

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Board Meeting Room

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on October 21, 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 6:00 PM. 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:

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 three times but there were no speakers. Public Portion ended at 6:03

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro had spoken with Ken Carney about the Bailey Roof and a couple of other items so he volunteered to come and answer any questions and update us. This is parent visiting week. Bailey today, WHHS tomorrow, Carrigan on Wednesday and the elementary schools are on Thursday. We thought it was more important to hold the conferences prior to the first report card being issued and that is why we have parent visiting at this time of the year.

We are filling a Special Ed position at Carrigan and this is the one position we hadn't filled so we are now an all filled teaching staff as of today. We do however need a nurse as a nurse who we recently hired decided to take a position in another district. The good news is we have been able to find nurses but retaining them is the bigger challenge.

Ken will give a report on the Bailey roof and give some good news on other projects and Washington School.

Ken Carney said he will give the board a high level overview of all the projects going on right now. The Bailey roof that the engineer specified came in last week which was a special color that matches as closely as possible to the one that is there. The roofers were measuring for fabrication of that metal and will return tomorrow completing a punch list of the EPM given to them last week and on Wednesday they hope to install the metal and on Thursday Ken Carney will be out there inspecting the roof as will the building official and that should wrap up the project. He was granted permission to replace the entire roof for Bailey under the State Reimbursement Funds he put out to bid a project management team which was needed when you go to the state to get your reimbursement. The winning bidder was Construction Solutions out of West Hartford with a bid of \$18,000. Without changing the scope after a review they came down to \$16,500. They in turn will hire an architectural group through a bid process which will create a feasibility study and work with the administration to do the Ed Specs for the roof replacement and will apply to the state and we should hear pretty quickly that the state has approved it. Our reimbursement is somewhere between 77 and 78 percent and at that point we can schedule the roof to be done in the summer and put the roof out to bid. Patrick Leigh asked the square footage of what needs to be replaced. Mr. Carney said the building itself is 123,000 square feet but that is not the roof and he doesn't know how many squares are on the roof and you don't want to know that it is up to the bidders to determine as you don't want to poison the well and say we think it is 40,000 square feet or 50,000 but every single inch of that roof will be replaced with the exception of the cafeteria that we just completed. Makes sense; perfect. Rosa Richardson asked how this will blend with the part just replaced. The material on the roof is a black EPM which you really can't see anyway but would match either way. He would hope for a reinforced EPDM which is on the high school roof which is much more durable when workers go up there. This would look a little different but you wouldn't see it from the ground. The metal will be slightly different but when we do the entire roof we will be able to match the current metal so it will all match. Rosa asked about blending where the new roof is now and when the old roof becomes the new. Mr. Carney said this is not an issue because the cafeteria roof is actually elevated and has a parapet wall so the new roof will go up to it and will mirror the EPDM and you could not tell the difference. OK. Patrick Leigh asked the life span of that. The life span of all these roofs is warranted for a small extra fee for 20 years but as we have experienced we get between 28 – 35 years on a roof. Awesome. The one on the roof now is about 28 years old. Jim Morrissey said you said the cafeteria hopefully will be done this week is that what you are saying? Yes as you know we are working with a very difficult contractor who was the low bidder and it has been nothing but aggravation with this guy. The good news is that because of his behavior this has been the most inspected roof in West Haven. The quality of work has been confirmed by the building department, Mr.

Carney has been up there, and the manufacturer has given us written letters saying its good quality meets a 135 mile an hour wind zone. The contractor has been told if he wants to get paid, we have confirmed the metal is in, you have to be done by Thursday. Jim understands that but he has his materials up there so you just can't say we aren't going to pay you obviously. No but my point to him is you are going to be paid soon. I need it done by Thursday. Jim said he bid the job for \$70,000... correct. This was 40 or 50,000 lower than the higher bidder so the city hired him and I don't think the fault should clearly lie on the feet of this roofer. He has done other projects in the past like this one. We have been waiting for this roof to be done since last March and it has been one thing after the other. Back in August you said it was going to be done before school started and I asked you if they work on Saturday and Sunday and you really didn't give an answer and this board has been out in left field since, in my opinion, last March. I think it is shameful that we have to wait this long to get a \$70,000 roof installed in one of our school buildings. Jim then said you said the roof has a 20 year lifetime guarantee so let me ask you this question. That roof has been exposed now since August does the manufacturer knows it has been sitting there through rain and we have had damage there with leaks. Mr. Carney said that the roof is not exposed. Jim said it was leaking I have been there on several occasions and saw that. Mr. Carney said wait let's get the facts out straight...OK. Mr. Carney then said let me speak to what you are talking about. Before the new cafeteria roof went on we couldn't use the cafeteria it leaked in 25 spots he put the roof on and the first major leak we had was not his roof we had to hire a second roofer to come in and do a seam repair before the parapet wall. Mr. Carney was on the roof on a Sunday, Mike McGrath was there, Chris was there and we brought in a roofer who fixed the seam and that was the major leak. Then we had another rain storm and because the coping was not installed the flap blew up it on the parapet wall so in other words this is our roof and the parapet is his roof and we had a minor leak that we didn't expect. We just had a major storm and not a drop of water. Jim said that is because you went up there a second or third time whatever to put cinderblocks up there and stuff like that the report came from the architect saying it was water tight but right in the middle of the cafeteria the tiles were all wet they leaked from somewhere. That middle is on the parapet wall; the roof itself is completely water tight it has been flooded many times has all brand new drains; that roof is 100% water tight. The perimeter of the roof which is lacking the metal right now did let water in once but nothing is exposed. A long further discussion took place. Jim then said the fact of the matter is we shouldn't have waited this long to get this roof done. In my opinion I think it is shameful and our students and staff deserve better. Thank you.

Mr. Carney said moving on the Haley School has two ADA lifts being installed over the Christmas break which will take care of a problem over there. Bob Guthrie asked if they are replacing existing lifts there. The lifts that are there now are breaking down all the time and are not sufficient for normal use. OK. Will they be going in the same location? Yes what you have now is almost like a chair lift and to use it once or twice a day is OK but it is used way more than that. Now we are creating a metal platform that takes up like 1/3 of the stairs and there will be an actual drop lift so the student goes down the metal platform which will be railed off and safe and they sit in a chair and it is an up and down lift. This is in two locations. A further discussion took place. Rosa asked if the up and

down lifts are for handicapped wheel chair accessibility only because we have children on walkers. Mr. Carney said it works for everybody. With the walker they would just walk onto the lift. It allows students not to use the stairs for any reason at all and it is big enough to not only accept a wheel chair but a wheel chair with an aide. A further discussion took place.

Superintendent Cavallaro said once we get the Bailey roof on is solar a possibility. Yes on that point Frank made him get a \$4,000 engineering study on what the roof could support which is a little crazy because the new roof is many times lighter than the old built up roof with the gravel. That report will allow us to skip a step and go right to the solar guys and say here is the weight that this thing can support let's do solar.

Moving on to Carrigan we have a condensate tank that has failed and created a problem with the two boilers used to heat the school in the morning and turned off when a certain temperature is reached. The tank is being custom made and should be in the end of this week or early next week. Jim asked how old were the tanks? That tank was probably 30 years old and full of gunk. There was a two year period where the treatment company wasn't paid and they stopped showing up. Right now we are in good shape and the tank is being custom fabricated and the heat is working and it will be working permanently once we put that tank in. Jim Morrissey said a couple of years ago he and the superintendent went over there as the staff and students were complaining that the building was cold so he is hoping that this won't happen this coming winter. No we are prepared for winter and it has been really, really warm and the tank will go in full time.

Moving on to Washington School the feasibility study for a new elementary school was put out to bid and we had 5 architects respond. This Friday at 11:00 AM there will be a committee meeting with the principal of the school, the superintendent, myself, Chris Everone and we will go over the bids to see which one suits our needs the best and then he has permission to award that to a committee scoring system. That will begin the process of looking at a replacement school for Washington. The plan is to build this new school in the parking lot behind Washington almost like where the new gym is towards the street and once that is done we tear down the old school so there won't be any swing space needed. We won't have the sort of the issues we are having now at the high school. It will be a two story school, brand new built and then Washington School will come down.

Rosa Richardson asked where the parking would be for the teachers and staff. In the footprint of the old school. Karen Pacelli asked what about during school? That is one of a hundred questions that have to be worked out in the phasing plan and everything OK. Patrick asked if the new front would be on Brown or still Washington. Probably Washington because of the size of the school but he doesn't want to commit to that because that is really up to the designers. They will come in and it will be a state reimbursement project so there will be rules and regulations they have to follow. This will be far more efficient than the old school, far more secure, much friendlier, the stairs won't be as steep, and we will have an elevator that we don't have now. Superintendent Cavallaro said we just talked about handicapped accessibility and remember right now that school is off the charts when it comes to any student with a disability so this will

certainly help that situation down the road. Pat Libero asked will it be a different reimbursement because you are getting rid of the old building. No we would max at around 78%. OK. Jim Morrissey asked if the State of Connecticut has any plans to lower the amount of reimbursement. Mr. Carney has spoken to the state guys and he thinks it is coming and is already happening. New London is building a new high school and they probably need 105M and were told by the state you can't spend more than 90M and anything over 90M is on you and that is happening all over the state. We kind of made it under the wire at West Haven High School as we had 130M and they told us we can't spend more than that which we clearly are not going to spend. What saved us is we had a special rider or exception that we are limited to a 4M ineligible and with a building like that you might be at a 12M ineligible. They are saying that no matter what you do only 4M will be considered ineligible and that is a gift that is unbelievable. Jim Morrissey said what you are saying right now is that Washington School is entitled to 78% from the State of Connecticut. Yes. If we go two or three years down the road it will be less. Absolutely that is why we want to get in as soon as possible. When these things happen it usually happens at certain times of the year when the legislators meet and he thinks that our plan will be in at that meeting so they are not going to approve what they have and then change it in the future so he thinks we will be OK. Jim asked if we get it locked in is there a certain amount of time when it would run out. Yes you have basically two years to start the project or you lose your grant. Superintendent Cavallaro said we were able to keep the high school going by doing some preliminary work and calling it phase 1 because if you don't start we were on the risk of losing that...Jim doesn't mean to cut him off but we are building a new school so we are not walking in to an existing school. You are right Jim but you are building a new school that is much easier to build than the high school. Let's say you have a problem where the City says we don't have the 7M you could go into the existing school and do some abatement and call that a start because you have to abate that school to tear it down. OK I just am throwing these questions out because he knows the state is obviously in some financial straits here and can see them cutting back down the road on many other things. I think you are right but we are going for it. No, that is fine. Superintendent Cavallaro talked with Rosemary Russo and Patrick Leigh will sit in on that committee to help us choose the architect and the meeting will take place at 11:00. OK

Next we have WHHS and we think the wing they are working on now is a little bit ahead of schedule. We are still trending about 2M under budget and we are in punch list mode in the phase we just completed. We did have a visit from the American Federation of Teachers and they gave us a glowing report on the cleanliness of not just the new school but also the old school. They couldn't find dust or many things we have heard complaints about.

The last school is the Forest School Playground. An engineer determined that there is a clay base not suitable for the drainage. We have determined that the footprint of this playground would max out at 150 ft. wide by 45 ft. deep and the city has offered to do the drainage work on their dime. This leaves roughly \$92,000.00 left for the playground and we went to the state bid list and met with one of the top playground companies in the state they are out of Massachusetts but service Connecticut and they are designing a

playground for the numbers we have and hope to have that in the next two weeks. We will make sure it fits in the model and the city will do the drainage work and we can order the playground. We are going with a better rubber pad has far superior durability, safety and bacteria wise than mulch and they say it has to be above 50 degrees so you probably won't see it poured until March or April but we will stay on it. Patrick Leigh asked with 92K left over what was the total? We had \$100,000.00 grant with spent \$8,000 with the engineers and were told there is another \$10,000.00 sitting around that he hasn't seen so roughly \$100,000.00. OK awesome thank you. Bob Guthrie said on Bailey obviously the last time you both met with the contractor you were told October 15th was the hard date. Correct yes. Was there an agreement to extend it or is he being fined or docked money. Mr. Carney said there was a discussion with Corporation Counsel to hire another roofer but they never did. The metal was out of stock for 6 weeks so the engineer said a thicker metal same color can be used and delivered in 2 ½ weeks and that is the metal that came in here on Friday. He could call the other roofer tomorrow but we are using the original roofer which he thinks is the best course of action. If he doesn't perform this week then he pulls the trigger for the other roofer that is it. A further discussion took place.

The board members thanked Mr. Carney.

Superintendent Cavallaro thanked Ken for coming to update the board not only on the Bailey roof and other projects but for the extensive report he gave on things going on throughout the district. State Representative Borer could not make the meeting tonight however we do have Alesha Hartley and Stacey Giaquinto who is one of our teachers at Forest to speak on food waste in the schools and littering. Please make your presentation and if needed we can bring in our Food Service Director and maybe get more involved.

Stacey Giaquinto was kind enough to give a typewritten presentation for the minutes. Stacy also said she went into the cafeteria at school for one lunch period and took pictures of everything that was thrown out and there were 16 bags. She shared the pictures with board members. She knows we use Styrofoam trays which are not recyclable and are thrown out; paper bags would be better or cardboard trays. Her complete presentation is at the end of the minutes.

Alesha Hartley said she is on the same Sustainability Board and is the food waste expert on the board. She just received her Master's Degree from NYU in Food Studies with a specialization in Sustainability and Sustainable Food Systems. Food waste was a big part of her work and a lot of the projects that she did. Robin asked her to help with food waste in West Haven and has already presented to the Public Works Department and Rosemary and Alesha thought this might be of interest to the board. Alesha presented a quick synopsis of some ideas she has researched and could be implemented that are low tech and low cost. The problem with food waste is that about 40% of what we produce in America goes to waste. A lot of resources are being wasted such as energy, water and soil. 40% that we waste in America is wasted by consumer facing entities so schools would be a part of that 40% partly because the kids are consumers. The EPA's suggestion of how people or entities should deal with food waste so source reduction and feeding hungry people are two of the solutions that were discussed. In schools we could host

assemblies for the teachers and students to let them know what food waste is, why it is bad, and why we should care about it. You can also inform the parents on issues of food waste and do that through flyers and newsletters or whatever type of communication is sent to parents and add this on to it so there is no added cost. You can bring parents along as volunteers if you do want to implement something. Another idea would be to create a challenge or competition maybe between two classrooms or two schools and at the end of the year whoever diverted the most waste wins a big jamboree day or a good incentive like pizza. Or you can do who had the best composting site that looks nice and is clean and composted correctly. You can start at the beginning of the school year and do all your measurements because you can't fix what you don't know so you have to measure it first and implement whatever challenge you come up with and do another data collection at the end and figure out who the winner is. Stacey said the kids are excited about this and want to get involved so you know you have some stakeholders on board with this and also teachers who are interested in food waste so that is another stakeholder group that would be able to help. You might also consider incorporating composting in the science lesson so you can have the worms and see how everything breaks down. There is a clear composter that you can put the worms in and you can see everything happening and that would be a cool way to get the kids involved and learning at the same time. Blue Earth Composting is based out of Hartford and does curbside pickups so they will come to the school and pick it up for you. There is also a composting site on Kimberly Avenue. Rosa Richardson said the composting a Kimberly Avenue wouldn't be food compost. The Public Works Department and he seemed kind of open to it but hasn't gotten back to her. Rosa said by integrating it? Yes like the wood and leaves etc. which you need to add in to the compost so it wouldn't be such a big undertaking. Alesha's favorite part is feeding hungry people and she thought we could connect with local partnerships and non-profits to help with the education around sustainability and food waste so they are also subject matter experts and help with outreach and creating teaching materials. Giving a little education to the staff and students on food waste in the schools and how to reduce it is by implementing share tables and a lot of schools are having success with this because they start them at a young age and it is becoming more and more ingrained in them. You have a table and this is the compost bucket clearly labeled with the various languages in the school, trash, recycling and then a food share where you would have the food that is uneaten, unopened, and ready to go or be donated or used the next day. You can work with the Health Department because the USDA supports this and promotes this. Havens Harvest is a local food recovery organization that started in New Haven and now she is partnering with UNH to do food recovery from them and also the Hamden School District and has done talks to do food recovery for the Woodbridge School District. She picks up the food and finds the recipients so she does everything. A further discussion took place and slides were shown during the meeting.

C.1.b Student Representatives' Report

There was no report for this board meeting.

C.1.c. Board

Sue Walker asked about the teacher who has been absent from Washington School.

Superintendent Cavallaro said as of last Thursday they secured a sub and the substitute is

there and Mrs. Trotman will not be out as long as they thought and Miss Shirden has made a schedule where they are receiving extra support from the reading teacher and the math teacher. Substitute teachers are hard to get. Rosemary Russo asked what you meant when you said you thought of disbanding the class. We were actually thinking of moving the kid into the three remaining classes and we would have still been under the contractual limits but we really didn't want to do this because we have really nice class sizes. Everything seems to be OK now.

Karen Pacelli attended Jon Capone's Roast and it was very nice with a great outcome. She didn't know how much money was made but it was a good time.

Bob Guthrie congratulated Mrs. Parades being honored as Assistant Principal of the Year. He has to be out of state and not able to attend.

C.1.d. Committees

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. The West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting was held in the cafeteria of West Haven High School, 1 McDonough Plaza, West Haven, CT on Monday, October 7, 2019 at 6:46 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the October 7, 2019 board meeting minutes D.1.a.

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Patrick Leigh seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Regular Meeting Minutes are approved

D.1.b. The West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting was held in the cafeteria of West Haven High School, 1 McDonough Plaza, West Haven, CT on Monday, October 7, 2019 at 5:50 PM.

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

Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Regular Meeting Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

19-100 Devon Kurker-Stewart, 13 Tanglewood Drive, Hamden, CT 06518
Special Education Inclusion Teacher 5th Grade – Carrigan

Salary: \$51,515 Step 5 BS
Effective: November 4, 2019

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve Item 19-100

Karen Pacelli made the motion

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Item 19-100 is approved

D.4. New Business

Chairwoman Russo said she was glad to see a clerk has been added to the high school because they needed the help in the office. Neil said we were able to take the sub 8 hour position and came up with two five hour positions so that worked out really well.

Bob Guthrie said the CABA Delegate Assembly is November 14, 2019 and our district is entitled to one vote if you have an interest in participating it will be from 3:00 to 6:00 PM at the Mystic Marriott before the CABA/CAPP Conference.

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Karen Pacelli made the motion to adjourn

Patrick Leigh seconded the motion

All board members were in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary