

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

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on October 7, 2019 in the West Haven High School Cafeteria, 1 McDonough Plaza, West Haven, CT. The meeting was called to order by Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 6:46 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**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:** Mayor Nancy R. Rossi

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**PRESENT:**

Brendan Carew  
Mackenzie Gardner  
Anthony Vendrella.

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Russo asked three times if anyone would like to address the board. There were no speakers. Public Portion ended at 6:50

**REPORTS**

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

Superintendent Cavallaro had no formal reports tonight. He is very pleased that we are able to show off the high school and do the presentation tonight. Neil is very pleased that both Forest and Haley are utilizing the technology that was provided for them. This is a

great thing and a great feeling. We did all of this for the students and I hope that they also make the most of this in all of the other schools and in the new facility here.

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

This report will be found on the last page of the minutes.

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

Sue Walker read to the students at Mackrille School. She brought two books to choose from and the students chose both books. The students were very cute and the next night she went out to dinner and saw one of the little girls in the class. Sue asked if substitute pay was still \$70.00 dollars. Superintendent Cavallaro said yes and we believe we are OK with the minimum wage and Matt has done some work on that but there will be an adjustment made in the up-coming budget but not only for substitutes we will look at all of the part-time positions. Sue thanked Neil and said this is good because we are requiring certification.

Karen Pacelli said it is nice to see technology going on in all schools because we did spend a lot of money on that. It was great to see how the math and literacy coaches are working with the staff at Forest and providing the professional development that is needed to keep everyone up and going.

Jim Morrissey thanked Chairwoman Russo for putting together the West Haven High School Dedication and bringing everyone who has been involved over the years. This was a nice presentation, the school looks beautiful and will look even more beautiful as we go along. He also wanted to thank Forest School and Seth Haley School for coming here this even and doing a great job with their presentations. Once again this idea came from Chairwoman Russo last year when she decided to bring our schools in and Jim thanked her for that. It is nice to see what our teachers and students do and they do a great job and for that Jim wanted to say thank you for all you do on behalf of our students. With the different languages spoken in our schools today it is entirely different from when Jim went to school but our teachers have overcome this and do a great job. As a board member he wants to say thank you for all you do for the West Haven School System.

Jim goes by Bailey every day and that roof is not getting done. He is not blaming the Superintendent but we have been told as a board since last March that this would be taken care of and here it is October. This shouldn't be like this for our staff and our students. The consultant's report said the roof right now is water tight but that was not true. We had rain a couple of weeks ago and water came right through the ceiling and that is unacceptable as far as Jim is concerned and is not right. Both the consultants and experts are saying the roof right now is water tight and we are having rain during the next several days and he hates to think it will probably be leaking again. This roof must be done. Mr. Carney came before us in August and told us it was going to be done before school started and that never happened. Now it is October 7<sup>th</sup> and all he sees are cinderblocks up there protecting the roof from the elements. Jim is at his wits end at this point and wants to know what is going on. We have a beautiful school right here a 130M school but yet

we can't get a \$70,000 roof done in eight months. This is inexcusable as far as he is concerned. Thank you Chairwoman Russo.

Chairwoman Russo asked Superintendent Cavallaro if he wanted to comment. Sure he can update you but Neil is the messenger in this particular case. About a week ago on Tuesday Mike McGrath called a meeting with Ken Carney, Frank Gladwin the City Building Inspector, the designing engineer and the roofer were present. He assured us that as long as Mr. Gladwin could give the green light, which he did, that the job would be completed by October 15<sup>th</sup>. There were a couple of minor issues to resolve and Mr. Carney made it clear that he would be billing the roofer for any expenses incurred by the board of education over time, maintenance and anything else like lost tiles. Chris Everone was supposed to be providing Ken with a list of our expenses and Neil believes he has done this so if everything goes right it is supposed to be complete October 15<sup>th</sup>. Neil said it is important to understand that the consultant said the roof needs to be replaced because once water comes into a building it travels and it could leak. The roof has outlived its life expectancy and Ken Carney has advertised through the city purchasing department for a designer to start the process where the entire roof would be replaced. When you do these things and are proactive we are entitled to reimbursement which we weren't because the roof problem. Jim it is frustrating and he appreciates his bringing this up at meetings. We will try to give you as much information as possible. If there is someone you or any board member would like to meet with we will put you together.

Rosemary asked what is plan B if it is not done by next Tuesday. We will start billing the roofer and there is even the possibility of another roofer on standby. This is good but could also delay the final product if you are bringing in somebody new. Neil's preference would be that this roofer completes the job. Has the roofer given a time table of when he will be working and how much longer it is to complete the job. Most of the work has to be done at the completion of the school day. Chris Everone said work has to be done after the school day so from 2:00 PM on. A lot of it is low noise and putting flashing on and some downspouts but they are told they can't do it until after school is out. They will be working weekends once the metal gets in.

