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 Raymond Collins III, Vice Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:05 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Raymond Collins, Vice Chairman  
George Monahan  
Eric Murillo  
Gerald Calabritto  
Robert J. Guthrie  
Mark Palmieri  
Howard Horvath  
Krista Pickering

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chairman M. Toni Paine

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Neil Cavallaro, Assistant Superintendent

**B. PUBLIC PORTION**

Vice Chairman Raymond Collins requested that all pagers and cell phones be turned off and requested all speakers to give their name and address if they wish to speak. He reminded the audience that there are meetings scheduled next week related to the budget. As far as programs being cut a lot depends on what happens tomorrow. As far as layoffs are concerned we are now sure. We welcome all input again, when you come to address the Board it is for informational purposes there is not a dialog set up between the Board. We welcome any input. He then asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Patti Fusco, 311 Shingle Hill Road, West Haven addressed the Board. Patti presented a list of cost saving suggestions from teachers that she would like you to consider. She knows the Board is voting tomorrow. She doesn’t like the whole thing being on their vote because her belief is that it is the City’s fault for the situation we are in it is not the teacher’s fault. She is saying this for everyone’s benefit. She knows this is a very supportive Board which has been very supportive and fought the City to try and get the money that we needed to run the schools unsuccessfully. She read some suggestions from her list enclosed.

**Cost Savings Suggestions from the WHFT**
Close all buildings at 6 PM and on weekends. Readjust custodial staff hours so that buildings are still maintained and cleaned. The exceptions are buildings that are utilized by Adult Education. Those can be closed at 9 PM. You will save money on heat and electricity. Although outsiders pay for custodians to be on duty, they do not pay for the actual utilities’ costs.

Do not fill non-essential positions that are open or become open. Many teaching jobs can be filled by internal transfers.

The Floater Nurse position should be eliminated for next year. The nurses in the private elementary schools can decrease their hours to half time in those buildings to help fill in where needed in our public schools.

Department heads should teach three classes again.

Department heads should only be in charge of grades 9-12. Let the coordinators and principals handle grades 6-8.

No teacher should teach a sixth class. Class enrollment should be able to be above 18 by combining sections and eliminating low enrollment courses. AP classes may have to be offered every other year.

Eliminate middle school sports. There are plenty of teams for kids outside of school.

Institute a pay to play system for all high school sports. At the very least, cut in half the number of coaches and assistant coaches. We do not need a personal trainer on staff.

Close the two pools.

All outside sports games should be played during the daylight hours.

Lower the heat and raise the temperature for air conditioning. We may need to spend money to make equipment work more efficiently. It will pay off in the long run.

Eliminate one of the two secretary/clerk/bookkeeper positions in the grants department. We are no longer a priority district so why do we have two secretaries?

Eliminate all overtime unless it is CRITICAL.

NO OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS!!! Our staff is able to handle it alone for one year.
• Use electronic mail as much as possible. If announcements, attendance, etc were e-mailed or posted on the Power School Announcements section we would save money on paper and manpower to disseminate such information.

• Send all newsletters home with the children in elementary schools. Use the oldest and only system so that each family only gets one copy of notices. This includes cafeteria menus.

• Cut supply money in half.

• Don’t water the grass or fertilize it this year. This will mean it won’t have to be cut as often.

• Utilize the staff you have.

• One technology para is planning to resign at the high school level. Rather than fill that position, take the two paras out of Washington and Mackrille. Let one fill the high school position and let the other float among all eight elementary schools to assist teachers in the labs. Consider hiring another technician to free the teachers up in the Tech department and cut down on overtime.

Ray Collins thanked her on behalf of the Board and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Curtis Jordon, 249 Malcom Road, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He applauds Ms. Fusco and agrees it is not the teacher’s fault it goes back years and it is political. He has always supported the teachers. The Mayor has said we only have 1,083 employees and according to a statement made by Mr. Palermo which says school board freezes hiring. He said the school system has 1,400 employees when according to the Mayor we only have 1,083 people working in the City. How can you make this statement when you have 1,400 people working in the school system? We have approximately 578 teachers and if we have from 1,300 to 1,400 people working in the City why do we have to lay off 78 teachers? What about those other 700 employees working?

We have janitors and assistant janitors making more money than the teachers. He was told they are at the top grade. He doesn’t care. How can a janitor make more money than a teacher it doesn’t make sense. It is all politics. Every year you put in a budget and every year it is shot down. Not shot down completely but if you receive less. If you put in for 70 you may get 3.5. If you ask for more maybe you will get what you need.

He asked for the Allingtown Pension and Fireman’s Contract and Agreement and it took almost two years to receive. He threatened to go to the Freedom of Information and he received it. One of the reasons the educational system has to fight so much for money is because it is going to the fireman and policeman. We have 120 firemen and 132 policeman and we are $150,000,000 in debt. 252 people have put the City of West Haven in $150,000,000 debt. The firemen doubled their pension. The policemen get
80% and they get bumped up a grade. It was stated this was from a different budget. He said the money is going into special interests that have a significant impact on politics. He is upset by this. This City is over $300,000,000 in debt and we are facing an $11,000,000 Deficit.

In 1991 the Statewide Review Board turned the administration of our finances back over to the politicians we had a surplus. The audit reports showed we had 23,000,000 in uncollected back taxes. He and a few other people started attending Budget Meetings and then they went out and hired J. E. Roberts to collect back taxes and put a 15% fee on top of the fee. Finally the people in the Center and West Shore are beginning to listen. He went on to discuss other material regarding the budget and suggested all Board Members from the previous administration should resign.

Ray Collins thanked Mr. Jordon on behalf of the Board.

Raymond Collins asked if any one else would like to address the Board.

Kebbie Waterfield, Seaview Avenue, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She is a life long resident of West Haven and a former Seth Haley Student and currently a Seth Haley parent. She chose to live in West Haven specifically in West Shore in order for her children to attend Seth Haley School. Her property taxes are about to experience a huge increase which she knows is not the Board’s fault. She pays these taxes to give her child the opportunity to attend kindergarten in the school district where she pays to reside. Currently her child is on a waiting list for all day kindergarten while students from out of her district have been chosen for all day kindergarten. Again, in the school district where she pays to reside. Roughly 75% of the students that have already been chosen for all day kindergarten are out of district students being bussed into the school district where I pay to reside from a school district already receiving Title I Funding. As a result her child is not afforded the opportunity that my tax dollars pay for.

Currently only 10% of schools in Connecticut are without all day kindergarten for all students. Our first graders this year did not meet benchmark standards for DRA Literacy Testing. This is the greatest number of first graders in recent years at Seth Haley School. This year we have nine students being retained in kindergarten. All of them from the half day program. I realize this may be too late to affect my child for next year but all day kindergarten should not be left to the draw and that all of our residents of the City should have the same opportunity. All day kindergarten should be the standard in West Haven for all students.

Ray thanked her on behalf of the Board and commented that for speaking for the first time she did very well.

Raymond Collins asked if any one else would like to address the Board.

Valerie Bruneau, 238 Peck Avenue, West Haven, CT addressed the Board.
She stated she values everything the Board does and knows that you have a very difficult task ahead of you. Her concern as a teacher and a parent is the concession package presented to teachers. She would really like to think that some of the concessions weren’t completely thought through. If the teachers vote in favor of this package the average teacher would lose between $25,000 and $30,000 over the next four years. This is just too difficult for residents of West Haven to bear. Some of the other cuts perhaps will have to happen. She puts no blame on anyone. The only analogy she can offer is if all of a sudden we couldn’t afford to pick up garbage in West Haven. Would we look at the area of West Haven that uses the most garbage and just say we aren’t going to pick up your garbage anymore we don’t have the money? No we would look at the whole town. We need to look a little bit broader than just the teacher’s union and really look to see where we can fix this. The Board should consider this. The teachers did take concessions years ago in 1992 and for the concessions now this is a really difficult thing to vote in favor of.

Ray thanked her on behalf of the Board and commented that for the record they are negotiating with all unions not just the teacher’s union.

Raymond Collins asked if any one else would like to address the Board.

Dennis Blater, Woodmont Rd., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He was explaining to his son the Civics approach as to why he had to come to this meeting and stand up and be counted and discuss this issue. His son said what is the point it is a done deal you can’t change things. He said but you can you present arguments and reasonable approaches and people listen. He said no its political. There are contracts and people you have to deal with and they are not going to change. His son is eleven and for him to have that kind of approach he has to challenge the Board to prove him wrong.

As a Board of Education you are providing a product and he is a consumer who has a child who consumes this product. Education is this product and as a consumer who pays taxes to have this education provided he wants to make sure he gets the best value for his money. He wants to make sure the teachers and school system is the best. He is pleased that in the West Shore district there have been improvements.

As the taxes go up and less product is provided he has to wonder if he is getting this value for his money. He expects the best value. He expects a good solid educational base for his child which doesn’t mean just a no child left behind give him math, give him science etc. Give him a full explanation of education which is music, art, gym and anything that rounds out the child’s education. Let’s not cut back on those things. Sports give students an opportunity to achieve and feel the satisfaction of a personal goal and team achievement. Students exposed to music training have higher test scores and more self esteem. Don’t lower the goals don’t lessen the children’s self esteem. Don’t do it through budget cuts don’t do it through layoffs. He would like to see the teachers stay and continue to care about the kids.
He went on to discuss alternatives some of which are mentioned here:

1. If we are asking teachers to take a cut lets look at everybody; administration and staff. 
2. Lets look at consultants do we need them? How many do we need what is the cost? 
3. Can we have a task force of parents to volunteer who can do the same thing? 
4. You have Universities and Colleges where you can utilize student consultants. 
5. He would be interested to know what the new Superintendent’s thoughts are. 
6. Can we be more effective when applying for Grants? 
7. Is it reasonable to have a city-wide auction or raffle and have businesses donate? 
8. Parents need to get deeply involved in the educational process. 

This is the smallest crowd that he has seen. It is unfortunate that we are preaching to the converted. We need to get other parents involved. The Board needs to take positive steps to make the parents in the community realize this is their children’s education and they are paying taxes for it. Therefore the parents should step forward and get involved. If we can’t achieve the goals collectively that we need to set up in this room through the Board then the parents have to go back and look at those goals and start achieving them in smaller areas at the individual schools if we can’t get it done here. We can not give up because our children can not afford to be given up on. 

Ray thanked him on behalf of the Board and commented that he wanted to address some of the issues and stated he had some great points. 

First of all he congratulated him on his son who is very insightful which is a direct reflection on your parenting skills. He doesn’t want to take away anybody’s thunder but when you said unfortunately it’s a done deal unfortunately that’s true because not one person on this Board wants to make any cuts. He totally agrees about the arts, sports, the after school programs. Not one Board member wants to make any cuts. The Council gives us our money. Back in May we went an argued for our money. The Council dictates the money we are getting and we have to make it work within that. We are looking under every rock and nook and cranny for grant money and we are negotiating with every union not just the teacher’s union. We have to live within the budget given to us by the City Council. Unfortunately they cut us down to bare bones and we are doing the very best we can with the littlest effect we can to the educational process. 

Raymond Collins asked if any one else would like to address the Board. 

Marlene Cullen, Colonial Boulevard, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She has two children one attends Bailey and one attends Seth Haley. She has been involved in Budget Meetings and City Council Meetings since 1998 when her first son started attending kindergarten. She asked the Board to look at all unnecessary items before they cut teachers. There are so many reasons that we need to keep all the teachers that we have now. She has heard many great ideas. She has not heard anyone mention anything about the City vehicles that are used with City funding and insurance and gas. Things like this should be the first to go. Her son plays Bailey sports and she would be happy to pay for
the sports in order to have her child get the education that her tax dollars deserve to be spent on. She doesn’t want to see any improvements to the ice rink or athletic fields if it means loosing a teacher. The music programs in the school now should remain in place but extracurricular things and after school things can be cut. Parents have to take responsibility for what happens after school with their kids. It is important to have the teachers be in place and have the same education afforded to the students that they deserve. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to address them.

Ray thanked her on behalf of the Board and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Darcy LoPresti, 115 Bellvue Road, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She has written a letter to Neil and would like to make a statement. She too is a life long resident of West Haven. After college she decided to buy a house here to give her children the same life. They deserve to be afforded the same education that West Haven had while she was growing up. Instead she is being forced to send her children to private schools or being forced to buy a home elsewhere. Education draws people to a City and West Haven is failing in that aspect. Many parents agree with her about this. Why are you asking the teachers to take a pay cut? The administrators are putting their own needs ahead of our children why do you expect teachers to take pay cuts when you aren’t? People really do wish you would cut the sports in this town. She pays for gymnastics, cheerleading and dancing. All which cost over $200 a month yet all these kids can’t learn to read and write and they have sports jerseys with their names on them. Why are there two managers for the Rink and the Field making over $50,000 a year? Since they are seasonal jobs why can’t you combine them? Our teachers aren’t even making that much money. The Rink and the Field do not make enough money to support themselves. She saw on the budget that the Board of Education transferred over $80,000 to help them last year. She would like to know why that happened. We need to be closing the field and rink in the summer and save money for staffing. We have other fields paid for by Park Rec so why don’t these stay open. Why exactly does the high school need a personal trainer? It is a coach’s job to make sure kids are physically fit. Many of her friends are teachers and parents and feel uncomfortable to come up here and speak to the Board. You are making them feel horrible and they are the best advocates you have. You have parents and teachers and they know what is best for our kids and yet they don’t even want to come to these meetings. You should be ashamed of yourself.

Ray asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Tiffany Kinney, 42 Windsock Rd, West Haven. She too has been a life long resident of West Haven and the West Haven School system. Her daughter is in first grade at Seth Haley and she did not pass the DRA test that was given to her in the fall. She used the literacy teacher and went for extra help all through the year and she just passed above average for the DRA this time around. She really thinks that the literacy teachers are important and agrees with everyone about the sports program. She too pays for everything extra and would have no problem with the sports program. She too definitely agrees that the personal trainer. She can’t imagine just how much they are paying a
trainer at the high school to train the football team. She wanted to stress the fact that the literacy teacher is definitely needed. If her daughter didn’t get the extra help who knows she possibly would have stayed back or would be in Special Ed. She is just an average student and needed that little bit of help and it made a difference because her testing is back above average now. She also agrees with getting parents involved with volunteering to do workshops. She thinks this would work out very well. She doesn’t think that the Board does a good job of putting this information out to the public. As a parent of a first grader, if a teacher didn’t make a comment to her at a PTA meeting she never would have known anything. She has no problem volunteering and helping out but the Board has to get more involved and let people know what is going on. It took her and a small group of parents to do a lot of research to find out what is going on. They had to dig and dig and dig and then all these things came out. They say it is a done deal. With all of us coming out and speaking it will make a difference for going forward.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Marty Northum, 47 Shingle Hill Rd., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He stated he knows the Board is in a tight pickle and that the City Council put you there and you are working to do something about it. Hopefully people are working to do something about the City Council.

One thing he hasn’t heard mentioned was what about the administrators? Why is it always the bottom row that must face the layoff? Everybody knows they have assistants to assistants running around here and this place is getting so top heavy it will fall over one of these days. Why are the teachers taking the brunt of it?

There are a bunch of consultants around. Half the teachers don’t know what the consultants do and half know they do nothing. Wherever he has worked and the budget is a problem the first thing anyone lets go are the consultants. The teachers know there jobs they don’t need these people coming in, sitting in the back of the room, and at the end of the day they say Mr. so and so that kid shouldn’t have been yelled at and makes $500 a day. This is ridiculous. You can save a lot of teachers just by getting rid of the consultants.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Sandy Miller, 315 Country Hill Drive, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She stated the teachers are the key here. Certain things can be done rather than let the teachers go. Some of the things were touched upon. Her biggest issue is that they hired a Superintendent who is really not here during a time of crisis. Really should be here to reassure people and making sure that things are being done. She doesn’t feel that many people feel reassured. Also, she feels that Mr. Cavallaro is quite capable of handling things she doesn’t think paying another person $550 a day is necessary. These things should be looked at before you look at cutting teachers who are key to our children’s education.
Someone had spoken about the Seth Haley program for kindergarten. She is in the 8th District Mackrille. She bought her home in that district and again in this district there are children from other districts being bussed into the all day kindergarten program over children who live there. She spoke to many people and was told that one child was there because of who they are related to. This needs to stop. Nepotism has been a big thing in West Haven. It is in the headlines every other day practically. If you don’t put a stop to it now it will go on for years and years. She has three children and is pregnant with her fourth child and in five years she doesn’t want to be sitting here having this discussion again.

Concerning the all day kindergarten. They did a lottery and we don’t even know if there is going to be an all day kindergarten but by doing the lottery ahead of time you really have people worked up. It shouldn’t have been done. It has caused a lot of problems and has brought up the fact there are children from other districts in our district and we are paying to live here. She understands the racial balance issue and the children in question are not a part of that at all. The only resolution she has come up with herself is to withdraw the lottery that has taken place. Verify all the addresses of where the children live then do the lottery but only when you know all day kindergarten is going to take place. It is not fair for us to live in the district where we bought our homes and are paying taxes which are sky rocketing and we can’t have our children aside and not put into the school they know to get into the program.

Another area discussed was the use of City vehicles. She has seen City vehicles used for non-city business. She has seen vehicles used for dropping children off at sports events and being used at Stop and Shop. These are not work hours and the vehicle shouldn’t be used this way. You could have an accident you are using gas and insurance. That money needs to be put toward the children all the children not just members of the Board of Education or who they know.

Another thing she was looking at was there is a janitor at Mackrille that has a child in Mackrille but they live in the Washington School District. So you are telling me this person has the advantage of having his child at this school. They probably don’t own a home but rents and isn’t paying the taxes that we are but can have a child in this school.

These types of things need to be looked at and addressed and she would hope that she would receive a response to this at some point because she has sat back too long and watched things and didn’t speak up and has learned that if she doesn’t fight for her child nobody else will.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Tom Eckles, 83 Hickory St., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He was on a previous City Council and is very aware you are under a very tight budget. He knows that at No Child Left Behind you need to nurture at the lower levels and give these kids a good foundation to move forward. But on the other hand he is also here to talk about the Mackrille lottery. We should look into that a little bit. The Seth Haley lottery was a
week or so ahead of the Mackrille lottery and he thinks that a few people had their names in both lotteries. Does this create some improprieties? In addition we pay for the play. We asked for drama and theatre throughout the years. Maybe its time we asked for sports to step up and help out a little bit. In addition his daughter is a candidate for the all day kindergarten at Mackrille and is on the waiting list. He would be more than willing to pay the difference to make sure she has that opportunity.

Ray thanked him and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Robert Hauer 20 Michael Drive, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He has two main concerns right now. His daughter is presently second on the waiting list for the full day kindergarten but it is still a gamble. Full day kindergarten is very important especially for his daughter who really gets bored with the half day program and could really use a full day program. She jumps from that to day care and it makes it difficult for her. He is not looking to use this all day kindergarten to substitute his day care costs however it would definitely help especially with the increase of taxes. The other thing is his wife is a teacher in the West Haven System and so between the costs, the day care, the possible freezing of his wife’s pay, and the taxes going up it could be a big personal hit of at least $10,000 to $12,000.

One of the things we need to do is cut out a lot of the extras, stay with the basics that are needed to enhance our children’s education.

One thing I did hear was that the State of Connecticut is going to be mandating in the near future that full day kindergarten be mandated through all systems. If we get rid of it now we are going backwards we are not looking for the future.

He knows the Board has a tough job ahead and commends them.

Ray thanked him and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Ann Stockinger, 11 Tuthill Street, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She is a life long resident and the parent of a West Haven High School freshman. She is a concerned, devoted, involved, and informed parent. She presently sits on the Executive Board of PTA Council, West Haven High PTSA, and is a band parent. She feels compelled to speak not only for her son but for all the children of West Haven Public Schools. With the four million dollars in education cuts she is fighting for her children’s education. She fears that most budget cuts will adversely affect our children’s education. Next year West Haven High will be up for accreditation. With possible teacher layoffs and pay freezes this will cause a lot of these teachers to seek employment elsewhere. Leaving a shortage of certified teachers in English, Math and Science. This would create larger classroom sizes and possible cuts in honor classes. This will definitely affect accreditation classes for our high school as well as our children. If the high school does not receive accreditation how will our students feel if not being able to graduate from an accredited school? If the proposed layoffs do go into effect it would involve half the staff at Meloy School as well as several music teachers. What will happen to our music
programs? Our Memorial Day Parade and Football games will be very quiet without the
sounds and support of our wonderful band.

If we loose our all day kindergarten and literacy program how will we be able to maintain
our high standard of education at the elementary level? Kindergarten teachers will have
to teach up to 26 children in a half day class with no aide and have them reading by the
end of kindergarten.

She has always been a strong supporter of the West Haven Schools and what West Haven
has to offer. Being a health care provider for over 23 years in this City and a former
graduate from West Haven High School she has always advocated for West Haven
Schools. She has seen her patients graduate from the high school and be accepted at
prestigious universities such as Yale and Harvard.

We the parents are holding the Board of Education and City Council accountable for our
children’s education.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Tamara Mersko, 728 Main Street, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She is here as
the co-treasurer of the Mackrille PTA. Mackrille School received the distinguished
honor of the National Blue Ribbon School. Mackrille PTA set up a fund raising event in
order to purchase a permanent sign in front of the school similar to the one at West
Haven High School. Mr. Tutora told them that no fund raising would be necessary as it
would be paid for from the building fund. It is now a year later and we are being told
there is no money for the sign. She wants to know where the sign is. Mr. Tutora is being
paid $550 a day to work so she would like the Board to ask him that question and respond
to the Mackrille PTA. We want and deserve that sign and if the building committee is
not going to provide it we will go forth with our fund raiser. I want to know where the
money is and would like a response.

In regards to the all day kindergarten they can send their child to any school in the city as
long as there is room at that school and the parents provide the transportation. You can’t
discriminate against a child. There was no room for my child at Seth Haley when I was
there this year so they offered me Pagels or Mackrille. She took Mackrille because that is
where her other family was. Yes we all pay taxes but unfortunately some people who
live in one area can afford the nice houses in another area. It is not there fault. Every
child has a right to an education. If there is not a full day available then not everyone can
have it.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Beth Denton, 82 Woodvale Rd., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She works at the
high school so she has some suggestions. If you are going to keep sports in make sure
that every single child who plays an after school sport is making the grade. She doesn’t
want to see a kid that has failed the grade play a sport for another year.
She also suggested limiting some of the clubs where stipends are issued or limit the number of clubs one person can receive stipends from.

She was a former band parent and they did a lot of fund raising. The get permits from the State. You are paying for electricity in the band room and parents pay to repair the instruments. Band is self sufficient and self supporting.

She also discussed the NASCAR Day event that she came before the Board on in May but was disapproved. She felt it was a worthwhile cause. The people who did go to City Hall did enjoy it and she raised over $440 for the NASCAR Foundation.

She noticed that Thompson Elementary School had its first Walk for Diabetes and never found that they asked for approval to run this as a school event. She never saw it came before the Superintendent or the Board. The Chess Team had a dart tournament at Randall’s Restaurant. She saw no notice of this in the minutes.

She went on to show athletic posters that hang up at the school that shows advertising. In the library she noticed that they have a transportation club that was running a trip to the auto show.

She tried to do this the right way it was for a good cause. She believes it is educational. She feels before anyone criticizes her they should ask what NASCAR does.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Jennifer Fournier, 15 Michael Dr., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. She is a two year resident of West Haven but the reason she moved was because of the school district. She has two children attending West Haven Schools and was heartbroken when she attended the City Budget Meeting to find the types of cuts facing the schools. Our children need to compete internationally and she hoped that this City was going to help her children build the foundation they need to go out and make their mark.

Her daughter told her that her teacher was being laid off so that is why she is here. She is here to plead on behalf of her children, their classmates, teachers and the other children in the community. They need the teacher and good quality education.

She hopes she didn’t make the wrong decision in investing in West Haven she prays this will turn around. She would hate to leave but would if it meant she went some place that truly stood behind our education system.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Alan Miller, Country Hill Dr., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. He wants to fix things for the future. The lotteries probably shouldn’t have been done until the Board makes its decision. Second of all he agrees children have a right to go to any school in
this town as long as they are a tax paying member of this town; however not at the expense of those children in that district. He moves forward for any lotteries that children of that district come first. Secondly the lottery should be done for all to see otherwise it is not a fair lottery. Because the lottery is not fair it should be withdrawn. He thanked the Board for making the tough decisions and knows they are not in a popular spot right now.

Ray thanked him and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Marlene Cullen, Colonial Boulevard addressed the Board. She doesn’t have a child in kindergarten but she believes that if you have a child in kindergarten and pay taxes to live in that district you should be afforded that opportunity. She understands the racial balance and feels if you have to take someone from outside the district perhaps they should be put into the half day program in fairness to those who pay taxes in that district.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Buffy Rivera, 9 Cowpen Road, West Haven, CT addressed the Board. It sounds like it’s a done deal. We are trying to fight for something that has already happened. PTA can be a great asset to the Board of Education. She would like to see the Board become more personable with the schools and try to find out what is going on. There is a lot of waste everywhere and she would like to challenge everyone here that we need to fight come May so this doesn’t happen again next year. Maybe there is nothing we can do now but in May we all need to be involved for the future.

Ray thanked her and asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

Curtis Jordon, 249 Malcolm Rd., West Haven, CT addressed the Board. We have 52,500 people in the City of West Haven and have over 7,000 students in our system but when he looks around he sees maybe 100 people. What we should have is public television. The meetings aren’t being recorded. A lot of people don’t read the paper but everybody has a television. If we could televise the City Council and Board Meetings people would see what is happening. He would like a petition signed by the people to have these meetings televised.

Ray thanked him and responded that this is the first meeting in four years that hasn’t been televised. Every Tuesday and Friday at 7:00 p.m. you can see our meetings. We are on public television. As far as the Council he doesn’t know about the Council he only knows about the Board.

Ray asked if anyone else would like to address the Board.

After the third and final request no one else wanted to address the Board. The public portion closed at 8:25 p.m.
Reports:

Status of Schools
Neil Cavallaro pointed out that the letter from ACES regarding the technology plan has been given approval and would urge the Board to pass that.

Board Reports
George Monahan stated that the Board was presented a budget from the City Council and upon review of that we were informed that the language from that budget had a section that was actually illegal and we required Board counsel to revise some wording and present that to the City Council. They addressed it as a resolution and it was taken care of at the City Council meeting this past Monday and he did want to express his appreciation of the Council’s understanding of that problem. He thanked them for their support in getting us a budget that the language is legal and now and only now after we approve that tonight can we go forward with the first budget that we have been handed to deal with.

Committee Reports

Howard Horvath wanted to note that prior to tonight’s meeting we had an Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting on Security and Discipline with the Principals, Assistant Principals and the Provost from the High School and Middle Schools. We will synthesize the minutes of that meeting and will put a report out to some teacher meetings to help insure that everything stays and remains safe and secure. He appreciated the community coming out and voicing their opinion. As a number of people noted sooner is probably always better but lets continue to keep this kind of enthusiasm for education in our City it is critical. It is inspiring to see you all come out. Thank you.

Krista Pickering wanted to thank Bob Guthrie for handling the last curriculum committee in her absence.

D.1. Approval of Minutes:

Ray Collins asked for the approval of Minutes D.1.a and D.1.b inclusive.
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to accept the minutes
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

06-56 Joseph F. Cianculli, English teacher at Bailey Middle School
Effective: June 23, 2006
Reason: Retirement

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the above resignation
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

E. New Business:

06-61 Budget from the City Council

Ray Collins asked for a motion to add said agreement Mr. Monahan discussed to the agenda tonight.
Jerry Calabritto requested that the City Council Chairman’s signature be added if it has not been
George Monahan made a motion to add the above agreement to the agenda
Jerry Calabritto seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

06-57 Authorized Signatures Change Form from Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Health and Nutrition and Child/Family/School Partnerships

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Bob Guthrie made a motion to approve the above signature form
Krista Pickering seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

06-58 Correspondence from Gary R. Palermo, Director, Pupil Services to Neil Cavallaro regarding Summer School Staff at Pagels Elementary School

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the above signature form
Eric Murillo seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

06-59 Correspondence from Jolene Barnes, Personnel Director to Neil Cavallaro regarding Summer School Staffing for the High School and Middle Schools (enclosure)

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the above staffing
George Monahan seconded the motion
No Discussion
All in favor
Motion passes

06-60 West Haven Public School 2006-2009 Technology Plan

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Bob Horvath made a motion to approve the above staffing
Krista Pickering seconded the motion
Discussion: Howard Horvath at some point would like to hear a presentation of it.
All in favor
Motion passes

06-61 Budget from the City Council

Ray Collins asked for a motion
Jerry Calabritto made a motion to approve the agreement between West Haven and the City
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
Discussion: Bob Guthrie understands the Board has taken that to allow some leeway in the budget. He does not think it is a good way to conduct business banking our savings we probably will never realize. This will put the cart before the horse and maybe solve the problem for one year but not long term.
All but Bob Guthrie in favor
Motion carries

F. Informational:

Eric Murillo does understand the pain of the parents. He is trying his best to save some teachers. The District needs to come together. He wants everyone to help the ones that can’t help themselves. As a parent and as a Board Member he would like everyone to be more open minded lets try and work together. Its only $50 and you have done it before and have grown from it.
Krista Pickering said we are parents as well as Board Members and we do put a lot of time and heart and thought into this. I do worry about what is going to happen and how we can make this system a better place and I think that everybody in the public needs to realize that everybody on this Board does put their heart and soul into it.

Mr. Petrucci spoke at Mackrille and Seth Haley was an excellent speaker. She was at Seth Haley and listened to him speak to the fourth and fifth grade students. He was a lifelong resident of West Haven and educated in the West Haven School District. Later on he went to college to become a sports writer and he currently is a 6th grade teacher in the Long Island School District. He spoke to our fourth and fifth graders about how important it is to become involved in your school and community. He wrote a book called Heart of the Hide. She was inspired by him as well as the students. The book is available at Barnes and Noble.com. The book has familiar West Haven landmarks and names. It was a great opportunity.

