

## **WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### *MINUTES ~ SPECIAL MEETING*

Thursday, August 8, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Waterbury Arts Magnet School, 16 South Elm Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

**PRESENT:** President Stango, Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Sweeney, and Van Stone.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Rodriguez.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor O'Leary (6:24), Chief Academic Officer Anne Marie Cullinan (6:11), Special Advisor to Superintendent Paul Sequeira, Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff Paul Guidone, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

### **SILENT PRAYER**

President Stango called the special meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. with a moment of silence.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Vice President Harvey led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### **ROLL CALL**

CLERK: Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner D'Amelio.

D'AMELIO: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: Her.

CLERK: Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner Morales.

MORALES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez (absent). Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Van Stone.

VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: President Stango.

STANGO: Here. Commissioner Rodriguez did call and let it be known that he could not be here tonight for personal reasons. The next item on the Agenda is the Public Addresses the Board. It's important to know that the public address to the Board tonight is on the Agenda items only.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Van Stone, it was voted unanimously to convene into Executive Session for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? All in favor, opposed. We are going into Executive Session and we will then return to complete the Agenda items. Thank you everyone.

*Present in Executive Session were President Stango, Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Sweeney, and Van Stone. Also present were Mayor O'Leary (arrived at 6:24), Mrs. Cullinan (arrived at 6:11), Dr. Sequeira, Dr. Tucker, and Mr. Guidone.*

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:26 p.m. with no votes taken.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? All in favor, opposed, we are back into our regular order of business.

### **1. COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

**1.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Matthew Calabrese as Elementary School Principal, Chase School, effective immediately.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Yes, Mr. Guidone.

GUIDONE: Thank you. On behalf of the Superintendent I would like to make a few comments regarding the recommendation of Mr. Calabrese. Unfortunately he's unable to be here this evening, he had a prior commitment out of state, but the Superintendent very strongly, after a detailed search, recommends Matt Calabrese. As many of you know, he's a Waterbury native, graduate of Crosby, received his Bachelor's from Quinnipiac, Masters in Elementary of Education from the University of Bridgeport, and a 6<sup>th</sup> year from Sacred Heart. He actually began his teaching career at Walsh in 2004. He transitioned to Wallace and for the last two years has been the Vice Principal at Chase. He's very enthusiastic, well organized, very well respected by his staff and parents and the Superintendent strongly recommends him for the position. As I said, he's away and is aware, obviously, of the action proposed this evening and wanted to express that he's very, very happy with the appointment, very respectful, and will communicate with the Board members upon his return.

STANGO: Thank you Mr. Guidone, on the Superintendent's behalf. Any other discussion? Yes, Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: I'd just to add that I'm really happy about this move. I think Matt has been a great asset to our school community ever since he got hired, he did a great job with the

Accelerated Academy at Wallace, he's had the background at Walsh, I know he's well respected within the community and he's also part of that community, that even adds a little extra to my feelings about him being in that position. I really am enthused about it and as I told some others I was hoping he was going to be the one to replace Ceil because I was afraid losing Ceil might be a problem but we had Matt in the wings and I'm glad that the Superintendent, through that process, agreed with what I had hoped for and assigned Matt to this position. So I wholeheartedly support him.

STANGO: Thank you Commissioner Hayes. Any other discussion? Seeing none – roll call vote.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.1:**

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Sweeney, Van Stone, and President Stango - 8

*(applause)*

STANGO: Mr. Calabrese could not be here today because of a planned trip out of state but we have made arrangements that when he does return he will come before us, to the podium, and address us so he can accept our congratulations and best wishes on this appointment.

**2. SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 2.1 and 2.2, Superintendent's Notification to the Board, as listed:**

- 2.1 Temporary assignments effective 8/12/13:  
Calabrese, Gina - Interim Principal, Walsh School.  
Paolino, Ellen – Interim Principal, Rotella Magnet School.
- 2.2 Appointments:  
Crosby, DeNorris – Transition Administrator (SVP), Walsh School, effective 8/14/13.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. All in favor, opposed, motion carries. Mrs. Calabrese, would you like to come forward?

*(applause)*

CALABRESE: Thank you very much. I'm very, very pleased to have the opportunity to help Walsh School. Walsh School is, and always has been, very dear to my heart and I am looking forward to going there and getting reform started and working with the staff. I will be going there Monday and I want to thank you all for having such confidence in me to allow me to do this and I hope I won't disappoint you. Thank you.

*(applause)*

STANGO: Thank you Mrs. Calabrese for stepping up at this time and we have utmost confidence and wish you a great deal of success in this challenging role.

HAYES: Typically when we have Superintendent's Notification we don't comment on it but I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Calabrese, again, for all these years of service and for being there, willing to be there for us in this time of need. I think she's gonna fill that role just, we couldn't pick anybody better. I think we made an impact at Walsh when she was there, she's made an unbelievable impact at Rotella, and I'm really grateful to her that she's willing to step up and do this for us. So I wanted to personally thank you on behalf of all of us and I think the parents at Walsh are gonna be understanding of why we're thanking you for that also. And just to mention also that Ellen Paolino is gonna be the interim principal at Rotella Magnet Schools, she's gonna do a great job, I think she's probably still gonna be in touch with Gina, I just got a feeling, I don't know if Gina's gonna put that in her rearview mirror, so I think she's gonna be filling all kinds of roles. I'm sure Ellen could do a great job, I'm sure there's gonna be people at Rotella that are concerned about what's gonna happen with losing Ms. Calabrese but we're making it clear that we're doing everything we can to get a permanent position, to get that position filled permanently at Walsh so she can return to Rotella where I'm sure that she'll be missed in the time that she's not there.

GUIDONE: I also want to mention that Ellen is also away this week, as is most of the school district from what I can tell. She would have been here also this evening but she, likewise, is out of state, and we are communicating by, the district is communicating by email to all of the staff of the three buildings affected and sending a letter out to all parents of the three building affected regarding the circumstances you just mentioned.

STANGO: Any other? Mayor O'Leary.

MAYOR: Thank you. I want to echo Commissioner Hayes' comments. It's a courageous move, Gina, for you to go up to that school and leave that beautiful Rotella School that you've made into an award winning school. And from the City of Waterbury's perspective, and especially mine, I really admire people who step up to the plate when needed and this is a challenged situation, we all know that, we don't need to go into any of that, but you know it takes a special person to leave a comfort zone that they're in and then take on a challenge and this is a challenge. And so for myself, and I'm sure for this Board, we want to recognize that, thank you for that, and most importantly we'll be looking to hear from you as to how we're doing and most importantly how we can help you and provide whatever resources are necessary to get that school back on track. We certainly owe that to our students and their parents, our teachers, I'd like to really hear an awful lot from you over the next several months to find out what your assessment is and your evaluation is of Walsh School and most importantly to make sure that we put that school back on track. And I'm very, very proud of you for stepping up the way that you have. Thank you.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:37 p.m.**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Carrie A. Swain, Clerk  
Board of Education