

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

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

PRESENT: President Brown, Commissioners Harvey, Pagano, Rodriguez, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, J. Van Stone, and T. Van Stone.

ABSENT: Commissioner Hernandez.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Kathleen Ouellette, Chief Academic Officer Darren Schwartz, Director of Personnel Robert Brenker, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

1. SILENT PRAYER

President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. with a moment of silence.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

President Brown led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hernandez (absent). Commissioner Pagano.

PAGANO: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Rodriguez.

RODRIGUEZ: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner J. Van Stone.

J. VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner T. Van Stone.

T. VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: President Brown.

BROWN: Present.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file the following communications:

1. Copy of communication dated January 19, 2016 from Civil Service certifying Jamie D'Agostino for the position of Administrative Support Specialist 1.
2. Email communication received January 21, 2016 from Robert Goodrich, R.A.C.C.E., regarding pilot course entitled Teaching Assistant Seminar.
3. Communication received January 28, 2016 from French Speaking Baptist Church of Waterbury regarding Walsh's parking lot.
4. Copy of communication dated December 19, 2015 from Blum, Shapiro & Company, P.C. regarding submission of the City's State and Federal Audit Reports for year ending June 30, 2015.
5. Copy of communication dated December 19, 2015 from Director of Finance Michael J. LeBlanc regarding submission of the city's Comprehensive Annual Finance Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.
6. Email communication dated February 13, 2016 from Bernadine Orintas regarding naming of Waterbury Career Academy's library.
7. Email communication dated February 13, 2016 from Franklin Ray regarding naming of the WCA library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
8. Email communication dated February 13, 2016 from Sabrina Freeney regarding naming the WCA library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
9. Email communication dated February 13, 2016 from Joyce Thomas regarding naming the WCA library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
10. Email communication dated February 14, 2016 from James Monroe, NAACP President, regarding naming the WCA library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
11. Civil Summons received February 17, 2016 regarding Plaintiff Laura D'Averso.

BROWN: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none - all in favor, opposed, motion carries.

5. PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner Jason Van Stone and duly seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:43 p.m.

BROWN: Motion made and seconded. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of five minutes. The Chairman will disallow a speaker from continuing to speak if slanderous or defamatory remarks are made. There will be no responses this evening

to any questions or concerns raised; they will be referred to the Administration for review and response.

Lisa Lessard had the following comments: Good evening, Lisa Lessard. I have a little bit of a cold so hopefully my voice will carry. I am here in accordance to the last workshop when it came to Wendy Owen, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services, herself, who said that they hired a lot of Special Education teachers since the beginning of the year, that being January 2016, in case anybody would like to know. Wendy also said her department is down 5 Special Education teachers still. Anne Sweeney then said “so you are not down 17 supervisors of Special Ed.” I think she was referring to my speech, the meeting before that where I said that the Director of Special Ed. and Pupil Services basically was down 17 teachers in Special Ed., and two supervisors of Special Ed. I said 17 teachers, and to be clear, I said two supervisors of Special Ed. So then I decided to do some homework, so I went on the web site, though I no longer have a computer, but somebody did this for me. Position: Special Education-Home Services, Special Ed. Home Bound Instructors, meaning plural, as usually means plural. Homebound Instructors Special Education Home Services, and Special Education Homebound Instructors, that’s another one, Pre-K Special Education teacher, Student Support Services, Early Childhood, School Library Media Specialty, Student Support Services, Library Media Specialty, School Psychologist-Bilingual, Student Support Services and Psychologists, Special Education teacher, Student Support Services in Special Education, Student Support Services in Speech and Language Pathologists. Now, when you put it in “s” that means plural. So, basically, I just want to go back to the speech that I did prior to. Back in October Wendy Owen herself asked me to please come in front of this podium at the Board of Education and advocate for her so everybody sitting here being Board of Education members would know that she is doing 80% plus under Pupil Services, 20% less under Special Ed. That is what I did in October of 2015. October ending of 2015 I went on the radio WATR with this. Then we had Liz Brown at Mohawk Civics Club who was there when I gave a question about Special Ed., and I said how are you going to help Wendy Owen, Superintendent of Director of Special Education, Pupil Services. I should have said Director, and that I do apologize for, because Anne Marie Cullinan used to call herself Superintendent of Special Ed. Anyway, basically, at that time, Elizabeth Brown came back with, I understand as you know that we are down 17 teachers of Special Ed. There were other people being politicians in the room, and 5 people from Waterbury, CT, also in the room being part of Mohawk Civics Club, and it’s on a tape recorder, so I just wanted to mention that. So, I’m telling you that when people speak at this podium, please listen to what they’re saying. If I said two supervisors of Special Ed., I meant two supervisors of Special Ed., not 17 supervisors of Special Ed. Basically, you need to listen, you need to dig in, and then you need to do research. Wendy Owen, herself asked to go in front of this podium. Could you please listen because she is still doing 80% plus under Pupil Services, and 20% less under Special Ed., which means the Special Ed. population under BDLC, mental health and everybody in this community, are not getting what they need and the services they need to get. I just want to say one more thing, why do we have parents within the school system who do not know who their supervisors or Special Ed. teachers are, because they do not show up to PPTs. Because when you’re there, the principals say I’m sorry because the supervisor is not here at the present time, because they’re wearing too many hats, and they are so short staffed. So, if she is saying what is true, then why are our children under Special Ed. not getting the services they need, and I’m getting phone calls coming in daily because of

this. Believe it or not, how do you know if somebody downtown is lying? They open their mouth and try to speak.....

BROWN: Alright, that's quite enough, that's quite enough – point of order. Thank you.

