WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES July
August 19, 2013
Regular Board Meeting
Savin Rock Community School

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the cafeteria of Savin Rock Community School, 50 Park Street, West Haven, Connecticut on August 19, 2013. The meeting was called to order by Mark Palmieri, Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:
Mark Palmieri, Chairman
Cebi Waterfield –
Patricia Libero, Secretary/Treasurer
Eric Murillo
Betsy Davis

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:
Patrick Egolom
Robert Guthrie
M. Toni Paine, Vice-Chair
Dorinda Borer

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Cappetta, Director of Finance

ABSENT: Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:
Chairman Palmieri welcomed everyone to the August 19, 2013 regular Meeting of the West Haven Board of Education and asked if anyone would like to address the board. Public Portion began at 7:05 PM

B. Public Portion of Meeting- hard copy of speech handed in

Board Of Education Meeting Speech, August 19, 2013
Bart Chadderton
270 Richmond Avenue
Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am here tonight for several reasons. First and foremost, I am here to reaffirm my support for the Save Our Shops movement. Of the three current mayoral candidates, I was the first to express my total support for this cause and I am here this evening not only to reiterate that support, but to pledge to you that when I am elected mayor I promise to SAVE OUR SHOPS!

However, I am also here this evening to express my outrage at the attitude of the superintendent of schools, not only for his lack of foresight in eliminating our shops in the plans for our new high school, but even more importantly for his apparent total disregard for the citizens of West Haven, particularly for those students, who without access to these shop classes, may see their future employment opportunities severely handicapped. Not all our high school students will go on to attend college; however many will take full advantage of the knowledge and skills learned in all their classes, including shop, to go on to having extremely rewarding careers.

I attended the city council meeting on June 10th of this year when the new high school plans were presented to the city council. Numerous people attended that meeting and heard the superintendent for the first time officially confirm that the shops were being eliminated in the new high school, even though this fact had been rumored for quite some time. Many concerned residents, like me, attended this meeting in order to hear the proposal and voice our opinions on this matter. However, as soon as the superintendent finished speaking he abruptly left the meeting without giving himself the opportunity to hear a single citizen voice his or her opinion. When I had an opportunity to speak at that meeting, I expressed my outrage over the superintendent’s hasty departure. In my opinion, from the beginning of his tenure as superintendent, he has run the Board of Education with his own personal agenda and with total disregard for the wishes of the residents of West Haven.

What I find particularly despicable about the elimination of our shops is the fact that in the process the superintendent has taken a well-respected educator with over 40 years of teaching experience at the high school and basically “thrown him under the bus”. I am speaking about Garrett Grant, Department Head of Business Marketing & Technology Education. Gary has helped prepare more than a generation of our high school children for the uncertainties of the future. Over the years he has unselfishly shared his knowledge and time to give his students the opportunity to realize their full potentials. And what, you may ask, has the superintendent done to reward such dedication?; he has taken away Gary’s keys to the building, changed buying practices for the shop program to create more red tape and handicap the process, and taken away his tech-ed truck which was actually purchased through a grant from the state.

And then, to add insult to injury, the superintendent has issued a gag order against Gary preventing him from publically speaking about any of this. Fortunately, I am under no such gag order. This is a man who should be receiving awards and accolades, but instead the superintendent is attempting to throw Gary out with the garbage. SHAME ON YOU! This man has had a positive effect on more people than you could even dream of. On behalf of all the residents of West Haven I would like to personally thank Gary for his outstanding service to our high school and to our community.

THANK YOU MR. GRANT FOR ALL YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY! KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
The superintendent has stated that if the city council wants to add the shops to the new high school they should address the issue themselves. To me this sounds like the ultimate example of “passing the buck”. As head of the Board of Education, he should be carrying the torch, not passing the torch. I find his actions so deplorable that in the past I have publicly called for his resignation. If he does not resign, I promise you when I am elected Mayor, I will not renew his contact and will take great pride in replacing him with someone who not only cares about the residents of West Haven, but will do everything in his or her power to act in the best interest of the city and all our residents. After all, we are the ones who pay his salary, along with those of every other city employee. I find it unacceptable that the superintendent through the Board of Education has approved over $2 million in raises in the last year alone, but has still found it necessary to outsource the cafeteria workers’ jobs. It never fails to amaze me how those lowest on the totem pole, who are often the most dedicated and hardest working, always seem to get the shaft, while those at the top, who are often out-of-touch with reality, simply keep getting pay raises regardless of job performance. Although I guess when it comes to the superintendent this should not come as a big surprise to anyone. The actions and inactions of the superintendent mirror those of the current mayor and his administration as a whole. This is not only unacceptable to me, but I firmly believe it is unacceptable to the citizens of this city. I am here tonight not only to commit to Saving Our Shops, but also of ridding this city of individuals who operate under their own agendas and fail to do what’s right for the citizens of West Haven. Mr. Cavallaro, on my first day in office as Mayor of West Haven, I will expect to find your letter of resignation on my desk. However, prior to that day, the citizens of West Haven would appreciate it if for once you could do the right thing and apologize to Mr. Grant for the despicable way he has been treated. In the meantime, I think you should also make every effort to make up for the egregious wrongs perpetrated on Mr. Grant by reversing all the negative actions taken against him as well as releasing the gag order placed on him.

Thank you all for providing me the time and opportunity to speak to you this evening.

Chairman Palmieri asked if anyone else would like to address the board.

Ken Carney, (no address was given). I spoke with the dept. Head of Tech Ed and asked him what was meant by save our shops. The answer was the building themselves roughly eighteen thousand three hundred square feet physically remain on the premises and somehow if you consider the state rules and regulations we have to a bid by to keep those structure in place. It would be a cost of 20 million dollars. Save are shops, the shops were saved in 2009. I have here the educations specifications, showing thirteen thousand five hundred and fifty square feet of modern shops, with woodworking, plumbing, electrical, computers that met the needs of the students of the 21st century. (Gave a handout, attached) So presently the High School is two thousand ninety nine thousand square feet. Under the grants rules and regulations we had to reduce the space to two hundred and seventy seven thousand square feet. The existing shop area is eighteen thousand three hundred square feet and the new shop area has been reduced to thirteen thousand five hundred and fifty square feet of modern shops. Which does include electrical, plumbing and woodworking, if the board of education does decide to increase the size of the shops. We will be forced to reduce square footage in other parts of the building. In return the existing floor prints, size wise that equals six classrooms that we would have to pull from West Haven. That’s mean the science lab would go, an English class would go, and a math class would have to go. There is simply is no more room. Thirteen thousand five hundred and fifty square feet of modern shops is equivalent to what other area towns have done in their new high schools. The building
committee which is a group of volunteers does not have the authority to override the educational specifications that were voted on and delivered to the building committee and approved by the state in 2009 by the board of education, the council does not have the authority to override the specifications, the superintendent nor does the mayor have the authority to override the specifications. The last time the building committee ignored the educational specifications was at Mackrille, they added thirty two hundred feet. The result was a two hundred and fifty thousand bill that came in from the state as held, we don’t have the authority to do that, we have to follow the educational specifications as laid out by the board of Ed in July of 2009. If the Board of Ed chooses to increase the shop area other areas will have to be reduced. We are not allowed to go beyond the two hundred and seventy seven thousand square footage. When I hear that we eliminated the shops it not true, when I hear that the shops are being ignored and taken off the plan completely not true, thirteen thousand five hundred and fifty square feet exist in the building specifically for the shops. I have listed on the paper the educational specs the classroom and purposes given to us the building committee has put those shops together.

Thank you

Chairman Palmieri asked if anyone else would like to address the board.

Doreen Rivell

I spoke to the mayor on Friday, we met with the mayor and he explained, we went through all the conversations going on and he knew. I went over our concerns about the woodshop would be small; they wouldn’t be able to build the sheds that they are currently building to give them the basic of construction. Which is different in my mind then woodworking. I explained I had talk to Rosa Delaura who said I had to speak to the mayor; I talk to city council they talked to the mayor. All of the educational specifications that Mr. Carney referenced and we understand that. I went over with the mayor and the fact that it was approved in 2008 and the city council was unaware that those were the plans and those are the things we are trying to figure out. He has agreed he would meet with us again and he is going to get me the answers to questions that were asked, the actual numbers of the cost, so he can explain to me in numbers what exactly they are talking about. He has also agreed to speak with a West Haven representative to talk to the students and see what it is they have. I will continue with my discussions as I said before. I am here as a concerned parent.

Thank you

Chairman Palmieri asked if anyone else would like to address the board.

Garrett Grant
555 Woodhouse Ave
Wallingford, CT

West Haven Department Chair West Haven High School
I think we need to clarify terminology. The space in the G wing comes to twenty five, twenty seven thousand square feet, depending on if you count the maintenance closets and bathroom
When we are talking about technology education as it exist at West Haven High School, the state
definition which is it manufacturing technology, construction technology, drafting technology,
communication technology and auto technology. The areas that are shaded I am assuming. Mr. Carney
is referring to as technology education. I'm talking about family and consumer science I also supervise
that area. I am very proud of it. However family and consumer science are not technology education
classes. We are also looking at nursing programs that's medical careers, I also supervise those. But again
they are not technology education. Video Production, we are very proud of that program and our own
TV station. Also fashion and fabrics class not technology education class. So I think we may be confused
about the terminology. I think we are all trying to move in the same direction here. When we met in
April we had hoped we could join in hands and work together, and do something that represents the
needs of all the kids. I still think we can do that and I am hoping we can built on the support that we
have seen the last few months and still join hands and work together to solve the problem. I think I used
the saying "When we leave this table, we can hold our heads high realizing that we are doing the best
for the kids of West Haven."

Thank you

Chairman Palmieri asked if anyone else would like to address the board, asked for a
seconded and third time if anyone else would like to speak. Public Portion closed at 7:22

C. REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro, as you know today is the schools officially opened the secretaries are
there, we are handling registration. Doing all the things to get ready for the opening of school a
week from Thursday. The building are in really good shape, our maintenance crew did a really
great job. This was the shortest summer on record. We only had 41 days to get ready, by all
account we are ready to go. I asked Joe a report of what the projects were and the things that were
done over the summer. (See attachment) The one thing I am a little disappointed is the pace of the
security cameras. We are trying to put them up, but as you can imagine every school in the state is
beefing up security. We are a little behind; we are hoping for middle of October, we are hoping
all of the building have updated security and surveillance. Some of the projects, painting a lot
of painting in the buildings. Carriagn which was in very poor shape, we still have some to do at
Haley. In the amount of time they had. They did a great job getting the building ready to open.
Progressing along with the new cafeteria workers, our maintenance staff has work side by side.
We have gotten excellent cooperation from the workers. It is progressing nicely. We have come
a long way from where we were a month ago at this time. Louise Martone agreed.
Communication has worked and everyone is working together for a successful program.
Finally as for hiring we are in good shape, we are adding a Spanish teacher to the agenda. As
you have heard me say before that is a high shortage area. Mrs. Gardner did an interview on
Friday and talk to the person again today. Rather than give them the chance to seek
employment elsewhere. We are asking you add it to the agenda tonight. I want you all to see Mr.
Ogren. Who has done a really good job as provost at West Haven High School has accepted
principal’s positions in another district? You can always look at that as a double edge sword. That we are really pleased for Kurt, it will be a loss to west Haven High. Again I take it with a little sense of pride. Our Administrations based on some of the things we do in this district in the areas of curriculum development with new evaluation plan they are well versed and are doing really well when they interview and they are impressing others. I’m very proud of that fact although we hate to lose administrators. That being said. I talked very briefly with Mrs. Gardner, we wanted to make everything was set with Kurt. As you know we said at the last meeting we posted that job twice. So what we are going to do, rather than repost it. We are going to look at the candidates and see if we do some interviews to expedite the hiring. For the most part they went without, at least half the year with no one in that position and I just can’t do that to the administrative staff at the high school. Our goal is to get the position filled before the first day of school. It’s not official yet. But we may have another admin opening. I would rather not speak to that public tonight. So there is going to be a process to get this done as quickly as possible to get the best people in those jobs. So I will meet with Mrs. Gardner tomorrow to discuss that. We will see what happens with the other administrator and where he stands and it’s a position, promotion with another district and we will go from there. Our staff is in good shape especially the High School and Bailey. Those are the most difficult positions because they are content areas. Some of those areas are the shortest areas. That is my report for tonight. Thank you

Motion was approved by all Board members

C.l.b.  Student Representatives Report
C.l.c.  Board
C.l.b.  Committee

D.1.  Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held at Savin Rock Community School, 50 Park Street, West Haven, CT on June 17, 2013 at 7:00 PM.

