

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

October 19, 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 19, 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 Robert Guthrie
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo
Cebi Waterfield

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Palmieri

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Susannah Beyl
Evelyn Fabian
Andrew Gordon

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairwoman Libero 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 said we are one of the 30 Alliance Districts in the state of Connecticut and as a result of some legislation and the Governor putting some money aside West Haven is eligible for approximately 1.7M in funding for major bonding type projects. If we tie those projects with some needs at Carrigan we can get a lot of work done approximately 7.2 M for about 1.4M. Neil contacted Roger LaFleur who worked with CREC and now works with several firms who will help make this money work for us. A plan has been put together and Kevin McNabola from the city has been involved. At some point 2M will be set aside in a capital budget type project which we would take advantage of to be part of this project. Tonight we are asking for the board's permission to pass the Alliance portion of this which will give Carrigan a much needed face lift.

Roger LaFleur mentioned many of the deficiencies that Carrigan has. The windows need work, the paving in the parking lot requires work. We saw an opportunity to combine the Alliance Grant with some state grant funding for some new construction and leverage the amount of money that can be utilized for Carrigan to make a more attractive package for West Haven. Mr. LaFleur passed out a pro forma to board members that described the projects that either qualify for state grant reimbursement on a conventional school construction grant or it qualifies under the Alliance Grant which pays for those things that school construction grants won't cover. The roof is covered with the state school construction grant so we can't use the Alliance Grant for the roof. The state grant won't do boilers so we can use the Alliance Grant for the boilers. Roof replacement and window replacement were broken into two because the window replacement under the state grant will only pay for materials not labor so we decided to take the most difficult windows and put them under the Alliance Grant and save the windows with the lower labor cost and do it as a second phase in a two phase project. We also want to take advantage of a solar project to generate savings to the school system because we will be generating our own power and this is covered under the state school construction grant process with 75% paid for by the state. The utility will also buy back the renewable credits which is another bonus which offsets more of the costs on the other projects. By having a pool cover you save lost energy. A further discussion took place about other areas in Carrigan that will be corrected; the main electric service upgrade, the roof, the controls for the building environment (heating cooling), interior lighting, lockers, and specialized paving areas. These improvements except for the lockers will help offset operational costs for many years to come. A discussion took place about the five areas of grants that will help with this project.

Bob Guthrie asked how long the whole project would take. The Alliance Grant work could be started tomorrow once authorized to proceed. The state grant process has to go back to the city council for approval because they will bond for their share. You have two

types of projects on the state side priority (the second phase window project) which has to go through the state legislative process for bonding and has to be submitted by June 30th of 2016 and we wouldn't be authorized to proceed until July 1 of 2017 and the other is a non-priority project (roof) as soon as the Commissioner approves the application for the roof project we could get going for the summer of 2016. Bob Guthrie as how much disruption can we expect to the learning environment. Both roofing and windows would have to be done in the summer when the kids are not in school. The rest of the projects would be coordinated after hours or during the summer or vacation time. Bob asked if we know where the city will find the 1.7M. Neil said we were told that it will be part of a package that will be submitted to the Council for 2.5M for capital improvements towards BOE buildings but this still has to pass. What we are up against is the deadline for the Alliance Grant; the first submission (and there are three) is due by October 30th. If this falls through we could ask that the money be reallocated. Bob wanted to make sure that this would not fall under the overview of the Building Oversight Committee and get bogged down. Neil said because it is a school building process a building committee would have to be appointed by the administration. Roger LaFleur said a legislative process requires a building committee be appointed. You can use an existing one if you want to but you can show a legislative action to create one.

Pat Libero said this is a building that certainly does need some assistance and having been principal we have talked about this before. Putting the windows in and having the ventilation fixed and the roof and parking lot will definitely be an upgrade and she hopes this goes through.

Rosa Richardson asked don't we have some structural issues at Carrigan. Mr. LaFleur said none that were brought to his attention. Rosa said wasn't there some discussion at a previous board meeting where there were some structural concerns at Carrigan. Neil asked if she was referring to the river or water. Mr. LaFleur said that this is not a structural issue. The engineers he brought to Carrigan went down and found a rather large air conditioning unit that services the main office area that was not running correctly and a portion was like a block of ice. It was still cooling but it is melting and that water from the ice is continuously dropping and we believe that is what is causing that wet area. Rosa said she didn't want to invest 7M and miss something. Rosa thanked Mr. LaFleur. The board gave thanks.

Neil said on November 10th the high school building committee is going to do a presentation called a "white canvas" presentation of the interior finishes and furniture for the new high school. Neil received an email from Michael Losasso who is one of the architects for Antinozzi and he asked that we hold the finish presentation during the scheduled November 10th Building Committee Meeting at 7PM and to invite the board members. Please mark your calendars and Marylou will send out official notification shortly.

Neil said Matt will talk a little bit about the finances because last week it appeared in the newspaper that at the last council meeting it was stated that we were going to possibly be

running a deficit. We don't believe that is the case and Matt will explain that what we told you two weeks ago we still think is true now.

Matt Cavallaro stated at the last meeting he stated we were confident that we would deliver a balanced budget at the end of the audit for the last fiscal year and then at the council meeting it was said we were running a deficit so we felt the need to discuss it. A series of entries to our budget still need to be made. There is a lot of revenue on the city side as well as our grant funds that need to be moved to our budget to offset any expense that we have now and any expense that the audit may find. That was known by the city side before the council meeting. The council also received this information as well.

We did have a plan towards the end of the last fiscal year to carry over some money to 2015/2016 because at that time we were very good financially and then the tuition numbers and the health insurance numbers started to rise so that plan changed and we are going to move that money back to the 2014/2015 year. This is a very common move and is definitely allowable. This will help offset some of the expenses. The city receives FEMA money from the storms we had over the winter and we will receive a portion of this reimbursement from the city. A CNA program rents space at Molloy and the rent mistakenly went to the city and we will be having it transferred to our side. We received a security grant for approximately \$130,000 back in the 2012/2013 fiscal year for security cameras and somehow we didn't receive the reimbursement from the state until this fiscal year and that was booked to the city side as well and will go into our budget to make us whole. The excess cost money is received for the expenses we incur for educating our special ed students that are outplaced to different schools throughout the state. We are reimbursed for any child we educate that is five time more expensive to educate than a regular ed student. The state refers to these expenses as catastrophic expenses and states that any dollar over our itemized special ed budget line item in our budget should come back to us. We haven't been doing this because we have been able to live within our budget but as the needs of our students have risen along with the price of private institutions we will need this fund to offset the rising costs of special ed. With these revenue sources it is our expectation that the Board of Ed general revenue budget will be balanced at the end of the year. We have discussed this with the City Finance Department and they are on board with this line of thinking. We felt the need to address this and if you have questions I'll be happy to answer them.

Bob Guthrie said it was disappointing to see the way it was presented in the paper because we were just told that we were tracking well. Part of the problem is that the money goes to the city as a pass through to us. Bob asked if any school districts cut their own checks. Neil said that regional school districts do. A lot of what we are bound to is the city purchasing order ordinance and that sets up a lot of how we have to run through the city finance department. Certainly if we don't need the money we are happy to turn it over to the city. The concern both the BOE and the city has is that we ran into a bad year of benefits as a City/BOE. Being self insured it is difficult to project those things until the year is over as Matt has said many times. This is the reason the city ended the year in a deficit this year. If we don't need the excess cost share money we are not going to take money back at the expense of the city falling into a deficit. This is the way we have worked for years and it is our hope to continue to work that way. We read this in the

paper just like you Bob and the board members and that is why we feel the need to address it. A further discussion continued.

Cebi Waterfield asked when we can expect the entries to be made back to our side. Matt is in the process of doing some of them now. It is common to do it around this time with the start of the new school year ordering etc. Cebi asked if we had an idea how much of the ECS money we would be receiving. Matt is anticipating around \$100,000.00 of the 1.9M for the last fiscal year. Cebi said so we are still left a big balance in that 1.9M yes, absolutely.

Anne Druzolowski said the Full Day Kindergartens are running very smoothly. It has been delightful to be in the buildings and see kids reading. The amount of books we have been able to get from this alliance grant has really made a difference. The more kids read and like to read the better we will see them perform. Carrigan and Bailey have instituted sustained silent reading where everybody stops and reads. The kids are just loving this because they are getting to choose what they want to read. The board was invited to walk around the schools and see what the kids are doing.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

Susannah Beyl, Evelyn Fabian and Andrew Gordon gave the student rep report which is attached at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board

Rosemary Russo said there was an article in the New Haven Voice this week that said the shops still aren't open and the kids are getting really frustrated. Parents are frustrated because there is no hands on component. Neil said they are open; the Fire Marshall cleared it almost two weeks ago. He asked that we use it only at times when they know we are using it because it is not open on a full time basis. We ordered a lot of materials especially for the auto shop which is the one area that has not been cleared by the Fire Marshall. Keith Flood from the Center Fire District is going to get all parties together to state what must happen in order to open it. Anne Druzolowski said we have ordered a lot of portable engines that kids can get a handle on along with a variety of tools. We have purchased five of them so kids can get around them in groups. We also ordered some computer software and different types of machines that fit in to everything we have been talking about which amounted to about \$250,000.00 worth of equipment. We were missing quite a few tools for kids to work with so tool sets were ordered with their cabinets, which is what I have been preaching all along, you can't have tools without the cabinets and they have to be locked. We will be coming to the board with four memorandums of agreement from Gateway, for the second semester, which includes every Friday during the course of the school day. Breaks are one of the memorandum of agreements. They will learn all about breaks and their installation. Rosemary asked will they have the opportunity to do this. Anne said yes, absolutely on automobiles and Neil said they will get a certification. Neil said that Gateway has partnerships with GM and either Toyota or Honda where they can get a certification in those areas by doing so many hours of hands on work. We hopefully will be bringing this to you during the next board meeting. Anne said yes we are waiting for some changes we made in the contract to come back. They are picking up most of the cost other than one of the instructors who

will come here to the high school. Eric Rice will come to our board meeting and discuss the agreements and arrangements that were made and Gateway has been a great partner in all of this and has been helping us think through ways of getting hands on types of materials now while we are waiting for January to come around. They have saved us a lot of money in selecting materials which is important when you don't have a lot of money and they are helping us with the curriculum. Neil said for the most part it is Tuesday and Thursday but if a teacher says it is part of a specific lesson and we need to do it another day as long as they inform the custodian and get administrative approval they have access to it as well.

Rosemary Russo also wanted to share with the board that West Haven wasn't the strongest city that scored but West Haven received standout district for their work in bridging the achievement gap and she thinks that all the teachers and administrators should be commended. Applause.

Student Representative Susannah Beyl asked what the students were taking while the shops were closed; were they in regular classes. Neil said they are set up in regular classes. Dana Paredes said the graphic design class is upstairs and there was no disruption to the graphic design program because most of it is computer based. The two classes downstairs were used for the manufacturing, woodshop, electricity, electronics and the internal audits and there was a lot more theory going on in those classrooms before we were able to get the shops up and going but they were already in those classes.

Jim Morrissey asked the reason why the shop classes were opened only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Neil said the Fire Marshall wants to know specifically when they are being used. Dana explained that the Fire Marshall approved the space to be used as a work space but not a classroom so he did not want to see those reopened as a classroom. There are some specific rules about what doors need to be open not just unlocked but open while students are down there because there is something in the fire code about having a dead end even though there are a number of other egresses down there so that door has to be wide open while students are down there. Jim said so there is no problem if the shop teacher wants to use it on a Wednesday or a Friday. Neil said as long as they let an administrator know so we can notify whomever we need to notify. Jim asked what were the issues with the Fire Marshall and Board of Education as far as moving this process along quicker. Neil said the fire department and Inspector have been very easy to work with understanding the bind that we have been in. Dana said the Fire Marshall said there are a number of issues with the auto shop but he could give us the approval on the other shops if we agreed to lock the auto shop until it is approved. Of course we said we want the approval on whatever space we can use and will agree to lock the auto shop. He will come back and make a list of what repairs need to be done in the auto shop. These repairs were more extensive than those in the other areas. Jim Morrissey asked when will this be done. Dana Paredes said hopefully by the end of the week he will be back but didn't know when the repairs would be done as he did think there would be a much more extensive list. Jim said there is a lot of frustration among the students and parents. Dana said really the only issue right now are the lifts; that is the only major component that is not in one of the other shops. We are not running the advanced auto class this year as

there wasn't enrollment for it and we weren't sure what was going to happen with the lifts. The only auto classes we are running this year are Intro to Trans Tech and Trans Tech which are really more small engine classes so the lifts won't be much of an issue once you get the small engine and station models in. We have space in the other shops so anything can be done down there and the only thing you don't have access to are the lifts. Jim asked about the classes at Gateway. Neil said when we offer classes during the second semester it will be the Advanced Auto Class. Kids will sign up for those classes through guidance. Dana Paredes said it will be dual enrollment with the auto and also advanced manufacturing. Neil said the kids will go there for a day and we will work a schedule so whatever work they miss they will be able to make up in their academics but get the full day. We can't bus them back and forth five days but they will get one full day a week at Gateway in their shops during the actual school day. Jim asked when this would take place. Neil said we will ask the board to approve the dual enrollment contract similar to what you approved back in March for that other program and that will start second semester mid-January. There will be no attendance points deducted during those classes.

Neil said we are reading the paper and trying to get an understanding of where the actual project stands right now and as he pointed out at the last meeting the abatement work was supposed to start on Columbus Day Weekend. If we get an indication that the work is not going to happen we can work to get full access as soon as possible. We would still try to keep Gateway because this is too good a program for kids to miss out on.

Jim Morrissey talked about the problem with the air conditioning unit at Carrigan and said don't we have service contracts that we pay vendors to look over these AC units, boilers and things of that nature. Neil said we do but fixing the actual air conditioning units when they are broken are not part of the contract; those are above and beyond kinds of things we pay for. We can get records to show you the kind of money that we are putting into things that aren't working and aren't part of the contract. Jim would like to see the contracts of what the vendors are doing on a weekly basis. Neil has the old contract and Matt said they sign in when entering the building and state what work they are doing. Jim wants to see the actual work being done on a bi-weekly or monthly basis.

Rosa Richardson asked Dana Paredes how many shop classes are we currently running. We are running 14 sections and the following classes. This includes Electricity and Electronics, Intro to Wood, Metals and Manufacturing, Advanced Wood, Advanced Woodworking, Intro to Auto, Advanced Transportation Tech, Graphic Design I, Graphic Design II, and Advanced Graphic Design. Out of the 14 sections how many are impacted by the closure currently. Everything except for the Graphic Design Program is impacted. Rosa asked the number of students approximately about 120 students.

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 October 5, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a.
Jim Morrissey made the motion to approve the minutes
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion:
All board members present were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

D.3. New Hire (Certified)

D.4. New Business

15-122 Approval of the Alliance Project

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-122
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the items
Jim Morrissey seconded the motion
Discussion:
All board members present were in favor
Item 15-122 is approved

Discussion: Neil asked Roger LaFleur to state the next step to the board. Mr. LaFleur said he would start the paperwork for the Alliance Grant and the second part will be bringing the information to the City because they become the fiscal agent of the projects. The board thanked Mr. LaFleur.

15-123 Request from Sue and Tony Bova to provide a sign dedicating the girls high school softball press box in honor of Thomas (Tinker) Blake for his service and dedication to the City of West Haven.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-123
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the item
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: Jim Morrissey thinks that Sue and Tony Bova had a wonderful idea on behalf of Tinker Blake. Tinker is an icon in this City he and his wife Maureen have done so much community service over the years. He has done so much for the youth of this community and this is certainly well deserved.
All board members present were in favor
Item 15-123 is approved

15-124 Adoption of Existing Policy 5114 (a) – (j) with revisions based on PA 15-96 Students – Suspension/Expulsion; Student Due Process; Exclusion of Students

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-124
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the item

Rosemary Russo seconded the motion

Discussion: Neil said this has to do with the new public act so we are bringing the policy into compliance.

All board members present were in favor

Item 15-124 is approved

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.

Rosa Richardson made the motion

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola

Board Secretary

Board of Education Student Representative Report (10/19/15)

Parents and students of all grades are invited to "Strategies in Planning for College" on Wednesday, October 28th, 6:00pm-7:00pm in the WHHS cafeteria. The Barnum Financial Group will be presenting the "Strategies in Planning for college: How to survive funding your College Education Workshop"

Congratulations to Mary Luz Heidtmann who qualifies for States in the 100 Yard Breaststroke

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the student group, Girl-Up, will be sponsoring a "Wear Purple Day" on October 28th and collecting personal hygiene items all that week to donate to shelters.

Friday, October 30th will be a Pink Out in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness and in support of all of the breast cancer survivors.

Tomorrow is Parents Visiting Day at WHHS and we hope to see many parents and guardians from 9-noon and from 6-8:30pm

The National Honor Society is sponsoring its annual MDA Sports-tacular on October 22nd at Painter Park.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the extravaganza on Saturday, October 30th on the campus of WHHS – all combined into one – Fall Festival, Blue Devil Car Show, Trick or Trunk, and the Children's Theater performance of "How to Build a Fairy Tale (you're doing it all wrong!)". Food Trucks, Games, Fun, Raffles, and more. The day kicks off with a Breakfast & School Tour for Prospective Students and Parents. We hope you can stop by for part or all of the day!

Powder Puff Football is back! Join in the fun on October 28th at Ken Strong Stadium.

Last Wednesday, all students in grades 10 & 11 took the PSAT while freshmen took the PSAT 8/9. Seniors came in for a special day designed just for them with speakers, activities, brunch, class meeting and a special photo out on the turf in their graduating year, 2016.

We are very excited about WHHS "Decision Day" on November 17, 2015 at the Savin Rock Conference Center. Qualified students can meet with admission counselors and get "on site acceptances" from Albertus Magnus College; Central CT State University; Southern CT State University; University of Bridgeport; University of New Haven; and Western CT State University.

Working with the TOP, WHHS is holding a Sneaker Drive for students in West Haven. If you have new or gently used sneakers in all sizes to fit ages 5-18, please consider donating them through November 2.