LESSARD: Point of order to you too, enough is enough. Thank you.

Athena Wagner had the following comments: Good evening. Athena Wagner. I would like to know what became of the things we were going to discuss and bring back as of the February 4th meeting. I believe there were four, Liz Brown, that you spoke of and some of them you instructed the Superintendent to bring some information. I would like to know what the results of that is, as a follow up. Number 2: Principal Brown, I still would like to know why, he, the only African American Principal, is still out on paid leave, plenty of time. How long does it take to do a Face Book post investigation? He's still out. But the two white administrators, no problem. They're back at their school. No problem. I don't understand it. I still would like to know why. Whether you tell me or not, I don't know. I want to know. It doesn't seem fair, as usual. Number 3: And this is a message to the teachers. As I served in, formally, in the capacity of Union Vice President, Union Steward, for a fairly large local, if the teachers feel as though they're being under represented, misrepresented, in any shape or form, I would like to help you out because I feel as though your Union President is misrepresenting you. The representation is not fair. It's who you like, who you hang out with, who you're related to. And then the rules change for who you don't like, and who you're not related to, and he's quite busy, but I would like to see him brought up on misrepresentation. Thank you.

Jimmie Griffin had the following comments: Good evening, members of the board, president of the board. I just want to throw out a follow up on a couple of things. First of all, I did an FOI and I got some information back from the Central office and basically it didn't give me what I asked for. I asked for a copy of the Affirmative Action plan and Contract Appliance plan. That was one thing I asked for. Before I go any further, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Waterbury Center for Economic and Social Justice, and I want to ditto the NAACP's charges that were made in the paper today, and I just want to say I support whatever they set forth. Secondly, Kay Wyrick, I understand, I saw a real nice article in the paper, and Kay was my former boss, and also I think her as a very, very, very dynamic lady. She kept me in line, as a matter of fact. That's why I'm so wild today. But I just wanted to say that I fully support the naming of the Library on behalf of Kay Wyrick. I think that would be a great thing to do, especially in this school year. I'm just a little concerned about, and I think Athena hit on it just now, why has it taken so long for you to do an investigation of something that was in all of the papers. That seems to be sordid. I don't know. I can't figure this out. And why, like you said, and why is it just a black administrator, I mean a black principal, and then there were three other people I understand that are in question. And these people, they never put anything in the paper about their charges, the allegations that were made, or anything. What's going on? I mean there's got to be something going on. It doesn't take that long. I've been around a long time. You know, so I really want to know what's going on. I think the people in the city of Waterbury deserve some answers because there's a veil of secrecy and there's a lack of transparency in the whole personnel process in the Board of Education. You know, I mean you brought in a Personnel Director. I brought that point up too. I don't know who the candidates were, but I understand that there was a Civil Service position that was created for a Personnel Director. I also understand that

there was a person in that position that was a black woman that was doing that job, and I don't know if she was considered or not, but I just can't understand with the record of hiring that you have, how you can pass over her and give the job to somebody else that came out of, I don't know, I'm just confused. I think we've got to be a little more transparent in the Board of Education. And by the way, the Mayor was on the radio the other day, and I'm mighty upset that the Mayor could go on the radio and complain about us coming down to the Board of Education discussing our concerns to this board, as if we were some kind of animals or something. You called the cops, or somebody called the cops on us already because they thought some mob was coming down here. This is the kind of perception that goes on. I can see why everybody is sort of paranoid. I think you guys ought to get your act together, and real quick.

BROWN: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak to the board tonight?

Upon a motion by Commissioner Jason Van Stone, and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:55 p.m.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Ouellette read and distributed the following announcements:

We will be holding a training session for School Governance Council members on Thursday, February 25, from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at the Waterbury Arts Magnet School. A light dinner will be served, and child care provided by WAMS students. The session topics will include 21st Century Learning, Standards, Testing and Chronic Absenteeism. A number of district staff will participate including Mr. Steven Strand, Director of Teaching and Learning, Mrs. Pamela Baim, Mrs. Michelle Baker, Mrs. Noreen Buckley, and Mr. Paul Whyte, Instructional Leadership Directors, Ms. Tara Battistoni, Supervisor of Research & Testing, Mr. John Reed, Supervisor Science /Technology Education, Ms. Janet Frenis, Math Supervisor PreK-12, and Ms. Dena Mortensen, Reading/Language Arts Supervisor PreK-12. The snow date for this event is March 3.

Parents are reminded that the lottery for openings at Maloney and Rotella School closes at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, February 26.

Laure-Lyne Mancini and Karen Sullivan, teachers from Bucks Hill Pre-K at the Annex, applied for and won the Margaret Generali Education grant to increase technology within their classroom. With the grant, the teachers hope to increase the students' understanding of technology, enhance their literacy skills and broaden their students' minds with experiences from around the world.

This Saturday, February 20, the NAACP will be presenting the "Black History Time Machine", revisiting the 60's, 70's and 80's. The guest speaker is Toni Harp, the Mayor of New Haven. The event and luncheon will be held at New Opportunities Auditorium from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

On Monday, February 22, Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty will be presenting the 2nd Annual 5th Congressional District Black History Month Program "Standing on the shoulders of Giants". The event will be held from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Hall.

Three educators are being honored as Waterbury Mayors for the Day. On Wednesday, February 17, at 10:30 a.m., we honored Kennedy High School teacher Jahana Hayes as our African-American Mayor for the Day. On Thursday, February 18, at 10:00 a.m., the city honored Tom Paloka as Kosovar Mayor for the Day. He is an author, teacher and journalist from Kosovo. On Friday, February 26, at 10:00 a.m., the city will honor Maria Taveras as Dominican Mayor for the Day. She is a bilingual teacher at Hopeville Elementary School, and she and her husband operate Via Al Paraiso Restaurant in Waterbury.

Schools will be dismissed early next Wednesday, February 24, for Teacher Collaboration.

7. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

BROWN: Are there any questions for the Superintendent. Being none. Thank you. I just have a brief comment. I want to congratulate the Waterbury Career Academy students and faculty at the honor of attending the Martin Luther King celebration today. The marching band was fantastic and the dancing. I have to say the kids were awesome, so kudos to all our talented students and faculty at the Waterbury Career Academy. I know I was joined by Vice President Rodriguez as well. In terms of some of the issues that came up at the last public hearing, I think the budget is before us tonight and the Special Ed. teachers. We struggle hiring them. It's not because we don't want to hire them, it's a state shortage area and we struggle hiring them, and we work very diligently to try to hire them, and hopefully, if anybody here needs a career, go into Special Education because it really is a shortage area. In terms of our state grant for recruitment for minority teachers I invite the public next week. Staff will be available to present the plan as well as the budget. We are very excited about the initiative and for the first time in Waterbury, we all are together, the Mayor, the Superintendent, the Board, all committed to a diverse staff. We look forward to working with the community in making this a very productive year in terms of our work together. As far as Personnel issues, we were looking at February 25th, our next workshop, and we will have a presentation on our state department grant. Also, in terms of Personnel issues, whenever a complaint is brought forward, we are by state statute obligated to pursue that complaint. There is no Gestapo tactics; there is no controlling, or get you. Nobody has time doing that kind of activity. I hope we can look forward and use our common sense as we move forward as a community in addressing these issues. So, I thank you for your consideration of that and look forward to further dialogue. Thank you.

Moving on to the Consent Calendar. Is there anybody who would like to remove anything from the Consent Calendar? Hearing none, I would like to read the Consent Calendar.

Commissioner Brown proceeded to read the Consent Calendar, items 8.1 through 8.9

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Theriault, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, items 8.1 through 8.9, as listed:

- 8.1 *Committee of the Whole:* Request approval of the revised 2015/16 School Year Calendar.
- 8.2 *Committee on School Personnel:* Request approval of two new positions of Intramural Co-ed Tennis Coordinator/Coach for Walsh and W. Cross Schools (funded by US Tennis Association of NE and the USTA Connecticut Foundations).
- 8.3 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Donna Cullen, MMS, and 12 chaperones to take 87 students to New York, NY on March 16, 2016 to attend a performance of Finding Neverland.
- 8.4 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Tara Doyle, WHS, and five chaperones to take 38 students to New York, NY on March 28, 2016 to visit 911 Tribute Center.
- 8.5 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Heather Pytel, NEMS to take 10 students to New York, NY on March 2, 2016 to attend a performance of Fiddler on the Roof.
- 8.6 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Bob Haxhi, WHS, and four chaperones to take 49 students to Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown, VA from May 22 through May 25, 2016 (see itinerary).
- 8.7 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Cassandra Fann Pierce, KHS, and five chaperones take 20 students to Dallas, TX from March 30 through April 3, 2016 to participate in Habitat for Humanity (previously approved; location and date change).
- 8.8 *Committee on School Facilities & Grounds:* Use of school facilities by school organizations and/or City departments.

GROUP	FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES
M. Valletta	Wilby gym & café: Fri., Feb. 19, 6:00-10:30 pm (Senior Night)
Pension & Benefits H. Boyd	Reed café: Thurs., March 24, 4:00-6:00 pm (MetLife Seminar/WTA)
H. Doolan	Wilby aud.: Fri., March 11 th , 4:00-10:00 pm (school play/"Fiddler on the Roof") (Rehearsals: Tues., Wed., Thurs. 2-5 pm)
M. Vagnini	WAMS recital hall: Apr. 5, 6, 7-6:00-8:30 pm (Rehearsals & performance of M/S Earth Day concert) WAMS recital hall: Apr. 12, 13, 3:15-4:45 pm (rehearsals) and Apr. 14, 6:00-8:00 pm (performance) H/S chorus)
J. Policy	Duggan library: Tuesdays, Feb. 9 th to Apr. 19 th , 2:15-3:30 pm Yearbook club meetings.
Park Department Ed McCann	Kennedy pool: Mon. thru Fri.-April 4 th to April 15 th – 2:30-5:00 pm (lifeguard training)
S. Schulte	WAMS apron stage: Mar. 14 thru Apr. 30 th weekdays Rehearsals and 2 performances of school show)
P. Pouter	Regan all-purpose rm.: Tues., Feb. 23, 5:30-8:30 pm (PTO Zumba)

K. Effie WAMS Lib.: Wed., Mar. 2nd-6:00-9:00 pm (Literacy workshop)

- 8.9 *Committee on School Facilities & Grounds:* Use of school facilities by outside organization and/or waiver requests.

GROUP **FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES**

REQUESTING WAIVERS:

Neighborhood Housing Services	Reed café: Sat., Mar. 12th	5:30-8:00 pm
Eden Brown	(Black History Unity event)	(\$294.)
	Reed café: Thurs., Mar. 17th	4:30-7:00 pm
	(Pizza with Police)	(\$294.)

GROUPS NOT SUBJECT TO FEES OR WAIVER DUE TO TIME OF USE OR PREVIOUS WAIVER:

Post University:	West Side M/S parking lot, Sat., May 7,	8:00 am - 6:30 pm
Patricia Ford	(use of parking lot for cars during their graduation ceremony)	

BROWN: All in favor, opposed, motion carries.

9. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no items removed from the Consent Calendar.

10. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- 10.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Rodriguez and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve an Agreement between the Waterbury Board of Education and United Public Service Employees Union Local 424-Unit 68- Classroom Assistants and Transportation School Assistants Bargaining Unit.**

BROWN: We have with us Attorney Shaw who will go over questions that you may have or describe in detail with regards to the agreement.

ATTORNEY SHAW: Good evening Commissioners, President Brown, and Superintendent. For the record Attorney Tara Shaw, I represented the Board of Education in the negotiation. There are actually two contracts before you; the first one on the agenda is the Classroom Assistants and Transportation Assistants that is Unit 68. I provided you with a summary of changes to the contract which includes general wage increases, changes to the insurance program. If you like I could go through them or I could just answer specific questions that you have.

BROWN: Just give us a summary.

ATTORNEY SHAW: In sum, the Classroom Assistants, just by way of background, there are 64 total employees. In this unit, about 50 of them take insurance. The average annual salary of members of this unit is \$23,000.00 per year. This contract would be a four year agreement. It provides general wage year four. The total cost of that is \$195,000, however, \$20,000.00 of that which can be attributed to guaranteed movement, because new hires are brought in at a lower wage rate and have a guaranteed increase by the time they reach one year. So, based on that, the

cost of it is \$175,000.00. The proposed agreement eliminates the lower health plan, the OPE plan, and essentially moves everyone over into what is now the current high tier plan, the OAP plan. It's not the high deductible plan, but we are significantly increasing the premium cost share, so that employees will pay from 5% to 20%, usually from 5% to 15% for this unit. The estimated savings over the two years is approximately \$120,000.00, so the net increase percentage is about 4 1/2% for this entire contract. There are some other minor changes in here. You should also know that this unit, like the other units that we will discuss next, was de-certified during the course of the prior contract and then they re-organized with another union, so they are affiliated now with a service that was formally CSEA union. Thank you.

BROWN: Any questions for Attorney Shaw. Thank you very much.

T. VAN STONE: I have a question. I 'm just looking quickly. Thank you Madam President. I am not seeing this listed in the budget. Is there somewhere or if Gary can show me where in the budget these contracts are listed?

BROWN: Actually, I would ask Mrs. Biolo. Is she here? Yes, there she is. I believe we will be making adjustments.

BIOLO: Yes, most of these positions are grant funded, so you won't see them in the operating grant, I mean the operating budget.

T. VAN STONE: We have unionized employees that work under grants?

BIOLO: Yes, they are part of this SEIU (UPSEU) Local 424-Unit.

T. VAN STONE: Okay. So none of these positions will appear in the budget?

BIOLO: There may be just a small handful, but not....

T. VAN STONE: Okay. But at some point just show me where they are located.

BIOLO: I will.

T. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President.

BROWN: Any others. Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: I have no question to Attorney Shaw, but I would be remiss if I didn't thank those individuals, especially those that work with our Special Ed. population, for the absolutely phenomenal job that they do. They certainly are kind; they're compassionate, concerned and dedicated. All of our Aides that work on the busses and our schools should be highly complemented for the very difficult job that they do, and they do it well. They make this school system a better system, and especially with our Special Ed. population, handicapped and mentally challenged kids. Those people just have a special knack and there's a special place in heaven for them. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you Commissioner. All in favor, opposed, abstain, motion carries.

10.2 Upon a motion by Commissioner Rodriguez and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve an Agreement between the Waterbury Board of Education and United Public Service Employees Union Local 424-Unit 69- Administrative Support Staff Bargaining Unit.

BROWN: Discussion.

ATTORNEY SHAW: Again, just a quick overview of the financial activity. There are businesses and administrative support staff units. There are school secretaries in this unit and IT tech. that work with the Department of Education. There are 55 total employees, approximately 40 of them take insurance. The average annual salary for members of this unit is \$34,000.00 a year. The contract again would be a 4 year agreement. The first year with a 3% general wage increase, the 2nd year with a 3% general wage increase, the 3rd year with a 2 1/2% general wage increase, and the 4th year with a 2% general wage increase. The total increase amounts to approximately \$205,000.00 over the course of the four years. Again, the lowest tier health claim would be eliminated and employees would migrate over to the top tier plan and by the end of the fourth year they will be paying 20% premium cost share. The majority of the employees are currently paying 5% on the lowest tier plan. Thank you.

BROWN: Any questions for Attorney Shaw? Are they grant positions as well?

ATTORNEY SHAW: These are also grant funded positions and in both contracts, you should know that if grant funding isn't available, the contract specifically provides that the positions can be eliminated.

BROWN: OK. Thank you. All those in favor, opposed, abstain, motion carries. Thank you very much.

10.3 Upon a motion by Commissioner Rodriguez and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, with Commissioner Harvey voting "no", it was voted to approve for the Waterbury Board of Education/Waterbury Public Schools to pursue to participate in the Connecticut Lighthouse Project as jointly offered by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education.

BROWN: Discussion.

STANGO: Thank you Madam President. I guess I'll just recap. A couple of weeks ago, we had members of the Lighthouse project from CAFE who came to us at the workshop and spoke to us about how we may move our board forward in a more professional manner, and they would offer this training to us free of charge because we are members of CAFE. And so, I endorse the fact that we will take the offer that they are offering to us and enter into this Lighthouse training, yet to be determined are the days and the time involved with it. They told us that they are very flexible. They will work with us as far as our schedule and help us get through the process. So, I will be supporting that. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you. Any other comments?