Patrick Leigh asked if this was in violation of contract. Neil said he believes there was a completion date of August 15<sup>th</sup> however there were some delays on the city part as well so it wasn't totally the roofer's fault. Rosa Richardson said it was held up for legal issues. Neil said this was through no fault of the roofer. Correct but the August 15 deadline came and went and we still didn't resolve the legal matter so we can't hold them to the August 15<sup>th</sup> date. No you couldn't hold them the August 15<sup>th</sup> and the permit issue is clearly on him and that is what got our Building Department involved. Frank Gladwin did his job and made sure everything was to spec and to code. We wouldn't be here today if the roofer presented the plans and whatnot.

Chairwoman Russo thanked Jim and Neil. She is in agreement with Jim as it has been a long time and the roof should be done and when the 15<sup>th</sup> comes and the work is done she thinks she will cry. Winter is coming and it just has to be done.

Patrick asked what happens if it goes post October 15<sup>th</sup>. Neil said we submitted them some billing. We are not going to pay him and have the right to remove him from the project and then it will be a legal battle. Patrick asked if Neil feels this will go to court. Not if he finishes it no. Our preference is not to go to court but to get the roof done. We need to submit to this legislative session the entire roof project and if we get approval that project can be done this summer but it won't happen this summer unless we get out advertising and hire the right people by mid-March. Jim Morrissey wanted to make it clear that the new roof leaked not the old roof. The water didn't come from the old roof to the new roof. Neil asked Chris what part of the new roof leaked and what caused the leak in the part of the new roof. Chris doesn't think it was the new roof leaking.....Jim Morrissey said it was over the cafeteria. He went down there and saw it himself..... Recently? Last week with you and Mike McGrath. The coping wasn't done and the wind blew under it. What I am saying is the roofer's report says the roof is water tight and secure and this is not true. The water got in there somehow and it is unacceptable. It wasn't the old roof that caused the new roof to leak it was the new roof itself and to claim it was waterproof is just completely false and not true. Chairwoman Russo said she thinks we all agree with you Jim and we don't want our teachers and our students to be in that predicament and we don't want mold to develop. It has to get done. Jim asked who is paying for the mold study which showed no mold. Neil said the board of education is not incurring any expenses on this but you are all taxpayers. Jim said is it coming from the roofer or from our taxpayers. This job is costing more and more as we go along and is becoming a nightmare as far as he is concerned. Chairwoman Russo asked if you can submit for other roofs at the same time as when you support Bailey's roof. Neil said with the exception of Carrigan and WHHS most of the roofs are out of warranty. We are expecting a list of schools in order of most needy to least needy with what needs to be done. Chairwoman Russo said then we can be proactive. Neil said part of what we submitted to the city over the years is part of our capital plan and has been roofs. If you are going to get 75% of the money back to do an entire roof before it leaks as opposed to \$80 to \$100,000 for a section you tell me what is a better value.

Rosa Richardson asked about putting a capital improvement plan together. Neil said we can give you a capital improvement plan in a couple of hours. We have submitted plans and have a basis to go off of. It is not putting the plan together it is funding the plan. As a board advocated we go out to bid and put a consultant in and put a very serious infrastructure plan together and we can't always come up with the money. Rosa thinks this is something we should consider. Put an RFP out there and get some studies done because it is not just Washington that is falling apart infrastructure wise. Neil we did put an RFP out 5 or 6 years ago and received two responses and it went nowhere. It is five or six years later let's do it again.

#### **C.1.d. Committees**

Patrick Leigh said it was a lovely ceremony that was presented before the meetings and he was really honored to be a part of it and to have his name up there with the rest of the board members. It has been nine years of hard work and it is nice to finally see it and be a part of it. He is also impressed with the use of technology at the elementary level. He watches his four year old son do things that he could never do as a child and it is amazing

how engrossed the children get into this process. He really likes that the children are still doing paper and pencil because that is extremely important. It is great to have the technology but to have the advantage of being able to do it freehand is really important to be able to problem solve and grow up to be adults that can accomplish normal day activities like going to the store, counting money and doing things of that nature.

Patrick has heard from a couple of sources that there is a group of conservative students at WHHS that has a club and it is a group that apparently some teachers don't agree with and if it is true how dare anyone take away from the freedom of a child. He heard they were ripping down posters and he can't understand that type of behavior. He doesn't know what the ethic's standards are for teachers to uphold to in the system but it is uncalled for and if it is true it is something that he recommends not be allowed and there should be some course of punishment that acts this way towards a child in a school system. Superintendent Cavallaro said Brendan is a member of the club and the name of the Club is Turning Point. It is a mostly conservative group which is growing in numbers. They did have some issues originally. We have worked out some rules and guidelines as to where posters can be displayed and what can be displayed. Just last week Dana, Neil, and Mrs. Libero brought in Attorney Dugas to talk about what we can use as guidelines and standards for what can be displayed and what can't be displayed and the kind of things that you can or can't do within a school. Brendan feel free to add to this. Neil said he thinks we are making progress but have a little way to go. Brandon said he definitely would agree as there have been incidents with teachers and students but for the most part they have been handled and we are making progress we are doing our job; we are good. A further discussion continued.

Pat Libero said as someone who was a professional she met with the kids many times and they said to her with Mr. Consorte we never know what his views are because he presents all sides of the issue. Pat told Mr. Consorte that k and he was really glad because he doesn't want them to know his opinion he wants them to see all the sides of an issue and make their own decisions. That is what education is about. They don't know if he is a Democrat or a Republican or Libertarian they don't know what he is and he presents his courses that way and that is how all teachers should be presenting it and it is not happening. A further discussion continued.

Rosa Richardson asked if there is going to be a certain place for all clubs and organizations to put their flyers and posters correct. Superintendent Cavallaro said yes. We are designating certain areas for all the clubs. Thank you. Superintendent Cavallaro asked Brandon if we had a pretty good handle on the rules.

Brendan said the new rule is that any club, or any organization cannot put their posters or flyers up immediately next to a teacher's door and everything has to be in common areas in the hallway no matter what it says. Superintendent Cavallaro said the common areas will be designated. We have ordered huge bulletin boards which will be going up shortly. Dana has a plan for this.

Rosa thanked Judy Drenzek for inviting the board to read to students at Mackrille School. Rosa said Mackrille has her heart.

Rosemary said she told Judy before the meeting she really enjoyed reading to the students in a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class and they were lovely. It was refreshing for Rosemary to be able to read the story and kids actually waited before they wanted to tell her something about it. It was a great experience thank you. Rosemary also read at Mackrille that day as she took a half day and had more time on her hands. She also walked around the high school which was really nice. She came to the cafeteria during one of the lunch waves and while she was there it was really wonderful. It wasn't especially loud, there were no long lines, actually all the lines were gone except the wrap station. Neil said we have been working on that station because they make the sandwiches fresh. Rosemary said it was nice to see the school in motion and it really did remind her of a college. She visited the shops and she enjoyed her visit which was great. The other thing Rosemary wanted to bring up was that she feels this board has done a lot of good and she felt in the end that she wanted to at least try for the recognition from CABE. She doesn't know if we received it or not but everything was sent on time and it got there by the due date. Marylou and Tammy did an incredible amount of work for it because Rosemary needed a lot of documentation. Rosemary hopes that we get it and thinks that we worked incredibly hard and we have had a good year. Rosemary then asked the board what schools they planned on adopting. She knows some of the board members won't be back but just take your school for these couple of months. Superintendent Cavallaro said we won't throw you out if you come. Jim Morrissey wanted to keep Savin Rock. Patrick Leigh wanted Washington School. Rosa asked for two Mackrille and the high school. Pat will take the high school. Sue Walker chose Pagels. Karen Pacelli chose Seth Haley. Bob Guthrie took Forest and Rosemary took Carrigan and Bailey.

Rosa Richardson reminded the board that there would be a Pupil Services Committee Meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 PM before the board meeting.

Bob Guthrie said we had spoken about a Policy Committee Meeting next month and Rosa has a meeting scheduled at 5:30 can we schedule it for 6:30 PM. Neil said we can get them both in if that is what you want to do. Bob said this way you can speak to Mr. Turcio and whoever else is supposed to be there. No problem.

Rosemary said she would like to add two items to the agenda tonight before starting the minutes.

Rosa Richardson said she would like to add items F.10. and F.11. under informational  
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion  
All board members present were in favor  
Items F.10 and F.11 under informational are approved and added to tonight's agenda.

**F.10. Kristine Gonzalez**, 46 Alling Street, West Haven, CT 06516  
Medical Building Paraprofessional – Carrigan Intermediate School  
Effective: October 7, 2019  
Salary: \$18,461.76 plus \$1,000 stipend

**F.11. Kimberly Moscato**, 37 Susquehanna Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516  
Medical Building Paraprofessional – Seth G. Haley School  
Effective: October 7, 2019  
Salary: \$18,461.76 plus \$1,000 stipend

**D.1. Approval of Minutes**

**D.1.a. The West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting** was held in the Board’s Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on Monday, September 16, 2019 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Meeting minutes D.1.a.  
Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve the minutes  
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion  
Discussion: Jim Morrissey abstained as he did not attend the meeting.  
All other board members present were in favor  
Regular Meeting Minutes are approved

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

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

**D.4. New Business**

**19-99 Superintendent’s Goals 2019 - 2020**

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Superintendent’s Goals  
Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the goals  
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion  
Discussion: Bob Guthrie is happy that the board has re-established a time line for evaluation and goals of the Superintendent. He hopes this continues going forward and now he challenges the board to reevaluate the Board of Education Goals and update them. Obviously it is important to make sure that our goals align with the Superintendent’s but we are looking to hold the standard for the Superintendent which we certainly hope to forward to ourselves with our goals going forward. All board members present were in favor  
The Superintendent’s Goals are approved

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational and asked for a motion to adjourn.  
Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the minutes  
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

All board members were in favor  
The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola  
Board Secretary

## **BOE Student Report 10/7**

1. Students came up with a list of concerns and suggestions regarding the lunch lines. A meeting has been set for with the head of food service to go over these concerns.
2. This week is spirit week at the high school. Our homecoming football game will be played at some point this week, but last we heard, the schedule is not definite.
3. The PA system is set to be up and running in the old part of the school by October 11th.