

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES**

January 20, 2004

The Meeting of the Board of Education was held at the Blake Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven. Chairman John Carrano called the Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Anne Heffernan  
Krista Pickering  
Howard Horvath  
Raymond Collins  
M. Toni Paine  
George Monahan  
Robert Guthrie

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Paul Messina

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Superintendent Paul Tortora  
Assistant Superintendent Neil Cavallaro

**B. PUBLIC PORTION**

Chairman Carrano asked if anyone wished to address the Board.  
For a second time, would anyone like to address the Board?

Nancy Rossi, 12 Robin Road, Request that started several months ago, I talked to the Superintendent at the last meeting about E-mails that were involving the impartial hearing officer and the Boards attorney, prior to the expulsion hearing. I did receive 4 of those from the Board's attorney. Some were read at Board meetings, what I did not receive was the attachments. The letter dated December 5; your attorney states they are not a public Agency, I did not say they were. But they represent the West Haven Board of Education, which is a public agency. And are the keeper of this public agency records, which under freedom of information. I am entitled to. Freedom of information said that if everyone tried to hide behind there attorney then freedom of information would not be of any use to anyone. I highlighted where it was said many of the records you seek, are education records, etc. Then how did I get the first four e-mails? Now the most recent letter said they provided me with the documents. I did not receive the e-mails or attachments I requested, then they go on to basically tell me that if I proceed with this complaint. That we, who is we? The Board Members, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, or the attorneys, who is we? That if I precede the Board will attempt to re-coup its attorney's fees. Should there be anymore and then goes on to give me statute. I have been very liberal with the Board. I have tried to be flexible. It looks like I made three requests, when actually I requested the same information three times. If you attorney wants me to follow the statute to the letter I will, but now if I don't get the information. I will have to file a complaint by law.  
The committee meeting the other, some one asked about the bus contract. I have that meeting on tape, and would be happy to supply a copy to anyone would like

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Council decided not to put it out to bid. The Board got together and voted on contract, which were very very specific requirements. Then they went and put it out to Bid the Superintendent then said they were going to notify the bus companies and letter went out to all Bus companies. My husband called the other bus companies; now maybe one or two letters can get lost in the mail. But no bus company received any letter. Only one Bid comes in. I went to City Hall to look at the contract. Paul and George told the council that if this goes out to bid, the bid would come in higher. Now one bid comes in and it's higher then anyone thought. So it goes before the board. So they go and change certain things in the Bid. That probably kept certain bus companies from bidding in the first place. Never goes back out to bid and gives the contract to the existing bus company. I think maybe we should try this again. Everything should go out to bid, including the law firm. Then we talked about the Special Ed cost. I believe the figure was 20.87%. Now the Superintendent said that includes the process cost. What cost, the lawyer, settlement, what cost? Now Stiles school, a lot of the saving was suppose to be Special Ed. Now it's my understanding from the other night that only 12 have gone back in. That not near the figures we were told would be brought back in. I also thought that Stiles school was a separate from the High School, but it seems it's just an extension of the High School.

Another thing I have a problem with, I asked how many PPT are given and how many attorneys appear at them. The answer was no one knows. How can you know cost, if you don't know? I also asked about the police officer in the school system in the summer. I

I have always been an active parent and will continue. If this bothers people, then so be it.

Yes, I am checking figures and policies. I am trying to figure how one child can be treated one way and another child a different way under the same situation. If you want parent involvement, you need to encourage it, not sick your attorney on them. Thank you.

Chairman Carrano asked if anyone else wished to address the Board.

Robert Saley, 50 Bluff Ave, I was think having two people that sit on the council involved here. Sitting here for four hours was very enlightening. Kind of like the City Council.

We were talking about the budget. Something that maybe we could look at. Not necessarily cost saving. But to bring us closer. The police dept will be moving out. We will have empty space at City Hall, that maybe the Board of Ed move over. It would be more centralized. Also we have an acting personnel director; we also have a personnel director at the Board of Education. Somewhere maybe those two jobs could be combined into one. I'm not sure this could happen. I am just throwing it out as an idea. The city does Board of Education and City checks. Maybe we could consolidate these finance services. The reason I bring this up is we have a grand list of one point eight two billion dollars. We don't have a 3.4 like Milford; we don't have a 2.7 like Stratford, or a 2.4 like Hamden. And we are not

going to get a 2.4 so the bottom line is we are not going to have a grand list of 2.1 grand list in the next two, three years, so that means our taxes are going to increase. My job on the council is to try and reduce the mill rate. These are why we should try and consolidate. We might be able to save some money. On the five-year capitol plan, this is something I brought up recently. Discuss the field that is behind the rink; also address the water under

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the Rink. Bring the ice down so we have the rink run at 10 months, which is a lose of Revenue to the rink. Maybe we could address the water under the rink and addition to the field behind the rink. There were things that could have been avoided. If the soccer team could have played instead of being bused elsewhere. Board. Last but not least, this is an issue I really believe in parental involvement. We need over the next few years to get parents more involved, and test scores will come up. Thank you

Chairman Carrano asked if anyone else wished to address the Board.

Paul Scanlon, 11 Laurel Street, I am the Choral Director West Haven High School, also Carrigan Middle School. I am relatively new at this position. I follow Dr. Louis Negri that was that was there for four decades. When I took over as Choral Director one of the things I noticed most that we needed. The physical facility at the High School, there is a real need first I noticed that the vents weren't working. The room was sometimes at 90 degrees and the room has no windows. The walls are falling in; the tiles are falling down. That are on the floor are being chipped. That could be a problem; I haven't noticed yet any piece falling off. But the physical facility needs some kind of attention. I started with 53 students in the program, now I have 82 and next year is to be projected at 130 students. The five-year plan will be 200 students. I am looking forward to that. I am working at Carrigan and Mr. Lopes has been very supportive. We did make a call for the immediate attention to the heat. Mrs. Pickering and Mr. Collins came over, and Mr. Carrano who I talk to on the phone some how managed to get Joe Yacono involved and get the temp. Down to 70 degrees although the venting, there is no venting. At least the temp is down.

Chairman Carrano asked if anyone else wished to address the Board.

Chairman Carrano asked for a second if anyone else wished to address the Board.

Chairman Carrano asked for the third and final time if anyone else wished to address the

Public Session Closed at 7:30pm

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## **C. REPORTS**

### **C.1. Status of Schools:**

Mr. Tortora, Chess Team yet again won the state championship. Not only is it the sixth consecutive year, as you all know. We did have two students place in individual awards. I have asked Anne Heffernan to help out and have a celebration.

Anne Heffernan asked if anyone has recipes to please send them to her at 25 Ogden Street

Mr. Tortora, We had a couple of teacher from Carrigan who submitted an application to trading places and Carrigan was picked. I do have a meeting scheduled to make sure everything is kept up to code.

Mr. Tortora awarded a Certificate issued by Connecticut Schools to Carrigan Middle Schools Web-Site.

Thompson School has been awarded 4 days of Staff development at ACES at no expense to the Board of Ed.

Mr. Tortora gave hand out of the Community House activities.

### **C.1. a. Administration:**

Mr. Cavallaro congratulates the students on the Chess Team. This is a great honor it shows that our students can compete at any level. Mrs. Edmonds is here. If anyone has any questions on the Bailey Cosmic Culture field trip. Also Mr. Scanlon, who has requested a field trip for the Choral Group to Virginia.

### **C.1.b. Board:**

Mr. Carrano, I had the opportunity to go to the opening of Dr. Martin Luther King week

I had received the invitation from Carroll Brown; it was absolutely tremendous experience, if any of you have the chance to attend next year. I urge you to go. It was about 2 ½ hours and anything that can keep my 6-year-old daughter entertained for 2 ½ hours has got to be a wonderful thing.

Mr. Horvath said he had the chance to join Superintendent Tortora and some of the staff

At Stiles school for some of the computer training, and was very impressed.

Mr. Collins: I did visit West Haven High School with Mrs. Pickering and especially

for the new board members if you haven't been down to the High School to see some of the more unique classrooms Such as the Auto shop that is actually building a Hot-Rod. The Wood shop where they are constructing Sheds and Wednesday and Thursday the culinary arts program runs a restaurant, where the students cook the food and do the serving.

As for what Mr. Scanlon said about the heat, we did visit the room and I would like to compliment Mr. Messina who is Chairman of Facilities Committee, who then got Mr. Yacono to the High School and the problem was fixed right away.

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### **C.1.b. Board: (Continued)**

Mr. Carrano stated that he had gotten a call from Mr. Scanlon; he then called Mr. Messina, who was made aware of the situation, not ten minutes later Mr. Yacono called to say he had been made aware of the problem from Mr. Messina and they were on the way to the High School.

Mr. Carrano, Mr. Horvath has been involved in technology especially in New York, We will be asking for his help in parental involvement

Anne Heffernan mentioned a cookbook that will be selling to raise funds for the Chess Team. If anyone has any recipes please send them to 25 Ogden Street. The cookbook will be sold over town, threw the PTA and Schools. She is hoping to have it printed by March 1, 2004.

### **C.c. Committee:**

Mr. Carrano stated that there would be several committees meeting coming up. The month of January is full of Budget meeting, but the committee meetings will pick back up in February.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

D.1.a. Minutes from Facilities/Maintenance on January 5, 2004

D.1.b. Minutes from Regular Board Meeting on January 5, 2004 at 7:00 pm

D.1.c. Minutes from Executive Session on January 5, 2004

**A MOTION was made by M. Toni Paine, SECONDED by George Monahan, to approve D.1.a through D.1.c, Anne Heffernan abstained, as she was not present at last meeting. MOTION was carried.**

**Chairman Carrano asked for A MOTION for D.2 04-13 through 04-15 Non-Certified resignations**

### **D.2 Resignations: (Non-Certified)**

04-13 Alma Brooks, 330 Savin Avenue, Unit 7 West Haven, CT, 10 Month Clerk at West Haven High School, Effective January 1, 2004, Reason: Retirement

04-14 Joseph Bannon, Jr., 269 Captain Thomas Blvd #9, West Haven, CT, Assistant Custodian at West Haven High School Gym (7-3), Effective August 4, 2004, Reason: Retirement

04-15 Gina V. Foster, 21 Rice Road, Meriden, CT, Title Aide at Living Word Christian Academy, Effective June 2004, Reason: Personal

**A MOTION was made by Anne Heffernan, SECONDED by M. Toni Paine to approve D.3 04-13-04-15 as presented and so VOTED unanimously.**

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**Chairman Carrano asked for a MOTION for D.3 Non-Certified Appointments 04-16**

**D.3. Appointments: (Non-Certified)**

04-16 Alberto Martinez, 59 Savin Park, West Haven, CT. Part-time Bilingual Aide at West Haven High School, Effective January 21, 2004, Salary \$13.49 an hour 17.50 hours a week

**A MOTION was made by M. Toni Paine, SECONDED by Anne Heffernan to approve D.3 04-16 as presented and so VOTED unanimously.**

**Chairman Carrano asked for a MOTION to ask for New Business to open for discussion. MOTION was made by M. Toni Paine and SECONED by George Monahan.**

Linda Edmonds - see attachment

Paul Scanlon - Submitted wrong dates for trip, they should be April 19 through April 22. Itinerary is not complete or confirmed as of yet. Will be doing fundraiser with the parent group.

**D. E. New Business:**

04-17 Overnight Field Trip-Cosmic Culture Club at Bailey Middle School, to the Science Camp in Jersey City, New Jersey May 14 and May 15, 2004.

04-18 Overnight Field Trip West Haven High School Choral Department, Virginia Beach, Va. April 16 through April 19, 2004. Students will participate in a concert with students from the Salem High School Choral Department.

04-19 Request for a part-time Literacy Aide at Seth Haley School, 17.50 hours a week, Salary \$13.49 an hour

**Chairman Carrano asked for a MOTION to approve D.e. 04-17 through 04-19**

**A MOTION was made by Krista Pickering, SECONDED by Raymond Collins to approve D.e. 04-17 through 04-19as presented and so VOTED unanimously.**

**F. Information:**

Anne Heffernan- Just wants to say that is wonderful that the Athletic Hall of Fame is donating \$2,500.00 to the cost of the scoreboards

Krista Pickering - no

Howard Horvath - no

Raymond Collins - no

George Monahan - no

Toni Paine - no

Robert Guthrie -no

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**Chairman Carrano asked for a MOTION to adjourn**

**A MOTION to adjourn was made by Anne Heffernan, and SECONDED by M.Toni Paine at 8:30pm. And SO VOTED unanimously**