HARVEY: Thank you. I'm glad to hear this. I didn't hear about the part that this was free, so it kind of helps me. But, I must admit that I have some concerns. I did some research. It did appear in the paper regarding Winsted and they are in Receivership. Then, I googled the project to see which districts participated. They mentioned Ansonia, Danbury, Killingly, and New London, etc. I was looking for our urban districts, our large urban districts, Bridgeport, Hartford, Torrington, didn't see that, and Enfield. So, you know I'm still at a quandary on whether or not I'm going to vote to support this, because you know I'm kind of like what we have been dealing with, not lately, but definitely in this district. You know I'm looking for things from CABE that directly affects an urban district, and I've been at odds with CABE on this for a while. So, you know, I would hope when we talk about flexibility, that there would be some flexibility on what information they're going to present to us, particularly in terms of how to deal with the community, how to deal with parents, and how to help our students. So, I'm kind of at a quandary right now as far as whether or not I'm going to support this, because I'm not really sure of how much of this information they're going to apply to an urban district. So, I just wanted to make that public.

J. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President. Since I've been on this board I've also approached CABE, actually in the same area. In the first conference I went to, I could see that we were the only urban district there, and I asked those same questions, and they tried to reach out. They're actually very happy that we have had the attendance we have. I believe we almost had 100% attendance this year. So I have asked them, and I have gotten good answers. They are moving forward and they do have us in consideration. Of course, the proof is in the pudding, and we will see when we go through this. I would also support this and if it's voted on, I will be anxious to deal with it. But I have asked some of those same questions and I like the response that I got back. Thank you.

RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Madam President. I, too, similar to Commissioner Harvey's concern in reference to the urban district, that it's something that sort of stood out to me as well. However, I will tell you what really sold me. It was the fact that they were really stating that they would prepare the Board of Education members in focusing more on student achievement in terms of our agenda and how we move forward. I think that each and everyone one of us would agree that it is probably the most paramount item on our agenda in terms of Board of Education members. Secondly, what definitely sold me was the fact that it was a free service to us. Any opportunity that we can grow leadership skills, professional development skills, and an opportunity to get to know each other better as Board of Education Commissioners, I am in favor of. So, I will be supporting this. Thank you.

BROWN: Any other further discussion?

STANGO: I think that CABE was demonstrating their willingness to work with urban districts when they traveled to Walsh School that night with 3 or 4 of their staff and presented this to us. So, I believe that they are ready to embrace the urban districts as they have been moving to that. I agree with Commissioner Tom Van Stone, in the previous 6 years or 8 years that were questioned. But then as we continue to meet with CABE, continue to go to the conferences, I see many offerings of workshops that the urban districts can use. I think it is very important, too, no matter how the majority of this board votes to adopt it, that we have as close to 100% attendance as we can. Because,

if we're doing this as a board and the board is looking at this somewhat as a retreat, that's not the exact term, but it could fit the needs of that, I think that we need full board participation for it to work. So, again, I will be supporting it. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you. Any further comments?

HARVEY: Another concern I had regarding this, and reading in the paper what Winsted went through, I just see very basic what was presented. I'm just really concerned about that because when, we have issues in this district we really need better, you know, urban district's concerns. So, yes, CAFE has been good lately, but again, I just have some concerns about this in terms of what I can take away from this. So, again, I'm not really sure how I'm going to vote. Probably, I'll vote against it, because I still have that concern, and to spend time in a cumbia environment, I guess. I want something that's going to give me some concrete skills as to what we can do to decrease the achievement gap, what we can do to get cultural, or attune our teachers to cultural things to relate to our students. So, I don't see that in this, so I'll probably be voting no. Thank you.

BROWN: OK.

SWEENEY: Just very briefly, I have attended workshops on Lighthouse project over the last couple of years that CAFE has offered, and also have spoken with some of the participants of the Lighthouse project, and almost without exception, the comments have always been how much more effective they feel after going through Lighthouse training. It is not a cumbia, it is hard work, and anyone who has participated in it will tell you it is very hard work. It takes a deep dive into your district and what things are affecting the education of your students, and how you as a board member, can affect turning that around. It is long overdue here, long overdue here, and I will wholeheartedly support our participation and make sure that I am there for every single session. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you Commissioner. Any other comments? All those in favor, opposed, Commissioner Harvey, abstain, motion carries.

11. COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

11.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Pagano and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the 2016-2017 Department of Education's budget request to the Mayor totaling \$162,769,818.00.

J. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President. I appreciate the work that has been done in Central office and by the Finance Committee, thus far, chipping away roughly one million dollars since we did this a couple of week ago. I don't feel, however, though, we're at a point where I'm comfortable yet with presenting this to the taxpayers, so I'll keep it short and sweet tonight, but I'll be voting against this. Thank you.

T. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President. Again, I also won't go into too much detail. I have asked a number of questions, most of which have been presented to the board in response, not all just yet, and there is still a lot of concern I have, a great deal of it is with the Waterbury Career Academy. They're going into the 4th year, a very important year, the year that will put the final signature on that program. I do have my

concerns that I have stated on the committee, and I have stated here in public, so I also will not be supporting this budget because I still think we do have quite a bit of work to do. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you, Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Thank you. The motion, I don't know if we spelled out that there was a difference between what we voted on last time and what we're voting on now. So, I don't know if someone from the committee wants to point that out.

PAGANO: We're voting on a revised budget. The new number is \$162,769,818.00. I don't have the original number in front of me.

HARVEY: I'm just making sure that the public is aware of that, and to give you some time to look for it. Alright, I'm just going to say that it seems that if we can cut some from what we originally voted for last time, that we could do a little bit more. Have we gotten those numbers yet? Ok. So I will more than likely be voting against this.

SUPERINTENDENT: Ms. Biolo, I just want to make sure I have the correct number, \$7,688,814.00.

PAGANO: That was the original number. What was the original with that number included?

SUPERINTENDENT: Doreen, do you have it handy? I'm going through....

J. VAN STONE: I believe the original proposed budget was \$163,425,000.

BIOLO: Yes, the original budget was \$163,425,000.00. At that time a 7.8 million dollar increase.

BROWN: So, to clarify the budget before us, it has been reduced by a million dollars from the original budget that was voted on a couple of weeks ago. Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: For those of us who weren't at the Finance Committee meeting, could I just have some background on what was reduced, where those reductions are?

SUPERINTENDENT: Yes, Commissioner. The possible reductions were \$655,182.00. \$259,583.00 was transportation savings from regular ed. busses from diesel to propane. Also, there's a diesel savings from regular ed. buses to propane in the amount of \$211,909,00, and then Waterbury Career Academy reductions in positions of grade 12 for \$183,690.00, so the reduction would be from \$7,800,000.00 to \$7,144,818.00 for a 4.3% budget of \$162,769,818.00.

SWEENEY: So, am I to understand then, that a decision has been made on the change in the busses?

BROWN: Correct.

THERIAULT: All I can say is thank God for the Alliance grant. By the way, the Alliance grant is supposed to be used for reform for schools that are in dire need of educational

reform for poor academic performance, so, thank God for that grant. I wouldn't clap Lisa, when you hear what I'm going to say. You're not going to clap. So, now once again, we're going to take 21 million dollars and we're only going to use about 45% of it for reform. If I'm incorrect at any time, Superintendent, or anybody out there, and fellow board members, correct me. So, out of that 21 million dollars, we're going to take about 11.5 million and we're going to put it on the non-reform side. The non-reform side means to supplement our regular budget. So, when that happens, we're going to be out 11.5 million dollars on the reform side to better improve our school system and our educational opportunities for our kids. We're going to reduce it by 55%. Those are the hard cold facts. Do we need to do it? Unfortunately, we need to do it in this climate and this environment because the State Board of Education really should be giving us 21 million dollars for reform only, and maybe another 20 million dollars to increase our ECS, that's Educational Cost Sharing. In addition to that, we probably should get another 44 million dollars to supplement our growing Special Ed. population. So, it's good news, and not so good news. We've been flat funded. It's my estimation, I think in the past 7 or 8 years, flat funded on the ECS, which is the Educational Cost Sharing money from the state. So, as an olive branch, as kind of a slap on the back, they give us this 21 million dollars, and they tell us, with the Governor's blessing, it's OK, you can go pilfer this money, you can pilfer this money away from the kids, away from the reform side, and you can use it to supplement your regular budget. I don't care who approved it, I think it's an atrocity to take this money away from our kids. This is the environment that we live in. If we don't get this money, where are we going to get the 11 million dollars? We would have to get it from the taxpayers, or we're going to have to go to the state and say increase our ECS and I don't know how the taxpayers can shell out any more money. I mean, I have a comfortable living, but you know every year the taxes go up, this goes up, that goes up, food goes up. We try to take care of our kids, we're trying to stretch a dollar every way we can. So, I just want you to be aware of it, and as I often say, caveat which means the buyer beware. And you are the buyers. You're the people, you give us the kids. We provide the educational environment and the support services that are necessary for our kids to grow, and I will never disagree with anyone at the podium with regard to your right to speak. I might disagree with the subject or what you say about the subject, but I'll never disagree with your right to speak, and a right to say what you want to say. So, as we go forward, you got to talk to all the politicians out there and make sure that we get our equal share of our ECS money. Could you run your household budget today the way you were running it 8 years ago? That's the dilemma this board is faced with. It's kind of a catch 22. You're dammed if you do, and dammed if you don't. Thank you very much for your attention.

SWEENEY: There has been an increase in the ECS money. The Alliance district - the ECS increase was pulled aside and held by the state and called a grant. It is not a grant. It is our ECS under the state formula. It is the amount of money we should be getting through the ECS grant. That is our ECS funding. Alliance is not a grant. It is our ECS money that the state has decided we should spend in certain ways, but it is our ECS. So our ECS is under the 113 million dollars because we're not getting the increase that every other district got under the formula. So, the Alliance money is not a grant. It's not money that is ever going to go away, because the Alliance formula goes away if the Alliance plan goes away. If the state decides not to have Alliance districts, that money will become our ECS money and come back to us as our general fund money, but it is ECS money, and it is under the formula. It is in the budget every year. The state budget will show you exactly how they arrive at that total and how that money

is pulled out of the ECS money and called an Alliance grant. It is not a grant, and never has been.

BROWN: Thank you. Just for a point of clarification. I think both Commissioner Theriault and Commissioner Sweeney are correct, and I worked at the Capitol for many, many years. The Alliance grant, if you look at the state statute, is part of our ECS formula, but it was targeted for reform for 30 districts in the State of Connecticut that were underperforming and in need of cash. Commissioner Theriault is absolutely correct. We have been underfunded under that formula for many years, and it is, as he said, a political fight. We do need your support in the public to help us, because we really do need help. This actually is a bare bones budget in terms of what you and I know the district needs. We have been able to put social workers, psychologists, tutors and behavior technicians, and tried to put the support services in our schools, and we need to continue that. I do think this is a great discussion and I do urge the public to help us support funding for education. Thank you.

THERIAULT: As I said two weeks ago, just because Commissioner Sweeney said it, doesn't mean it's necessarily so. Maybe, later on, you'll find out what I'm talking about. But, I respect Commissioner Sweeney, and all the other members of this board for the tremendous research and the job that they do. I don't necessarily have to agree, nor does everyone have to agree with me. If I'm wrong, tell me I'm wrong, If I'm right, just be quiet, I guess or agree with me. But, as we go forward, we all know that we have a tremendous dilemma in terms of the budget, and I thank President Brown for her clarification of the issues, because sometimes you can both be right, or you can both be wrong, but you're talking about the same topic and looking at it from a different perspective. So, sometimes we have to agree to disagree. Thank you.

BROWN: Any other discussion? All those in favor, opposed. Roll call vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #11.1:

YEAS: Commissioners Pagano, Rodriguez, Stango, Sweeney, and
President Brown – 5

NAYS: Commissioners Harvey, Theriault, J. Van Stone, and T. Van Stone – 4

CLERK: Five, four – motion passes.

THERIAULT: At least we don't need an opinion from the Corporation Counsel.

12. 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 12.1 to 12.9, Superintendent's Notification to the Board, as listed:

12.1 Appointments:

Davis, Jacklyn- Leader in Residence, effective immediately.

Russo, Joseph - Athletic Director, WHS, effective 07/01/16.

12.2 Athletic resignations:

McDonald, Ryan- Boys' Tennis Coach, CHS, effective 01/13/16.

- 12.3 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:
Aquavia, Sara - Substitute, Maloney After School Program, effective immediately.
Harrison, Rebecca - Substitute Teacher, ESH Program, Regan School.
Kramarz, Lori - Substitute Administrator, ESH Program, Chase.
Montanez, Jessica Jimenez - Substitute Teacher, ESH Program, Regan School.
Richards, Jean - Recreation Specialist Floater, 2151 Century/SDE After School Program, \$12.00 p/hour.
Zillo, Maria - Substitute Administrator, ESH Program, Chase
- 12.4 Reed Dance Team/Spirit Team After-school Programs appointments, salary according to individual's contract unless otherwise noted, funded by the Reed FRC Grant:
Fisher, Tawana - Paraprofessional, maximum of 14 hours.
Maturo, Jonna - Lead Instructor, maximum of 14 hours.
Racine, Ernie - Supervisor, maximum of 14 hours.
- 12.5 Teacher new hires:
Aquavia, Sara – Maloney Grade 3, MA/1, effective 01/25/16.
Kowalski, Erik – WMS Tech Ed, BA/3, effective 10/20/15.
Malcom, Jacqueline – WHS English, MA/3, effective 12/07/15.
Mottillo, Carissa – Adult Education, MA/2, effective 11/25/16.
- 12.6 Involuntary transfer:
Russo, Joseph- from Health and Physical Education, WCA to Health and Physical Education, WHS, effective 07/01/16.
- 12.7 Adult Education appointments:
Kelley, Thomas M. - Science Instructor, 20 hours p/week @ \$32 p/hour.
- 12.8 Retirements:
Burzler, Donald - Principal, Gilmartin School, effective 06/30/16.
Rinaldi, Mary Lucy - W. Cross Grade 2, effective 06/30/16.
Waldvogel, Karen - Bucks Hill Annex Special Ed Pre-K, effective 06/30/16.
- 12.9 Resignations:
Block, Frances - Reed School Librarian, effective 02/05/16.
Perriello, Robert - Bunker Hill PE, effective 02/04/16.

BROWN: Discussion. All those in favor, opposed, abstain - motion carries.
Unfinished Business of Preceding Meeting Only. Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: I would be more than happy to supply you with the breakdown from the state budget last year that shows the Alliance grant and how that comes out of our ECS money. I will supply that.

BROWN: Number 13 – Other Unfinished, New, and Miscellaneous Business. Vice President Rodriguez.

RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Madam President. I just want to acknowledge Waterbury Career Academy. Earlier today at noon, they had a Black History month celebration. Dr. Padua and the students did a phenomenal job. These drummers, wow, it's very

powerful when you hear these kids play the drums and the trumpets. It was just really wonderful. The poetry was timely. The message was important, a wonderful, wonderful job by those kids. And they also invited, which was really cool, the Wilson Elementary School students to perform the two songs they performed for us at the workshop last week. And I have to tell you, we had such a good time. These kids were phenomenal, they were nervous, but they did a great job. But there was this one particular young boy who was just a little star. He was like waving his hands, pumping. He was like very into the music of the Martin Luther King, I Have a Dream. It brought a big smile to my face, and definitely a star in the making. Lastly, I did speak to Principal Mendoza, and we're going to have a surprise visitor in honor of Black History month. I have invited a friend of mine who's a professional boxer, former WBC World Champion, Chad Dawson. He is going to come and make a surprise visit to the Reed School students and I'm really excited about that and so is he. Thank you for the opportunity and let's continue to enjoy this month.

HARVEY: I want to just take this opportunity, I think Jahana was here but she left, just to express my pride as a former African American Mayor for the Day and also as an African American, just my pride of Jahana Hayes having that honor to share for the rest of the year. I was just so pleased to be there. Is she here? Oh, you're still here Jahana. I know I just said this to you individually, but I just wanted to say that I am so proud of you, and your speech. I hope we have that on tape. I think it was a wonderful speech. You said that you were getting very used to doing it, so I hope we taped that. But I just wanted to express my pride in having you as our Mayor for the Day, and I hope you know that your responsibilities will extend for the rest of the year. I don't know if anyone told you that, but we will expect you at different functions throughout the community to show up as for Mayor for the Day, just so that you know that. I just want to give her another hand.

JAHANA HAYES: Thank you Commissioner Harvey for that, and thank you to the board for all your very public support. This is not easy. I had no idea what I signed up for. I had no idea what I was in for. This is not easy at all. On so many different levels, it is more work than I ever expected, and the only reason that I am still in it is because of my students. The teachers that I work with, the teachers in this district tell me that they're place conscious. They have a sense of pride in where they work. That's the only reason. If this was just about me, I would have bowed out a long time ago, but this is no longer about me. And the level of public scrutiny is, I'm not sure of the word I want to use, I'm inclined to say offensive, but I'm not offended because I believe that God doesn't do anything that you're not prepared for, or not ready for. But, I have always worked 100% for this district. Now I think I'm working 200% for this district on weekends, holidays, etc. I spent more time away from my family, and even more time away from my students on behalf of this district. I believe that's appreciated, but I don't care if it's appreciated or not, because my students appreciate it. They're excited to say that they attend school in the Waterbury Public Schools. You know, in having myself gone through this district and having been educated in this district, and now teach in this district, I have to remind them that their actions should not be dictated by the actions of others. So thank you, thank you. Next week I leave to wrap up this process. I'll be in Washington, DC for four days, which is a very extensive process. Tomorrow is the beginning. It begins with a conference call with the four finalists, and then I fly out. There is a keynote speech, press conference, a media interview, state dinner, a cocktail hour, and a panel interview. So there are about seven different events in the course of

four days in which a decision will be made. So, pray for me. If you think about me, pray for me. I'm going to do my best on behalf of my students and the teachers that I work with in this district. And again, I thank you, thank you for all the support that you have given me in this process, because it was foreign territory for all of us. I never knew what to expect. You know, I'm getting e-mails from Washington and Hartford, and I saying to the Superintendent, what do I do with these? I don't even know what this means. We've never done this before and I wouldn't be able to do it, but for the fact that the board is allowing, you know, just kind of making it up as we go along. So, for that, I appreciate it, but I need for you to understand that this is not easy. I teach. That's what I do. I'm not a legislator. I'm not a policy maker. I'm not a public person. I teach. You know, for the last 13 years I've been accountable to my students and their parents. Now I'm accountable to the country, it feels like. Everything that I say, everything that I think, is publicly scrutinized, which is fine with me because I'm pretty straight forward. It is what it is. I'm very transparent. So, if you think about me, pray for me.

HARVEY: Alright, Jahana, you took up most of my time here. I also just want to mention, Jahana, that you succeeded Attorney Adrian Parkman. That wasn't mentioned yesterday, but I just want to make sure that everyone knows that. OK. Thank you Jahana and good luck.

I sent a memo to Dr. Padua and Nick Albini regarding my absence at the Black History program that the Waterbury Career Academy gave today. I usually am there, just a scheduling issue, and I sent my apologies for not being there because they really put on a fantastic show, and I'm glad to hear that they continue doing that. So, that was just really good to hear. I told them that I promise I will definitely be there next year. One of the things I think that we did not do, or I was reminded of, was that there was a request for a cyber policy for this district, so I don't know if we're looking into that or plan to look into that, but we really need to do so. This was as a result of a headline, Schools Check Face Book. This was January 23rd. I think we should make note that we need to look into that. And lastly, there was something that appeared in the paper with regards to our policy of incident reports and how we do that. I know I was quoted as being very supportive of the new form of relinquishing that information. I just wanted to say that I have no problem with information that is released, with the exception of names of students, etc. in regards to arrests. I think the public needs to know that, but when it involves HIPPA issues, I have an issue with that. So, I just wanted to clarify that, because it said that I wholeheartedly endorsed it, and I don't remember even saying that. I endorse the issue that we have to make these numbers available regarding arrests, but not names of students or anything of that nature, just the numbers. So, I just wanted to make sure that I made that clarification. That's all I have to say.

STANGO: Thank you Madam President. I was just going to comment on the Waterbury Career Academy, also. I think they did an outstanding job, not only did they do it once, but they did it twice, because I was at the early bird version in the morning, and they didn't lose any steam going forward. Thank you.

THERIAULT: I seem to be thanking you a lot tonight, President Brown. I am going to thank you again for getting an opinion from the Corporation Counsel regarding whether or not a vote on our budget could go forward or not. It was decided that it could go on, but ultimately we will have to vote on it. I was also very enamored with the Corporation Counsel's opinion whether or not a vote had to be unanimous to go before the Corporation Counsel for an opinion, and they said no. It doesn't have to be unanimous.

So, some people erroneously recall what the rules and regulations are. So, every once in a while we can all have our challenging moments. So, this happened to be a challenging moment and we were able to clarify it through the Corporation Counsel. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you. Always glad to clarify procedures and policies because sometimes they can be complicated.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney, and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to convene into Executive Session at 7:50 p.m. for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

Present were President Brown, Commissioners Harvey, Pagano, Rodriguez, Stango, Sweeney, J. Van Stone, and T. Van Stone. Also present were Dr. Ouellette, Darren Schwartz, and Robert Brenker.

(Commissioner Theriault recused himself from the Executive Session)

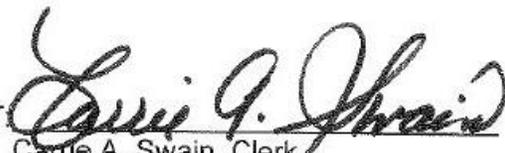
Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney, and duly seconded by Commissioner Jason Van Stone, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 8:40 p.m. with no votes taken.

BROWN: Discussion. All in favor, opposed, abstain. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney, and duly seconded by Commissioner Jason Van Stone, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

ATTEST


Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education

(Minutes transcribed by Virginia Birdsall)