Mark Palmieri added that he does know Mr. Petrucci very well and he purchased the book at Barnes and Noble and his son is reading it and takes part in Morris Park and Painter Park in the West Haven area where he grew up. It was nice to hear him speak and how nice it was for the children who were enthralled by the whole thing.

He attended the top 20 luncheon at Biagetti’s and was quite impressed with hearing the students and their majors and the universities they were attending. He likes the cords the students enjoy them and it is a nice touch. The most that one student had was 8 and it shows their input and how they dedicated themselves over the past four years.

Jerry Calabritto stated that he doesn’t think there is anybody on this Board who wants to see anybody get laid off.

He agrees with what Mr. Jordan said that there are 52,000 people in this City and a little less than 7,000 students and there was a parent that got up and spoke about next May. He would ask that the people in this room tonight keep that fire in their belly and next year when this Board goes before the City Council for its budget remember what happened this year and let’s not ever let it happen again.

Bob Guthrie said we have come full cycle of people wondering how we got here. The Board of Education forwards a budget request to go before the Board of Finance. The City Council and the Mayor send over 20 eyes looking at important stuff and here we are looking at a budget that we are going to have to set and I have been on the Board for eleven years and without really looking at programs it certainly has set education in West Haven back 15 years. We must live within the means that the City Council has authorized. It is certainly selling the 7,000 students short so parents please stay involved.

George Monahan would like to echo his colleague Mrs. Pickering and state that the majority of the parents on the Board here are parents. The majority of those parents have their children attending the West Haven School System. We don’t get paid one penny to do this job. We don’t want to be paid we do this because we care. As we are charged as
elected officials in this position we have specific individual legal obligations that are put forth by the State and Federal Government. Having said this I want to respond briefly to a couple of the comments made tonight.

Our administration staff is the amount of money that is spent within that section of our school district. It is one of the lowest within our education reference group in the State groups districts throughout the State of Connecticut into groups of like communities. Not only do we spend one of the lowest amounts of money on administration but we also spend one of the lowest amounts of money on administration in the State. So we are not top heavy in West Haven we do not waste money. We have talented people in those positions who perform very well as do our teachers. We do not want to loose one teacher. We have a talented staff here and have turned the corner in West Haven in recent years. The education system has gotten better and this Board clearly wants that to continue to happen. The sad new is that as Mr. Guthrie and the Chairman have indicated we are given a dollar amount from the Mayor. We make a request every year as a couple of people in the audience were aware. We made that request based on what our needs truly were and when the amount of money we get comes back almost six million dollars less than what we asked for and our budget last year was $72,000,000 and to factor in that contractual obligations for salary increases negotiated with the unions and benefit increases due to the cost of health insurance that everyone of you experience in your jobs everyday that results in a net decrease in our budget of around 14%. That is the pain that this Board is faced with. We haven’t even had an opportunity to go to work on specific dollars and cents because up until tonight when the agreement with the City Council that clarified the budget wasn’t passed. Now our finance committee now has to go to work and it is going to be very difficult. We are trying to minimize cuts in programs and to minimize the loss of jobs. Everyone has to pay a price these are difficult times. I hear this was done back in 1992 but that was fourteen years ago. As Mr. Murillo said it benefited the system back then and it would benefit the system again. This is about the children and all of us have to make the decision and sleep with our own conscious on what takes place and we do appreciate your input.

Ray Collins stated that as far a board meetings we usually don’t dialog this much and this is invigorating. Please keep in mind that we are parents. I spent all day chaperoning a field trip to Holiday Hill and I would rather spend eight hours in a Board Meeting any day. We feel your pain. It has been bought up a couple of times a done deal. We received a set dollar from the City Council and we are going to work at this as hard as we can to limit the amount we have to cut. Unfortunately there are going to be cuts because we have to legally create a balance budget with the money we are given. Lets use this as a learning experience and let next fall when it starts over again remember what happened now. As far as Board Meetings we meet every first and third Monday of the month and we actually like public input. You are not offending anybody at all by speaking your mind. We actually use this information as references. We take the advise believe it or not. We have never put a time limit on how long you can speak. City Council has tried to put time limits on how long you can speak we have never done that. You can get up as many times as you want. Thank you all for coming and your input.
Chairman Collins asked for a motion to adjourn
Motion was made by Mark Palmieri
Seconded by Jerry Calabritto
All members in favor
No further discussion
Meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola
Board Clerk