D.1.b. West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on July 8, 2013 at 7:00 PM.

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a. and D.1.b Motion made by made by Patricia Libero and Betsy Davis seconded the motion to approve

Cindy Waterfield abstained, was not present at meeting
Discussion: None
Both sets of minutes approved
D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

13-85 Lawrence "Ken" Clark, English Teacher - Bailey Middle School Effective: July 22, 2013
   Reason: Personal

   Reason: Personal

13-87 Lynn Jensen, Special Education Teacher - Carrigan Effective: July 30, 2013
   Reason: Retirement

13-88 Megan Moran, Special Education Teacher - Carrigan Effective: July 31, 2013
   Reason: Personal

13-89 Alycia Rovinelli, Science Teacher - Bailey Middle School Effective: July 31, 2013
   Reason: Personal

13-90 Eric Rice, Freshman Football Coach - WHHS Effective: July 18, 2013
   Reason: Personal

13-91 Julianne Bednarcik, Mathematics Teacher - WHHS Effective: August 8, 2013


Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve A.2 Resignations 13-85 through 13-92
Motion was made by Cedi Waterford and seconded by Patricia Libero
Discussion: Patricia Libero, stated there are a lot of good people here and she was sad to see them leave. Unfortunately someone of these people are leaving because they are making more money in other districts. Some of these people are leaving for 10 to 15 thousand dollars more a year. So we are going to lose people to that, beware of that. I hope some of these good people are able to come back to us. When we are able to raise their salaries.

Superintendent Cavallaro added we are trying to work on some creative ways and we are in the middle of teacher negotiations. We are trying to up the bottom salary and work on the people on steps. The goal is so they move every year and not stuck on a step. That has caused a lot of hard feelings.
Patricia Libero, I think people need to be aware of this. They were happy, they were good teachers dedicated, but especially in this economy you can get that kind of money for the same job you take it. I hope negotiations go well.

Mark Palmieri asked if there was any other discussion.

Motion approved by all Board members

D.3. Leave of Absence: (Certified)

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to add 13-97 to new hires. Motion was made by Cedi Waterfield and seconded by Patricia Libero

D.4. New Hire: (Certified)

13-93 Kristen Tierney, 196 Natchaug Drive, Meriden, CT 06450 Science Teacher - Bailey Middle School
Effective: August 26, 2013
Salary: $46,240.43 (Step 5 BS+60)

13-94 Kristen Lugovich, 108 Milton Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516 Science Teacher - Bailey Middle School
Effective: August 26, 2013
Salary: $44,011.46 (Step 6 BS)

13-95 Meaghan M. Vestergaard, 129 Plaza Drive, Middletown, CT 06457 Physical Education Teacher - Multiple Locations (Home School - SRCS) Effective: August 26, 2013
Salary: $40,018.98 (Step 5 BS)

13-97 Allison Trulli
70 Blinshed Road Madison, CT 06443
Spanish Teacher, West Haven High School
Salary: $49,175.34
Step 7 (BS+30)
Effective: August 26, 2013

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve 13-93, 13-94, 13-95, and 13-97. Motion was made by Patricia Libero and seconded by Betsy Davis
Motion passed
D.5. New Business

13-96 Request from the Superintendent of Schools to create a Communications/Social Media Coordinator.

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve 13-96
Motion was made by Patricia Libero and seconded by Cedi Waterfield.
Motion passed

F. Informational

F.1. Correspondence from Jolene Barnes to Dee Ann DeCrescenzo regarding retirement

F.2. Correspondence from Jolene Barnes to Neil Cavallaro regarding Medical Paraprofessional recommendations

F.3. Special Meeting - Student Expulsion Hearing, July 2, 2013 at 11:50 a.m. (enclosure)

F.4. Special Meeting - Student Expulsion Hearing, July 2, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. (enclosure)

F.5. Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to adjourn
Patricia Libero made the motion
Betsy Davis Seconded the motion
All board members were in agreement
The meeting adjourned at 7:35

Respectfully submitted,
Rose McDonnell