

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on August 5, 2020.



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, June 17, 2020, 5:00 PM
355 Migeon Ave – Remote Meeting**

Member of the public were able to e-mail or dial in their public comment and were able to watch the meeting via Zoom.

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 5:04 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Corey, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Eucalitto, Ms. Todor, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Spino, Ms. Richardson, Ms. Fappiano, Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Fergusson, Mr. Arum, Ms. Klimaszewski, Ms. Schulte, Mr. Barlow, Ms. Herold
3. Approval of Agenda: Ms. Spino made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of the numbers being in correct order, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
4. School/Community Service/Public Participation: None.
5. Information Sharing Session:
 - A. Superintendent's Report: Ms. Lubomski started her report expressing her enthusiasm and pride for all the efforts of everyone throughout the school district. Ms. Fergusson and Ms. Lubomski visited all the elementary schools, participating in the goodbye parades. Many of the things done every year in May and June, the district was able to continue to do this year in virtual form. All week Ally Herold has been creating the graduation video in preparation for our virtual graduation at the Pleasant Valley Drive-In on July 1st. There are 187 students graduating THS this year. We will have a parade and a diploma celebration/distribution prior to the Virtual Graduation video presentation. Ms. Fergusson stated that summer programs will be offered July 6th through July 30th for those students who are eligible. In grades 2-5, we are offering summer support/academic support. There will also be programs for our bilingual and English language learners. The district is participating in the Governor's Summer Challenge. The State is offering students and families free access to the digital State Library collection. Summer school will be offered for TMS and THS students as well. Ms. Klimaszeski reported that our sped numbers haven't changed much since our last meeting. Special education

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summer school will be for virtual this year, July 6-July 30th as well.

- B. Education Specifications: Ms. Lubomski and Kaestle Boos (KBA) reviewed the City Council, Board of Finance and Planning and Zoning presentations which occurred over the last month. Ms. Lubomski addressed the decaying building and the urgency of moving forward. KBA reviewed the three options presented to the state. The preferred option being a new structure. A cost analysis of the proposed options was presented: Total to Maintain and Repair - \$112.3 million, Additions & Renovations - \$170.3 million and New Construction - \$159.8 million at a 62.5% reimbursement rate or a taxpayers cost of \$74.8 million. The site plan, overall building plan and anticipated schedule were presented. The board's approval is necessary before submitting the application to the state. Ms. Spino asked what would happen to softball and baseball fields during construction. Ms. Lubomski said that accommodations would have to be made, the TMS fields being a possibility. Although the referendum is the first step, exploring other field options will occur over the next year. Mr. Maniccia asked was the current parking area considered as a site as opposed behind the school? The response was that it wouldn't fit. Ms. Fappiano asked if the plans were flexible and subject to change. KBA said that once the referendum passes, then the process includes work on more specific details. Plans would be adapted as necessary. Ms. Richardson wanted more information on the "outdoor amphitheater" labeling which was covering a ball field. KBA clarified that the label did not impact the ball field. There simply was no other place to put the label on the graphic. The ball field space remained fully intact.
- C. COVID-19 Update: Ms. Lubomski reported that districts are still waiting for guidance from Governor and Commissioner on plans for returning to school in the fall. District task forces will begin to be established next week. The state guidance may not be available until July 1st or after. Ms. Cappabianca and the other chairs have asked for minimum public health standards. The Commissioner will be on a call with the board chairs tomorrow at 11:00. The board chair stressed that districts need time to plan. Ms. Lubomski shared that the Mayor has reached out regarding the billing of COVID-19 related expenses. Ms. Fappiano would like another parent survey to be sent out once there is more guidance. Ms. Lubomski confirmed that was the plan.

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- D. Monthly Financials: Mr. Arum reported that the district is showing a surplus of \$742,200 dollars as of June 1st.
- E. Management Agreement with EdAdvance: Discussed the benefits of continuing this service which would total: \$31,469.70, an increase of \$886.90.
- F. School Meals Program: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)/Lunch Pricing: The two options are K-8 free lunch or K-12 free lunch. The board could vote on this issue every year. This year, it would be highly beneficial for those who have suffered a financial hardship during the pandemic. Mr. Eucalitto would approve of this program for one year, but would like to revisit it again next year. Mr. Arum suggested implementing a K-8 program, because high school students do not buy as many lunches, but they purchase more snacks. However, he also stated that he has no problem moving toward a district wide model as well. Ms. Richardson thinks that high school should be included, because these students often come from the same families. Mr. Maniccia asked if it will cost us money going with the CEP program. Mr. Arum said no. The district would have a greater reimbursement, since more students would participate.
- G. Time and Attendance System: The low bidder was Frontline. Frontline works with at least 35 districts in Connecticut. They have offered free demos. Kelly Services is using Frontline, and they have an automatic connect and it works very nicely. Ms. Schulte is in support of the Frontline option. The integration will be exceptionally easy, since the district uses some of their systems already.
- H. Eversource Project- Torrington High School gym lighting, and Torrington gym lighting and cafeteria lighting. The total cost would be \$74,450. The district would save on energy costs over time.
- I. THS Renovation Project- The Board received approval from City Council on Monday, June 15th to move forward with the Grade 7-12 New Construction project that will include the Central Office Administration. The only change will be the referendum date of November 3rd rather than September 22nd. KBA is establishing a timeline for the various types of mandated meetings and deadlines. Then, a Building Committee and a Marketing Committee will be established. Ms. Cappabianca will ask for volunteers for the Marketing Committee. It is her hope that the public will participate in the public forums and zoom calls.
- J. Board of Education Meeting Minutes: The chair wanted to clear up the confusion on the minutes. A decision was made

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to have the minutes reflect items that the board took action on, so what was discussed doesn't need to be included unless the board took action on it. Ms. Hoehne said it was a cost issue to having everything transcribed. She suggested if someone wanted to have something specific in the minutes, then a board member could ask to have it in the minutes and it will be included. Ms. Fappiano stated that it was hard to get a gist of what was happening in the past minutes as a new board member or a new parent. The comments for the board of the meeting should be identified by who says what. Mr. Eucalitto expressed an interest in recording and posting the minutes. Ms. Richardson stated that the subcommittee minutes need to be consistent. If we recorded our meetings, then this would not be a problem. Mr. Corey agreed with the idea to record the meetings and record on paper the actionable items. This item was moved to the Policy committee for August.

- K. 2020/2021 School Calendar Proposal – When the calendar was originally presented, it was pre COVID-19. The new proposal includes 3 professional development days in August. The last day would be June 11th and the students first day back would be September 1st. It was proposed that digital learning occur on snow days as a continuation of the existing digital learning that was necessary in the current year. The board discussed the pros and cons. Mr. Eucalitto wanted to know how this would benefit the students. Mr. Maniccia agreed with Mr. Eucalitto, because distance learning has been inequitable. Mrs. Richardson brought up questions about who is providing the internet service for homes that do not have it. Mr. Corey couldn't support distance learning post the pandemic, because he does not want to create additional inequity for our families with a low-income status. Ms. Todor suggested voting on the calendar and separating out the distance learning on snow days, since more clarification was needed. Ms. Richardson wanted the addition of “subject to change if there are no snow days” for the last day of school. The item was tabled until the next meeting.
6. Committee Reports:
- A. Budget Committee – Mr. Maniccia reported that everything was discussed, and they are continuing to work on budget.
 - B. Facilities & Technology Committee – Ms. Spino reported that they discussed in depth COVID-19, and the updated information we would like to see is coming. Mr. Barlow continues to update the maintenance list and projects that were completed in all the schools.

7. Action Items:

- A. Monthly Financials – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the monthly financials, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- B. Management Agreement with EdAdvance – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the management agreement with EdAdvance, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
- C. School Meals: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) – Mr. Corey made a motion to approve the CEP grade K-12, second by Ms. Spino. All in favor.
- D. Possible Action Regarding School Meals Pricing - removed.
- E. Time and Attendance Contract – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the contract to Frontline, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
- F. Eversource Project – Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to approve the Eversource contract for the Torrington High School gym lighting, and Torrington gym lighting and cafeteria lighting for a cost of \$74,450, second by Mr. Kissko. Ms. Spino abstained. Everyone else in favor. Contract approved.
- G. Education Specifications – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Education Specifications for the new TMS, THS and Central Office Administration Building as presented on June 17, 2020, second by Mr. Maniccia. Discussion: Ms. Fappiano is voting for this because there has been enough thought put into it, but she wants to see the details ironed out sooner than later. Ms. Richardson is voting against it, because she approves of the project but she is uncomfortable that some of the details have not been worked out. Ms. Spino echoed what Ms. Fappiano stated. Ms. Eucalitto stated that the Building Committee will be dealing with these issues on a daily basis, adapting and changing the numerous things that come up. Ms. Todor stated that she went through this process with Torrington and the Education Specifications are the first step that happens and then the details get worked out later. She is comfortable moving them forward. Ms. Cappabianca stated that the state has a backwards process and that things will get worked out as the process continues. These are just the big picture concepts.
The board voted on the motion: Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Hoehne, Ms. Fappiano, Mr. Corey, Ms. Todor, Mr. Eucalitto, Ms. Spino all voting for. Ms. Richardson opposed. Motion carries.

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- H. 2020/2021 School Calendar Proposal – tabled.
- I. Approval of BOE Regular Meeting Minutes – May 27, 2020
Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the board minutes, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- J. Approval of BOE Special Meeting Minutes – June 8, 2020
Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the BOE special meeting minutes, second by Ms. Spino. All in favor.
- K. Receive Subcommittee Minutes: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the subcommittee meeting minutes, second by Mr. Corey. All in favor.
 - 1. Budget Committee – May 13, 2020
 - 2. Special Budget Committee – May 20, 2020
 - 3. Facilities & Technology Committee – May 13, 2020
- L. Consent Agenda: Appointments, Retirements & Resignations: Ms. Todor made a motion to approve the consent agenda, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
- 8. Comments for the Good of the Order: (The following comments are paraphrased.)
John Kissko – “I wanted to give the usual appreciation for the Central Office. Patricia Strawson is retiring, and it will be a loss.”
Jessica Richardson – “Mrs. Strawson is retiring, and other teachers are retiring as well that have been a huge impact on our district. Thank you to everyone who has worked so hard.”
Nikki Fappiano – “I attended a goodbye parade at Torrington School with my kids and I cried. I am so appreciative of the teachers and administration; it feels a little unfinished. Thank you everyone.”
Armand Maniccia – “Thank you to everyone and thank you to Ali for all the work you are doing for the graduating class. Congratulations to all the retirees.”
Molly Spino – “Happy last day of school!”
Cathy Todor – “Happy summer!”
Ellen Hoehne – “I echo what everyone else said.”
Fiona Cappabianca, Chair – “Thank you to everyone in buildings and Central Office. It has been rough few months.”
- 9. Items for Upcoming Agenda
 - A. Monthly Financials
 - B. Calendar 2020/2021
 - C. Copiers
 - D. Changes Happening at TMS - School Improvement Item
 - E. Reopening Torrington schools
 - F. COVID-19 update
- 10. Future Meetings Will be Determined on an as Needed Basis
- 11. Adjournment: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.