking. We think we have a spot for all the teachers. Rosa Richardson thanked Dana and all the people who volunteered you all make me proud and we as a board appreciated it very much. Rosa hopes everyone has an awesome year. Dana break this new school in! Pat Libero wishes everyone a good year and Westies on Wheels is always a success and she appreciates all the work that everybody puts into it all year long as well as the work you put in throughout the school year with your closets etc. for the kids. There is a lot that goes on in West Haven that is not publicized and that is kind of sad and I think we are in for a good year and the cafeteria looks good. Pat was questioning the white chairs as first but will see in about a month but they look beautiful now and hopes the kids recognize what a great gift this is to them and this is a great place to be and have such a great building to go to school in. She hopes they appreciate this and will take care of the property. Chairwoman Russo wanted commented on what a good job Mr. Capone has done with the boxes and coordinating everything. Thank you good job! To piggy back on all the board members we all wish you a great year. We expect even bigger and better things this year.

C.1.d. Committees

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 Monday, July 22, 2019 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Meeting minutes D.1.a.
Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the minutes
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: Bob Guthrie abstained because he was absent from this meeting.
All board members present were in favor
Regular Meeting Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

19-82 Lisa Curatola, ELA Teacher – Bailey Middle School
Effective: July 31, 2019
Reason: Resignation

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item 19-82
Bob Guthrie made the motion
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
Item 19-82 is approved

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

- 19-83 Alina Romero**, 39 Glenwood Ave., Unit 2, Norwalk, CT 06854
ESL/Bilingual Teacher – Savin Rock Community School
Salary: \$51,515.00 Step 2 BS + 60
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-84 Jessica Clifford**, 93 Patten Road, North Haven, CT 06473
Science Teacher Grade 8 – Bailey Middle School
Salary: \$48,424.00 Step 1 BS + 60
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-85 Taylor Coughline**, 10 Rose Lane, North Haven, CT 06473
Elementary Teacher – Washington School
Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1 BS + 30
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-86 Corinthian Hughes**, 5 Schooner Lane Suite 1F, Milford, CT 06460
Elementary Teacher – Washington School
Salary: \$49,454.00 Step 2 BS + 30
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-87 Carmela Armellino**, 348 Haystack Hill, Orange, CT 06477
Elementary Teacher Grade 2 – Savin Rock Community School
Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1 BS + 30
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-88 Shayne Fischman**, 982 Rainbow Trail, Orange, CT 06477
Elementary Teacher Grade 2 – Forest School
Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1 BS + 30
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-89 Emily Bolcer**, 6 Masters Lane, Milford, CT 06461
Social Studies Teacher – Bailey Middle School
Salary: \$41,232.00 Step 1 BS
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-90 Thomas Norton**, 295 Clintonville Road, Northford, CT 06472
Special Education Inclusion Teacher – Carrigan Intermediate School
Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1 BS +30
Effective: August 26, 2019
- 19-91 Megan Taylor**, 58 Sherman Avenue, Trumbull, CT 06611
Athletic Trainer – West Haven High School
Salary: \$35,000.00
Effective: August 26, 2019

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve new hire items 19-83 – 19-91 inclusive
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Pat Libero seconded the motion
Discussion: All board members present were in favor
Items 19-83 – 19-91 inclusive are approved.

Chairwoman Russo said the next one is a walkthrough of the new phase of construction and she wants to remind the board they will come back here so we can adjourn. I want to do it this way if there are questions or comments. Questions were asked during the walkthrough and responded to. All board members were very impressed with each and every area of the school.

D.4. New Business

19-92 Walkthrough of the new phase of construction at WHHS

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item 19-92
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Pat Libero seconded the motion
Discussion: All board members present were in favor
Item 19-92 is approved.

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational.

F. Informational

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to adjourn
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion
All board members were in favor
The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary