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

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**
M. Toni Paine, Chairman
George Monahan
Eric Murillo
Gerald Calabritto
Robert J. Guthrie
Howard Horvath

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**
Raymond Collins III, Vice Chairman
Mark Palmieri
Krista Pickering

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**
Dr. JoAnn Andrees, Superintendent
Neil Cavallaro, Assistant Superintendent

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:**

Toni Paine requested a moment of silence for Officer Robert Fumiatti and his family.

**B. PUBLIC PORTION**

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Nancy Rossi, 12 Robin Road, West Haven, CT addressed the Board.

She thought the recycling of the Blue Agenda Binders was an excellent idea but thought the board could go further. The City Council has a much larger agenda and doesn’t use a binder. They receive it in an envelope and they are responsible for however they want to keep it. You can save a little bit of money and every little bit helps.

She also had ticket for the Black Coalition Dinner to be held at Fantasia on February 23, 2007 the social hour begins at 6:00 and dinner is served at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are $50.00 a piece and this is a Scholarship Dinner.
The Ward Heitman House is having their wine tasting on February 9, 2007 at the IA Club from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. These tickets are $30.00. The Ward Heitman House is a nice place that children are able to go to in order to see historic things. If anyone is interested you can contact me or the Ward Heitman House.

She would also appreciate it if she was able to receive a copy of the budget prior to the night of the meeting when it is presented. What steps have we made to save money? We have had quite a few ideas the last being from Donna Kosiorowski. She made some very good suggestions and she wanted to know if they have been explored. Patti Fusco has made suggestion and Nancy herself has made suggestions. Until we actually see the budget she can’t believe it is not going to be another tight year. It is very upsetting when you loose teachers. She has heard people call kindergarten a babysitting service and she has to disagree she doesn’t believe that anyone is using it as a babysitting service. It serves a very educational purpose. If we all work together for the same cause we can preserve teachers, programs and paras. Hopefully this year will turn out a lot better than it turned out last year.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Patricia Fusco, 311 Shingle Hill Road, West Haven, CT, President of the West Haven Federation of Teachers and School Nurses addressed the Board.

She stated that she wanted to remind the Board of a few things. First of all you were all elected to do what is right for the children and the education system in West Haven. You were not elected to do what is politically correct. You were elected to oversee the school system. Your mission is to provide a quality education not a cut rate one which is what we had this year. The children can’t absorb any more cuts. The children have suffered enough. I am not talking about the teachers I am talking about the kids. The kids have larger class sizes so they have less individualized attention. The kids have fewer Special Education Teacher Services so kids that can’t read or have other disabilities might not get as much time with a Special Ed teacher as they would have. The kids have less para support. There are half the number of literacy teacher in the system as there once was. The kids who need reading support aren’t getting it or they aren’t getting as much as they need. There is no all day Kindergarten. The State is leaning toward mandatory Pre-K because it has been proven that these kids need the time it is not a luxury anymore. We have no middle school sports and there are fewer nurses. We are really lucky that there hasn’t been a major medical emergency that caught us short. She stated she will be going to the City Council and hopes that some people will join her to ask the City to take some cuts this time. The education system was not given any kind of an increase this year. We actually got less money than the State thought we should have. The State thought we should have $98,000.00 more; the Mayor chose not to give it to us on the Finance Board of the City Council. They didn’t cut any services on the City side. We had numerous parades: Memorial Day, Columbus Day, Savin Rock Festival, Apple Festival and an Italian Festival. We had the Lighting of the Trees on the Green and the lights were still
on as of the beginning of last week. She asked the Board to look at their budget as to what is best for the kids not what is best for the City Budget. I think this time you need to stand up to the City Council and let them make the cuts. Let them be the ones that short change our kids don’t let it be you. We elected you. I’m a taxpayer and voter and I elected you to represent the kids and make our education system what it should be. I didn’t elect you to do what is politically in your favor or what the politicians think you should do. I elected you to make sure our education system is the best that it can be. We have been set back by the cuts that have been made. The kids that missed out on Kindergarten this year by not having an all day program will not be ready for Math III in three years and our scores are going to go down and who will be to blame. They will be looking at the Board of Education, the administrators and the teachers. We need to make sure that the next group of kids gets everything that they need and then some.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Tim Wrightington, 21 Susquehanna Avenue, West Haven, CT, stated he wanted to correct the record that some of those functions during the summer were paid for by Bayer, Stop and Shop and other entities and didn’t cost the City of West Haven anything. In years when the City was fat and money was wasted nobody looked and when things were brought forward nobody did anything about them. In 1997 and 1998 when we were going though the purchase of school books and there were $200,000.00 worth of invoices for school books, we found an invoice for a $250.00 leather bound copy of the Iliad and the Odyssey that somebody had purchased and nobody knew where it was or where it had come from.

He has been an advocate for a construction committee that would oversee all the City’s projects. He has brought waste forward and bills showing waste. A Construction Over Site Committee was formed last year and they found millions of dollars through change orders and mistakes. They found defects where before we had nobody watching over this stuff. The stairs out there were poured four times. He has sat through their meetings and commends them. He posed this question. Previously any questions or letters went through the Chairperson of the Board. A member would ask the chair if the chair could right a letter to voice his concern. He went on to read two letters from Board Member Bob Guthrie to Ken Carney and letters from Ken Carney to Bob Guthrie. The letters mentioned bids, unattended meeting, information that was given at meetings, fair pricing, and pricing that was not able to be investigated and unreturned calls.

Mr. Wrightington stated this was discussed with the Building Oversight Committee before this letter went out. He stated that Mrs. Fusco stated the contract was $98,000 short on the contract last year and there are millions that they just found which can go towards next year’s education contract. Grandstanding is not going to do it there has to be cooperation. In closing I don’t believe that anyone who has a family member that works for the Board of Education should be on contract negotiating team that is going to benefit him. That is what happened with Mr. Guthrie. He negotiated his wife’s contract.
Jennifer DeMaio is a teacher at Carrigan and wanted to say she loves being a teacher and loves her students but it is getting harder and harder to deal with all the obstacles that are coming at the teachers. She would like the Board to reconsider not lowering the classroom budget. They were allotted $100.00 at Carrigan and she only received $25.00 for her supplies and she has over 100 students. She thinks it is important in that aspect so they can get the supplies they need to help them in the classroom.

Helen Smith, 47 Savin Park, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. Helen is a teacher at Forest School. In past years she has listened to the Board when they sent over their bare bones budget to the City Council. She urges this Board not to do that. Right now we are below bare bones we are into the marrow. When she first started teaching at Forest she received $300.00 to use for financing. It cost her about $120 to $150.00 to do shows. It is about $60.00 a show just for the music. This year she received $125.00 that was it; no instruments or supplies. This is not a lot of money. She urges you as a Board to not look at it from the point of the City won’t be able to pay us. This is not your problem right now. I urge you to please send them a budget of what you definitely need for quality education. We need more money for supplies and paras and teachers. She will be at the City Council Meeting when the budget is presented and she will speak there too because this is important.

Cliff Blackwood, 31 Meloy Road, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. On January 1, 2007 Ken Carney called him from the Building Oversight Committee stating they had a flood at West Haven High School. He went down there to correct the problem and there were materials and supplies needed for the custodians to stop the water. He went out and purchased the materials himself for $151.59. Ken told the committee at the last meeting that he heard some mumbling that they would like to see that receipt so here is the receipt and I hope this Board will accept this as a donation from me to the Board of Education.

Marcie Yocom, 295 Kelsey Avenue, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She has a daughter at Bailey and a son at Savin Rock. One of her main concerns is the budget for school nurses. Both of her children have severe allergies. Anaphylaxis is a sudden onset
to an allergic reaction is responsible for 150 deaths a year. There are 82,000 instances of anaphylaxis at a conservative estimate. If we get rid of our school nurses what happens in the seconds that our school nurses have to respond. Parents trust the school to take care of their children when they are not with them. Numerous parents that she has spoken with have children with these types of allergies not only are concerned for their children’s safety but also for any kind of ramifications that would go along with their children being ill. Schools are to provide a safe, educational home environment. That means we don’t allow bullying and we don’t allow kids throwing things at each other and we don’t allow name calling. We simply can’t allow for medical emergencies and not having school nurses. This is not acceptable. Another thing we need to address and that is Special Education. My son is in the Talented and Gifted at Savin Rock and my daughter requires numerous Special Education needs at Bailey. Special Education gives our children what they are entitled to; the education that is based on their learning abilities. We are raising our future leaders.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

John Lewis, 273 Peck Avenue, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He extended an invitation to everyone here and on the Board to attend Washington Schools Variety Show on February 9th for kindergarten through 5th grade. It should be pretty good. No prices have been decided yet but the profits will go to the Arts and Music Department.

In regard to the Budget I am a father of five. Three of my children attend Washington School. I am also PTA President of Washington School. He first comes to say thank you for all this Board does to ensure the education and safety of my children. My kids truly love school and this is testament to the teachers and administrators at Washington School and also to this Board. A tough decision has been made this past year and I appreciate how hard was for you. However now it is budget time again and I want to be certain that our school and my family is represented through this process. These are some things I would ask that you consider when going into the Budget process.

Think Big.
The children in our schools today must be given the tools they need to succeed.
Get some of the things back for our kids that have been lost.
Consider our children’s early education and the reinstatement of all day kindergarten.
West Haven is one of the few if only City that does not offer all day kindergarten.
Kindergarten prepares them better for the increased challenges of first grade.
Look at the Art Program in all schools. My children have music and art once every ten days. The arts are a vital component to a child’s learning process.
Think about the reinstatement of middle school sports. Sports keep them busy and helps them be fit. Sports keep them productive and helps them learn to be part of a team.
The upkeep of our schools is something that needs to be addressed. Washington School is not even up to code. We do not have an elevator in our school. If someone was in a wheel chair they could not get to class on the third floor.
We need to bring back the paraprofessionals as well as the support staff. Thank you in advance for insuring that these things happen.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Dorinda Borer, West Main Street, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. In speaking with one board member she was told that all day kindergarten might not be on the recommended budget because it will be considered a new program this year and may be cut. There are so many studies that show how important it is for early childhood intervention. I have a son that will be entering first grade and he will never have the opportunity for all day kindergarten and I don’t have any other children in the system so my reason for wanting all day kindergarten is not a selfish one.

Reinstatement of school nurses is another area that we care about. I strongly recommend that the nurses stay full time. Her child has asthma and if he has an attack he needs trained personnel and I don’t think we should rely on a teacher. Our nurses were educated to administer health care. We have the statewide initiative for health and and wellness and these are not the only things a trained nurse can do. They are trained to pick out things that might be wrong with a child.

Board members should be looking at other Boards throughout the State to gain ideas.

She would ask if members of the Building Oversight Committee, because they have the authority to come into our schools, have had a background and fingerprint check. The Board doesn’t know and she would ask that anyone in our schools have this type of check.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Stuart Aronski, 897 First Avenue, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He has resided in this City about 30 years and the cuts we sustained last year hurt our students. All day kindergarten isn’t a new program it is something that kids require but are not getting. This is not a babysitting program. There are kids that will not be ready for first grade unless they have the additional time in school. Unfortunately they are not getting it this year so we will throw them in first grade and they will fail there and their first experience in school will be failure. This is a terrible shame. Somebody in the City has to stand up and say our kids need more and are entitled to more. This is your job. Middle School sports have been brought up to the City Council many times. When a kid becomes a teenager they need motivation. Middle School sports keep students interested. They can’t participate unless they are achieving. You have to give these kids what they need.
It is a shame to lose paraprofessionals. It is the best dollar we spend educationally. They work very hard and compared to other expenses they are not very expensive. I hope you guys submit a budget that works for us.

We have been set back for more than a year or two I don’t know for how long. There is a tremendous pressure now being a teacher; No Child Left Behind and the demands of students. We have children coming into the system from all types of backgrounds that you can’t even imagine. It is a real challenge being a teacher and they have to have the tools they need.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Charles Parlee, 78 Perry Merrill Drive, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He stated he is getting tired of seeing his friends get married and leaving this town because of the education system. He is getting to that point. His property value has gone up so his taxes have gone up and he is OK with that. He wants something better than cool trash pickup. He knows you have to make cuts and trim fat but when it affects children you must draw the line.

His daughter has food allergies and he called his attorney to ask if the system will be liable if God forbid she starts to die and a teacher is there who can’t handle the situation and there are no nurses. If you can cut nurses and provide the level of safety in the school system that needs to be go ahead and do it; I don’t think you can. His wife is a teacher and has kids in her classroom with shunts in their arm; is my wife going to do that. One time she had to learn Braille. What more are you going to ask of the teachers?

All Day Kindergarten – I do believe that this is used for day care a lot of times. If this is a place where you feel you can make a cut I’m in favor of that. I think a lot of people do use it as day care. Definitely I don’t think you can cut nursing.

When you go for the budget don’t ask for what you have now; ask for more. When fighting for the kids everyone has to share in the burden across town. The fireman should take a cut too. The kids are our product here.

The Board gave thanks.

Chairman Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Dennis Blader, 103 Woodmont Rd., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He listened to a lot of folks say what he wanted to say. He is not bitter but he is confused. There are two sides to this issue of education and he is not sure what side we fall on. His son goes to the middle school and was told you have to learn spelling, grammar, how to create a sentence and at the same time he was told don’t worry if you spell the word wrong, don’t worry if the sentence doesn’t make sense. We will let that go but you have to know it.
They give the kids sports then say there is no one to supervise it so we won’t do it this year and it is taken away. We have motivated teachers who want to go into the school system but they can’t teach the children the way they think they should be taught. We have No Child Left Behind but we shouldn’t stop the kids from going ahead. We have a web site that we should be able to utilize but at the school his son attends only four teachers are listed. He is responsible for getting his son’s homework if he can’t reach the teachers what is he supposed to do? He can’t go down there at 6:00 p.m. at night. He is confused and hopes that in the Board’s deliberations they will help him to be less confused and will help the rest of us to feel that we are getting something for our money.

The Board gave thanks.

The public session closed at 7:55 p.m.

C. REPORTS

C.1. Administration:

Dr. Andrees stated we have a presentation tonight but I would like to remind you that your comments have been heard by the people around the table. We have legislators here who represent West Haven. There are new initiatives coming out. Some of the hot issues out are:

Special Education
The school board as well as the Superintendent is fighting and asking the legislature to reimburse Special Education 100%. This may not happen but one of the legislators said to us on Friday that they respond to the issues that have the loudest outcry. If we don’t get there and make the legislators aware of the issues that are important to us the City will not be relieved of some of its tax burden and will continue to incur the high cost of Special Education. So write and visit and let your legislators know what is going on.

All Day Kindergarten
Another issue is All Day Kindergarten. This is something that they are looking at across the state. Let your voice be known there.

Technology
Technology is another thing that we have not heard about tonight but this too is going to be part of the legislative agenda and I hope you are concerned about this also.

I challenge you to contact our legislators. They have met with us and have indicated to us that they are passionately concerned about what is happening in education. They are outnumbered by some of the more wealthy districts that are not experiencing some of the same things that we are experiencing. Therefore I ask you in mass to contact your legislators and let your voice be heard for the good of all the children.
We do have a presentation tonight which will be given by Dr. Whitney, Assistant Principal from West Haven High School. A question that is asked is are the CAPT scores impacted by the children that move into the district or are our scores impacted by are own population. Data will come from a lot of things because Dr. Whitney have delved deeply into the data bank and has gone to West Haven High School so we can stop speculating and find out what the truth is so we can prepare and deal with those issues. Dr. Andrees thanked Dr. Whitney for coming this evening.

Dr. Whitney stated it was at Dr. Andree’s request that we took an in depth look. We get scores from the students and each year we test in the early spring and get the scores back. We have taken a new route at the high school in the last couple of years. We try to look at the data and figure out where we are doing a great job and keep doing that and look at where we could apply extra effort and go further. Dr. Andrees asked specifically to look at the data in terms of student attendance. Who has been with us since kindergarten and then look at who has been with us since sixth grade, eighth grade, ninth grade and tenth grade. This has never been looked at in this way. We just looked to see how they are doing and how they compare to their past CMT scores nationally and have they made steady progress. Now with No Child Left Behind are they able to make AYP is still under the microscope but this is a different way of looking at it.

We tested over 500 students last March. Every year there are a group of 11th and 12th grade students who take CAPT some for the first time some are taking it to raise their scores. She has only bought information regarding the 10th graders. The State is only concerned with the 10th graders. The 10th graders are the ones who are mandated to actually take the test.

We had 490 10th grade students who took the test. Not included in this information are the 12 students who were outplaced because there is no control over what classes they get and they have no information. Only considered are the 478 students. In order to retrieve this information she personally had to go through each CUM folder to get the background information as it is not currently in our tallied school system. She can’t just hit a button as of today and tell you where Johnny Jones went to elementary or middle school as we are not there yet. Unfortunately 135 folders either had no information available as the students probably didn’t fill it in or if the students had moved or transferred out their folders were moved from the file cabinet into the guidance office and stored somewhere in the basement and I didn’t have access to them. Because of this the numbers will be a little bit skewed. Dr. Whitney took the scores of 478 students who were tested. Some students didn’t take all sections as some of them were repeating the test. You don’t have to re-take a section where you passed. The State considers a level 4 or 5 a pass. Some students left portions of the test blank and didn’t even attempt to take it. They can’t be forced to take it. No score which is rare means some are so low that they can’t score. If the student is absent that is what it is. Some students are in our ACES Program and don’t take the regular test and their scores were not in it.
The State considers a level 4 or 5 passing. In WHHS a level 3 is not a pass but remediation is not required for graduation. Levels 1 and 1 require remediation for graduation requirements. A level 3 is average but it is not enough to meet state requirements.

From the students who took this test 218 have been with us since kindergarten and they are clustered around score level 3 and are average with the exception of writing. We have a great writing program in West Haven. They are scoring at CAPT and are at level 3 or level 4. If you look at level 4 there are 83 kids. This doesn’t show across the board just for writing.

The 99 students who arrived in 6th grade are clustered around score level 3 right in the middle.

For eighth grade we had 9 students and are clustered in the middle.

For the 8 students who arrived in 9th grade you are starting to see more skew towards the bottom. If you look at math you scored level 1. They showed up freshman year and took the test in the 10th grade. We only had these students a year.

One thing nice we did at the high school was Freshman Academy. Every freshman that comes through the door gets basic education. You take a four credit class where we are bumping up skills.

For the 10 students who arrived in 10th grade some students literally arrived the week of the test. We had no idea what classes they had taken or what they could accomplish. You will see more skew.

Dr. Whitney stated that Dr. Andres was interested in the 10th grade re-testers. There were 54 repeat 10th graders last March. Every year we have a handful about six who take CAPT for the third time. They can not get enough credits to get past the 10th grade and they have to take this test the third time. They are outraged by this. For the group of 54 repeaters we have a bunch clustered around group 3.

For those with us since kindergarten you will see groups three through 1. From 6th grade again level 3 and level 1 not at level four and five. Each of the remaining groups is three or below.

Private schools do not require CAPT testing and the state will only consider the highest score so many students take the test over to bring up their scores. If students pass all four they get an honor cord at graduation.

Dr. Andrees stated that many of the students failed in reading and now that we know this Mr. Cavallaro and the high school administrators have become pro-active. Neil stated that all students who are in this category should take some type of remedial reading. By students receiving this half credit not only removes them from taking the test again but it
also allows them to build credits for graduation. We are looking at offering more ½ credit courses but building in some type of remedial reading to those kids before they pass on to become officially juniors.

Dr. Andrees stated that high school is really too late and we need to come to the middle schools to become a little more aggressive. You will find that many of the students with behavioral problems are not successful in reading. We should focus on the reading at the middle schools. We have to become a little more drastic in the steps we are taking.

Dr. Whitney stated that the teachers are coming in on Saturday to prepare students for CAPT. This is over and above what is taking place in the classroom. CAPT is imbedded in class all the time. The students aren’t even aware of when they are getting a CAPT type lesson. It is not anything different it is just more of what is good.

Toni Paine said this is also being incorporated in the lower grades and has seen this when visiting the schools. She wanted to say thank you to Dr. Whitney and knows that it was all manual data and it couldn’t have been easy. It is interesting because the first page of the students who attended West Haven Schools since kindergarten there is 32% of the 218 that were 4 or above; whereas the sixth grade had already dropped to 19%. This is why I was bugging everyone for these because I had it in the back of my mind that this is where the difference is and it looks like that is where the difference was. We are doing right by our children we just need to identify the ones coming in who haven’t had this benefit. Dr. Whitney stated why are we going to re-teach the concepts we already know why we don’t find out where the deficits are and aim for that. This makes sense and we are trying to find a way to do this.

This March there will be a brand new Science test for CAPT. This is the third generation so we can’t honestly compare this year’s science scores to last year’s scores.

Neil stated that this year there are new elementary school science program. By improving the reading we think we are going to improve in all areas. By eliminating some of the remedial courses especially in the area of math that will not only help our math students but also science. This will not happen overnight but by the time the students reach the high school there should be an improvement.

Dr. Whitney stated that ESL and Special Ed students get the same test and this is reflected in these scores as well. They are expected to perform at a 10th grade level whether or not they are able to function at a tenth grade level.

The Board thanked Dr. Whitney for the informative presentation.

Dr. Andrees had a couple of item to remind everyone of. The Points of Pride is still featuring Carrigan School and Forest School. We are getting ready to tape Molloy now.

On the agenda tonight there is 12 month clerical position which we are asking to eliminate. There is a 10 month clerical position at the guidance office that we would like
to enhance and expand to 12 month with the same hours. We would bring in support for them during those peak times when additional staffing is needed.

Again, let me remind those of you in the audience to contact your legislators and to get all your friends and relatives to do the same. It is urgent and the time is crucial so now is the time to do this.

Our colleagues are ready to raid our school district for positions that are hard to fill. We have stated that we have lost one and hopefully we will find someone to fill positions that are hard to fill.

Neil Cavallaro stated that one of State Senator Hart’s aids informed him that the Senator has submitted a bill to go along with board member Bob Guthrie’s request that Board’s of Education be allowed to carry over 5% of the budget into the next fiscal year. If we have extra money at the end of the year often times we have to turn it over to the City or rush to spend it without actually planning the program. By allowing us to carry over funds that would allow us to plan for new types of programs, textbooks, science kits etc. This bill is a long way from passing but the Senator has submitted it and we will keep our eye on it. If you are going to be in contact with your legislator certainly this is something to keep in mind.

C.1.b. BOARD

Toni asked Bob Guthrie to explain about the 5% and that it is not our present budget. Bob Guthrie stated it would be 5% of the last adopted budget. By the time the State Legislature were to enact this law it would be a year in arrears and would be consistent among all 169 municipalities.

George Monahan stated that everyone who knows him knows that misinformation bugs him more than anything. He feels compelled to clarify the record when something like this happens. Facts are what are most important to make a decision for themselves and not have someone try to make a decision for them. I want to clarify a couple of points. We talked about the Building Oversight Committee this evening. State Statute requires the Board of Ed to review those expenditures and approve them prior to the State reimbursing them at the State level. They Mayor of this current administration disbanded the previous Building Oversight Committee and empowered his new Building Oversight Committee which was within his rights. There was clearly at best a lot of misinformation and a very, very rocky road with respect to the spirit of dialog and cooperation between the new Building Oversight Committee and this Board. There was no Board Representation on the original Building Oversight Committee and there was not any Board representation on the new Building Oversight Committee until a complaint came from this board and then and only then did the Mayor appoint Mr. Guthrie to that committee. Mr. Guthrie made an effort to go to that committee and clearly saw that there was still rocks in the road and found out early on that it was going to be difficult to even be involved with the method that that committee attempted to operate by. I’m not saying that the committee hasn’t done some valuable services but there has been misinformation
there as well. They talk about finding money. A lot of the monies were not found; it is just a question of how the expenses for those school projects were submitted to the state for reimbursement. If anyone wants to look at that you can find out that previous boards and previous superintendents had different methods of how those projects were submitted to the State for reimbursement especially when these complex projects uncovered unexpected expenses due to the complexity of the building and age of the building etc. There are procedures and rules and this board has always operated and attempted to get every penny we are entitled to. For someone to say that they found money and we wouldn’t have gotten that money is misinformation.

It is also clear tonight that there is some passion coming from the public that is here. It is always great as a Board Member and as a parent myself and taxpayers to see that citizens and taxpayer care about the education department. It is clear that this administration did under fund this year’s budget by $98,000.00 according to State Statute. It is also clear that people understand the budget process. This board does request a realistic budget based on what the system needs to operate. We request the number of dollars needed to operate the system and provide a proper education. That request then gets reviewed by the mayor and that gets modified in the form of the mayor’s requested budget and is submitted to the City Council. Then the City Council has the right to either approve as is or to modify that budget. Then State Law requires this board to operate this education department with the number of dollars we are granted; regardless of what it is and what we requested. We have to operate the education system to the penny and every member of this board is personally responsible to do that by law. No one on the City Council is held individually liable and the mayor is not individually liable. We, too, have the same passion and concern for the education of the children in the district especially since several of us are parents and we have children in this district. We do appreciate and look forward to your efforts in helping us to get involved to relay this message to the mayor and to the City Council that we need the proper amount of money to operate this department and properly educace the children. Thank you.

Jerry Calabritto agrees with Mr. Monahan’s comments and raises another question. If Mr. Guthrie is no longer a member of the Oversight Committee this Board does not have a representative and I would request that the chairman inquire with the mayor who he intends to replace Mr. Guthrie with. This Board should have a representative on the committee and at this point we don’t have one.

Toni Paine asked Bob Guthrie if he was officially notified that he was no longer on the committee.

Bob stated he received a phone call from the mayor last week.

Jerry stated to refresh everyone the mayor’s budget was cut an additional 1.8 by the council. The cut was for a total of six million last year and that put us in the situation we are in; so never again. I urge you when we submit our request the final number comes from the City Council they are the ultimate funding authority to us and the bottom line number they give us is the number we are going to have to work with.
Howie Horvath is also encouraged to see the level of passion and the people who are prepared to fight for the educational system here in West Haven. He would suggest to the 50 strong people here tonight need to recruit because that 50 needs to be 500 etc. This way the message will be ultimately sent. You can’t rely on just a few vocal folks. I would suggest you spend the time recruiting between now and the time we have to go before the council if you want to make a difference this time. We learned our lesson the hard way.

Eric Murillo stated it is good to see so many concerned people at this meeting and he hopes to see even more people attend future meetings. Parents should voice their concerns to the board and the board should focus on the budget and it should be presented in advance so we can come together and discuss it.

A lot of parents want sports returned and we can do these things if we come together and focus on these problems and discuss remedies. There are a lot of things that we can do in house.

When I first became a board member I was given a packet with the Connecticut Code of Ethics and he passed this out to his colleagues to review and think back to why we are here.

C.1.c. COMMITTEE

George Monahan stated the Special Ed Committee Meeting held a meeting at 6:00 p.m. prior to the general meeting. It was a very informative session. Director Gary Palermo and two members of his staff were in attendance. The department is running very, very well and clearly understands the challenges before them and the importance of their duties. It is a tribute to Dr. Andrees and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Cavallaro to work directly with that department as closely as they do and understand the need of the Special Ed students in this district. The minutes will reflect some of the dialogue.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Food Service Meeting, December 18, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at the Blake Building (enclosure)

Toni Paine asked for the approval of the December 18, 2006 Food Service Minutes Discussion: Jerry Calabritto stated he had a correction to the minutes. It starts with Mr. Collins made a motion to bring it to the board as a whole and then goes on to attempt to say there was a vote but that motion was not seconded. This motion died for lack of a second. So duly noted that there was no vote taken because there was no motion on the floor to vote on it. This would be page 7 of the minutes.
The minutes should reflect that Mr. Collins made the motion and the motion died for lack of a second. The rest of the notes should be stricken because there was no motion on the floor so they couldn’t take a vote.

Eric Murillo asked that the secretary go back to the tape and see if there was a second.

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to table these minutes until the next meeting
George Monahan seconded the motion
All in favor
Motion passes

D.1.b. West Haven Board of Education Finance Meeting, January 2, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. at the Blake Building (enclosure)

Robert Guthrie made a motion to approve the Finance meeting
Jerry Calabritto seconded the motion
Discussion:
All in favor
Minutes are approved

D.1.c. West Haven Board of Education Meeting, January 2, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Blake Building (enclosure)

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the Board of Education minutes
George Monahan seconded the motion
Discussion:
All in favor
Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

07-01 Raymond Wrinn, In School Suspension Teacher, Carrigan
Effective: January 2, 2007
Reason: Personal

Bob Guthrie made a motion to approve the resignation
George Monahan seconded the motion
Discussion: Howie Horvath if there was any kind of exit interview done. No it was a retirement. Howie asked if there was someone taking his position. Neil responded there is a substitute in that position. Anytime there is a position that opens in the middle of the year we are allowed to put someone in that job. However before we can fill the job we have to actually post that position. We will post all vacancies after April 1, 2007.
Toni Paine asked if it is part of our procedure to do an exit interview on everyone. The response was no.

All in favor
Motion carries

E. New Business

07-02  Correspondence from Jolene Barnes, Personnel Director to Dr. JoAnn Andrees, Superintendent of Schools regarding clerical reorganization in the School Counseling Department at WHHS

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the reorganization
George Monahan seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

E. New Business:

07-03  2007 – 2008 School Calendar

Recommendation: Move for Approval

Discussion: This hasn’t been presented to the union yet.
George Monahan made a motion to table 07-03
Jerry Calabritto seconded the motion
Motion passes

Toni Paine stated that in their packets were the goals from Dr. Andrees. We need to accept them so we can evaluate them. Would someone like to add this to New Business?

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to Add to the Agenda the Superintendent’s Goals # 07-04
George Monahan seconded the motion
Discussion: Toni stated Bob was the only one to respond. Thank you Bob
All in favor
Motion carries

07-04  Superintendent’s Goals

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s Goals
George Monahan seconded the motion
Discussion:
All in favor
Motion carries

F. Informational:
  Nothing to Add

Toni Paine asked for a motion to adjourn
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to adjourn
Howie Horvath seconded the motion
All in favor
The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Clerk