

**TOWN OF EAST HAVEN, CT
EAST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
35 WHEELBARROW LANE, EAST HAVEN, CT 06513
TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2011
7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT: MR. PALLADINO, MRS. DEPALMA, MR. DENUZZO,
MRS. MAISANO, MR. POMPARO, MR. SCALESSE
and MRS. VINEYARD**

**ABSENT: MR. HENNESSEY and MRS. KLUTH
MRS. ACQUARULO**

**ALSO PRESENT: MR. ANTHONY SERIO, SUPERINTENDENT
MRS. ERICA FORTI, ASST. SUPERINTENDENT
MR. JOSEPH TRAVAGLINO, DIRECTOR OF
BLDGS. & GROUNDS
MR. JASON LATHROP, BUSINESS ADMIN.
MRS. PATRICIA LEWIS, FINANCE MANAGER
MR. JOSEPH FERRAILOLO, ADULT ED.
FACILITATOR**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Nick Palladino called the Special Board of Education meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. in the Boardroom at the High School.

The boy scouts from Troop 408 led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- **Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 14, 2011**

Mr. Palladino asked for a motion to approve the regular Board meeting minutes of June 14, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mrs. DePalma.

There was no discussion, abstentions or objections to the motion. Motion carries.

3. SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Presentation from Troop 408/East Haven Re: ImpactLives

Mr. Serio introduced Rich Sandmann and his boys' scout troop members from Troop 408. Flyers were passed out and a short presentation was given on what ImpactLives was and what the boys' scouts were looking to do. This was a service learner project that positively benefits the recipient and the volunteer. This project was to stop world starvation. A pouch of the food that would be given was passed around the Board. Each packet contained 6 meals. There were 36 pouches for only \$32.50 and it was enough to feed a starving child for 6 months. The Board asked questions and discussion about what the Troop was looking for was determined. **They would need the foyer on the afternoon of August 9th in the late afternoon and early evening. Mr. Serio would check into the availability and be sure there were security guards on duty.**

Mr. Pompano made a motion to provide the venue for them and it was seconded by Mrs. Vineyard.

There was no further discussion, abstentions or objections. Motion carries.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Ratification of Appointments

- **District Technology Integration Teacher**

Mr. Serio requested the Board ratify the appointment of Taylor Auger as the new district technology integration teacher.

Motion made by Mrs. Vineyard and seconded by Mrs. DePalma.

Any discussion on the motion?

This position would be paid out of grant monies.

There were no abstentions or objections to the motion.
Motion carries.

- **ELL Teacher @ EHHS**

Mr. Serio requested the Board ratify the appointment of Michael Hickey as an ELL teacher at the high school.

Motion made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mrs. Maisano.

Any discussion on the motion? There was none.

There were no abstentions or objections to the motion.
Motion carries.

- **.4 Art Teacher (Recall)**

Mr. Serio requested the Board ratify the appointment of Melissa Minickene as a .4 art teacher who was a recall from two years ago.

Motion made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mrs. Vineyard.

Any discussion on the motion? There was none.

There were no abstentions or objections to the motion. Motion carries.

4.2 Request for Approval of the Payment of Invoices:

- **Dated June 29 & 30, 2011 for Fiscal Year 2010-11 in the Amount of \$976,519.79 (Previously Sent to Board Members)**

Mr. Serio requested the Board approve the payment of invoices for June 29 & 30, 2011 for fiscal year 2010-11 in the amount of \$976,519.79.

Motion was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mrs. Maisano.

Any discussion on the motion?

All American – This was the cleaning contract for the Middle School and Momauguin. There were two addresses. One was 6 Cutter Outlook, East Haven and the other was 39 Peck Street in New Haven. Why would these be different? He stated this was investigated last year and it was an East Haven address. This was investigated by the Town, not the Board of Education. **Mr. Lathrop would look into this.** Mrs. Maisano suggested the Board table this. Mr. Lathrop explained that the checks had already gone out.

Mrs. Maisano stated that she felt they did not have enough time to review the bills because she was out of town.

Shipman & Goodwin – The entire bill was not provided in the packet. Mrs. Maisano was confused as to why they were discussing employee retirement benefits to such a degree. She was not aware of a lot of people retiring except for last year. **The entire bill would be provided to the Board.**

Mrs. Maisano stated they were still in the negative for unencumbered balances. She thought they transferred money over. **They were showing a negative in Kostin & Ruffkess and tuition non-public. They had transferred the funds with Mrs. Acquarulo’s account and now it was in the negative? She thought he said this account was in the positive. Mr. Lathrop stated he would be glad to provide that information.**

George Ellis - This was an invoice for repairs done at the Middle School and the Town had been sitting on the bill since February. Mr. Lathrop had been trying to get a response from the Town to pick up the balance and they did not pay it. Mr. Palladino stated the Town did offer to take care of that bill for us. He would like this looked into and find out what happened there. He knew it was their idea.

Mr. Serio explained that Mr. Mauro had called him that afternoon and he said, “You pay for it.” Mr. Palladino thought that at the minimum they should split the bill. They asked us to do something and said they would pay for it and renege on paying for it. **With the Board’s permission, he would call tomorrow to see if they could negotiate at the minimum a 50% on that.**

Kostin & Ruffkess – They had currently paid them \$5,000 for the audit. This was the progress payment. **On Tuesday, July 12th, Kostin & Ruffkess would come to give them a report.** There was some discussion on the bottom line and

where they were at the end of this year. They could not encumber additional funds from a cost standpoint. Mr. Lathrop stated he had a forecast for them tonight if they wanted to look at it.

Mr. Palladino asked if they had finished the year in the black and Mr. Lathrop responded they had not finished the year yet because they had one more payroll and the balance of purchase orders to close. Mr. Lathrop informed the Board that there was a two-week delay for processing the payroll. Mrs. Maisano stated it should be according to the payroll check; they were accruing to the date of the check. If it was July, it was July. If it was June, it was June. Mr. Lathrop stated if she would like him to do that, it made them look better in June.

Mr. DeNuzzo asked if the forecast was black or red. Mr. Lathrop responded that again there was one more payroll to process and then they were around \$38-39,000 in the black right now. Mr. Palladino asked if they had stayed within their budget and Mr. Lathrop responded right. Were there any other transfers than what they transferred? Mr. Lathrop answered there were no other transfers; they had only done that for the facilities-based account.

Mrs. Maisano asked about the other funds like the Little Jackets and the rentals. Mr. Lathrop stated they had done the reports through May -- the reconciled balances; not the final reports.

Mrs. Maisano asked if there were any transfers from rental. Mr. Lathrop reported that the rentals were showing a positive result for May. Mrs. Maisano questioned whether there were any big expenditures coming up for rentals. Mr. Lathrop stated not to his knowledge. Mrs. Maisano said he would know that, right? Mr. Lathrop said if we need to; but not at this time. Mrs. DePalma stated they had a positive result of operations with a positive balance of

\$100K. Mr. Lathrop explained if they needed to transfer funds out of that they could. Mrs. Maisano wanted to know why would they do that? Mr. Lathrop stated if there was an operational deficit, they could use funds from our other fund. Mrs. Maisano asked what would happen if they were negative. Mr. Lathrop responded we could transfer money from different funds like the rental or Little Jackets or Medicaid. Mrs. Maisano asked if they had ever done that before. Mr. Lathrop said it had been done in the past; they did not do it last year. It was a normal course of action based upon performance. Mrs. Maisano did not believe they could do a budget transfer from rental, Medicaid or any other fund. Those were separate funds. She wanted to state right now, and state it again firmly, if she found out there were transfers from Medicaid or this, she was holding him absolutely responsible for that. It's unacceptable. They would not do that to cover their bottom line; she would not do that. She was not suggesting that he was doing that. They needed to make sure they were in the black without making any transfers anywhere.

Mr. Palladino stated that Mr. Lathrop would have better figures for them at the next meeting. There was discussion on payrolls and when they needed to be accrued for in June or July for hourly employees. Mrs. Maisano would like to have this checked into by Mr. Centofanti. Mr. Palladino said they could find out what the preferred method was to do that.

There were no other questions, abstentions or objections to the motion. Motion carries.

4.3 Action on Cafeteria Bid for Outsourcing

Mr. Serio stated he would like to ask the Board to take action on the cafeteria bid for outsourcing as presented by Whitson's their only bidder. This had been tabled several times and they needed to get a contract to the State for our food service in July

and he would like to have the Board take action on this this evening.

Motion to accept the bid for outsourcing the cafeteria to Whitson's was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mr. Scalesse.

Any discussion on the motion?

Mrs. DePalma spoke about the wording in the contract where it stated this needed to be done by July 1, 2011. This was located on Page 15 of the Cafeteria Contract. Mrs. DePalma read the part where this was stated and believed that this had to be done before this point.

Mr. Serio explained they had an agreement with the bargaining unit representative. They came to an agreement when they had the last meeting that we were going to extend the agreement based upon the fact that if it was outsourced, people that were eligible for benefits for retirement would still be eligible for that and the outsourcing effective date would not take place until the summer was over and the employees were being asked to come back to work. Mr. Lathrop stated this was to protect the employees' benefits to make sure the interpretation was clear. Mr. Lathrop explained that this was to cover them if they outsourced any other time specifically past July 1st and if they chose to outsource as of July 1st, they did not have to honor those sections of the contract. Mrs. DePalma stated that it was not clearly stated.

There was discussion regarding how Attorney Dolan had been at the last meeting and this was the fourth time they were discussing it. Mr. Lathrop thought that the clause was pretty clear that if they outsourced subsequent to 7/1, they would not have to honor the terms of the agreement meaning from the outsourcing clause, all Board employees have to be retained and protect those who might retire and protect the three people who had lifetime benefits. It was pretty straightforward.

Mr. Pompano explained how Mr. Hennessey had brought this up and started the wheels in motion. A lot of things had taken place. He, himself, had been on the fence. He spoke about the savings over the years and how from a financial standpoint, it looked very good. He stated how Central Office, union leadership, and the attorneys came up with the language through each step of the process. When Attorney Dolan was here last week, he brought some things to light as Whitson's now has 31 districts that they service over the last three years. Attorney Dolan is a Board member in Hamden and they had all of the same concerns there. Those people are not only gainfully employed, they are union members and Whitson's employees. He thought it did it justice to take its course of action that it did. It empowers the employees we have here to continue with the language and benefits they so greatly enjoyed over here.

Mr. DeNuzzo stated he had listened to some compassionate comments from several cafeteria workers and Board members and he had listened to Jason, our financial director, inform us of the savings to the Board if we outsource. He also listened to Attorney Dolan, who is a member of the Hamden Board of Education, discuss how Hamden had outsourced several years ago with Whitson's. They had positive effects on that district and their cafeteria employees, including the fact that they had unionized.

Mr. DeNuzzo said he had listened to some of our cafeteria workers complain about Whitson's food products, and how after several years serving this district, there had been no serious complaints from cafeteria workers, or more importantly from the parents of the children, and now allegations suddenly came to light when talking about outsourcing. Many compliments directed towards Whitson's had been made concerning the quality and quantity and variety of food served to our students here in East Haven. Numerous grievances had been filed by our cafeteria workers for various reasons; some had merit, but for the most part, many were frivolous in nature.

These grievances end up at Central Office and involve the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent's input, up to and including legal advice to resolve them which costs them money. There were additional costs for legal advice and representation during contract negotiations.

Mr. DeNuzzo had listened to Whitson's presentations and was impressed with what they had done for this district and what they will continue to do. Cafeteria workers have expressed their fears regarding losing their jobs if we outsource and he believed that Whitson's respects our employees for what they do and they have no intention of replacing anyone as long as they are doing their job.

Mr. DeNuzzo stated he had listened to Jason's numbers on the cost to operate the cafeteria. In the past 5 years alone, it's cost this district \$160,000 in workers' compensation claims, while at the same time it's cost this district approximately \$400,000 in medical insurance. That's half a million dollars that could be put to better use.

Mr. DeNuzzo reported that Tom Thompson, the Town Finance Director, reported in his May 5th letter to this Board, that the Town's annual expense for Worker's Comp was \$967,884, while its medical insurance was a staggering cost of close to \$9 million. By outsourcing the cafeteria, the district stands to save approximately \$125,000 in medical and Worker's Comp claims. If we outsource, the annual savings would allow us to put the money to use for things such as hiring 2 to 3 more teachers and additional ELL teachers; purchase more computers and Smart Boards; band equipment and uniforms; and sports equipment and supplies. Also anything else the Superintendent deems to be necessary with this type of savings.

Mr. DeNuzzo stated they had received emails from cafeteria workers and comments at these meetings, that we should not consider outsourcing because it's all about the children. That seems to be the theme of their concerns and he agreed with

them that it is all about the children. He further believed that the money we save if we outsource will help to insure that we provide the best education to the children of East Haven because it is all about the children. For these reasons, he stated he was in favor of outsourcing our cafeteria operations to Whitson's.

Mrs. Maisano stated she took great offense to what he had just said. She thought Mr. DeNuzzo treated these women, who had been employees of this Town, poorly right now. They have given their heart and souls to these children endlessly to provide warm meals for our children -- my children. She stated he could not forget the fact that they are people with jobs and lives and responsibilities. With regards to the money, she did not support it and obviously she was not comfortable with the savings and she did not believe this Board has discussed what they would do with a savings of \$125,000. It's not even \$110,000. To suggest we provide teachers and Smart Boards was really a little bit premature; they had never discussed it at all. She sympathized with these women. It was hard to get a job. If they go with Whitson's, there was no convincing them that they would be there forever. They were forcing these people to make a decision as of June 30 which will affect them for the rest of their lives.

Mrs. DePalma stated they were relying on numbers we're not sure in all honesty. She thought they were doing a disservice to Christine Maisano; they had not done due diligence. Mrs. DePalma supported what Mrs. Maisano says as a Board member. She did not hear that there was a good outcome and the interpretation was what she read here. She thought they should wait to hear what Kostin & Ruffkess had to say to them when they came and explained the process and audit and then they could go somewhere. No one was willing to allow that to happen. They should ask the people again if they were in agreement with this; if that was the case, then they would know that. They would have to make a new contract with Whitson's and she thought they would get the cost of that; the cost of

everything that you say we're saving. Mrs. DePalma added that the numbers they inflated with Worker's Comp were a little biased and that's just not the case. She could not rely on those numbers. She said the one Board member who brought this up cannot be here again. She hoped everything was well with him; it made her wonder.

Mr. DeNuzzo stated he did not want to get into a debate. These figures he raised tonight, he did not invent. They came from Jason and he was relying on Jason's figures. He respected her opinion and hoped she respected his opinions and wanted to do whatever was right for the kids. He stated that democracy rules whatever the vote was. They were all elected officials. Mr. Palladino stated that having a meeting was for an exchange of ideas.

Mrs. Maisano stated she respected everyone's opinions and she respected the ladies' opinions. She stated she respected everyone and she knows they work hard and she appreciated that.

Mr. Pompano added he thought we did our due diligence to protect their jobs. With outsourcing, they would still have a job and he thought that we did our due diligence about that.

Mr. DeNuzzo asked Mrs. Vineyard to speak about her committee concerning outsourcing. Mrs. Vineyard stated they had met three times. Mrs. Maisano asked what was discussed at all three meetings. Mrs. Vineyard stated the bid. There was some disagreement as to whether it was the bid that was actually supposed to be discussed.

Mr. Palladino thought that in fairness to the employees and in fairness to Central Office that has to make everything work, at this point he thought they should vote and however it comes out, it comes out. Mrs. DePalma felt they were just opening themselves up. Mr. Palladino stated that their business manager was telling them no. Our business manager who's involved in

writing these contracts has told them this is not a problem. If, in fact, it does become a problem and it comes back, our business manager will have a lot of explaining to do to everyone involved. If the vote goes yes, and it is illegal, it will be overturned.

Mrs. Maisano stated she agreed with that. The big problem was what Jason's title was. It was business manager. Mrs. Maisano stated her question was she did not believe a business manager without a legal degree was entitled to or can interpret a contract. Her suggestion was they present it to Mike Dolan. Mr. Serio stated he was at their last meeting. Mrs. Maisano stated she did not remember what it was. Mrs. DePalma stated he was not clear and it's not easy to understand when he speaks. She did not mean any disrespect to him. This did not come up.

Mr. DeNuzzo stated as Chair for the Legal Subcommittee, he did not believe they should get more of a legal opinion on this. He spoke to Mike Dolan today and told him it was on the agenda tonight and asked if he thought there was a problem with us voting on it and he said no for the record.

Mr. Palladino stated there was a motion on the floor and the only fair thing to do was a roll call vote.

Mr. DeNuzzo	-	yes
Mrs. DePalma	-	no
Mrs. Maisano	-	no
Mr. Pompano	-	yes
Mr. Scalesse	-	yes
Mrs. Vineyard	-	yes

Vote was four (4) in favor with two (2) opposed. Motion carries.

4.4 Possible Approval of the Following Bid Awards:

- **Custodial Service @ EHHS to Service Mgmt. Group**
- **Facility Management @ EHHS to AFB Management**
- **Custodial Service @ EH Academy/Deer Run, JMMS & Momauguin Schools to All American**

Mr. Serio explained that these were done through the Town and they were bringing them to the Board to ratify.

Motion was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mrs. Vineyard.

Any discussion on the motion?

Mrs. Maisano stated she had a very difficult time approving something the night of and get the information on a Friday and digest it and vote on it on a Tuesday. Mrs. DePalma stated especially when the information had been out there. Mr. Serio stated it was the same information and it was in their packets two weeks ago and they had tabled it. The bidders had not changed. There was further discussion on the timeframe that these needed to be done in. It was determined that the Town had awarded the bids but it would have been reversed if it had been done two weeks ago. Mr. Palladino stated the Town awarded the bids and allowed the bids without our approval. Mr. Lathrop stated that the Town awards all of the bids. There was a question then of why they were being asked to approve them then. Mr. Lathrop explained that they were on before. Mrs. DePalma stated that the Town was not the Board of Education. The bids were opened on June 9th.

There was further discussion on this issue and how they were expected to go with the lowest responsible bidder. Mr. Travaglino explained that they could go with a higher bidder within \$10,000 if they were unsure of someone who had bid

lower and they had not done business with that company before. It was a common sense thing.

There was discussion on Murphy Security and how they would be using them this year. Mr. Palladino stated he had been told that Murphy would not be here during the summer and they would be working only from September to June. Mrs. DePalma thought they had agreed to a contract. **Mr. Serio stated he would bring the information to them on Tuesday. If there was something not to their liking, they could discuss it. Mrs. DePalma would like the information prior to Friday at 3 p.m.**

Mr. Palladino stated that apparently all of these contracts have been issued, signed and are working as we speak. Again their approval or disapproval meant nothing. **Mr. Palladino asked the Board to allow him to go to the Town and ask questions and then he would send out an email. He would make an appointment with the Town tomorrow and maybe the following day talk to Tom Thompson about how they felt they were left out of the loop on this. He would make sure that this gets on the agenda for Tuesday as well. He had some serious questions because by Charter, the Board was responsible for every dime that comes in and out of this organization. How in good conscience could they be held responsible for bids they had no say in? They, the Town, approved and awarded the bids, and we did not vote to approve it and he had a problem with that. He would make an appointment with Town Hall.**

There was no action on this item. Mr. Lathrop felt that this should have been an informational item and not an action item. Mr. Serio stated they always brought these bids every year. Mr. Palladino stated that this was not on Mr. Lathrop. The Town needed to give him an explanation.

Mr. Pompano withdrew his motion.

4.5 Approve the Use of Condensed Curriculum International (CCI) for Courses for Adult Education and EHHS

Mr. Ferraiolo gave a short presentation and explanation for the use of the CCI (Condensed Curriculum International) courses for Adult Education and the EHHS. He did not normally bring enrichment programs to them. This was a possible venue for high school credit. He was working right now with the State on this. We provide the space and collect between 20-35% of the revenue. Their goal was to try two classes this September. They had the leased space for this. This was at no cost to the Board whatsoever and it was open to anybody; you did not have to be an Adult Education student. They were looking into whether any grants were available for students who did not have the money to go into this. There was discussion on the possibility of the offering of scholarships. The only class that they could not offer currently was the CNA class, in Connecticut anyways. The State had certain mandates.

Mr. Pompano made a motion to approve and it was seconded by Mrs. Vineyard.

There was no further discussion, abstentions or opposition. Motion carries.

Mrs. Maisano left the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

4.6 Approval of the Following Individual Contracts

Mr. Serio requested the Board approve the following individual contracts as discussed in Executive Session:

- **Executive Secretary to the Superintendent**

Motion was made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mrs. Vineyard to approve the contract of Janice Ball,

Executive Secretary to the Superintendent in Central Office as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

- **Athletic Aide @ EHHS**

Motion was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mrs. Vineyard to approve the contract of Jason Pierce, Athletic Aide, as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

- **Athletic Trainer @ EHHS**

Motion was made by to approve the contract of Marc Aceto, Athletic Trainer, as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

- **Athletic Director @ EHHS**

Motion was made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mrs. Vineyard to approve the contract of Michael Marone, Athletic Director, as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

- **Help Desk Attendant**

Motion was made by Mrs. Vineyard and seconded by Mrs. DePalma to approve the contract of Carmen Ruotolo, Help Desk Attendant, as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

- **Level III Consultant Services (Compu-U-Wise)**

Motion was made by Mrs. Vineyard and seconded by Mr. Scalesse to approve the contract of Jim Pompano. Level III Consultant Services, as discussed in Executive Session.

There was no discussion on the motion. There were no objections and there was one (1) abstention which was Mr. Pompano to the motion. Motion carries.

4.7 Approval to Dispose of Obsolete Furniture @ Hays School

Mr. Serio requested the Board approve the disposal of the obsolete furniture at Hays School. He believed the Board gives them permission to dispose of older furniture rather than store it. They would write a letter to the Town telling them that they have our permission to dispose of this equipment.

There was discussion on the type of furniture they were looking to dispose of and whether other facilities such as the Catholic Schools could use it. Mr. Travaglino stated they did not have that authority. The Town has to let us know. This furniture was used three years ago and the principals had gone through it and taken what they could use. Mr. Palladino stated the Town would make the recommendation. Mr. Pompano stated they could only say that the Town could dispose of it but not how

they could do it. **Mr. Palladino could discuss this with the Town as well when he went to discuss the other items he needed to discuss with them.**

Motion was made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mr. Pompano.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION – JULY 12, 2011 – 35 WHEELBARROW LANE, EAST HAVEN, CT 06513

6. ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mr. Pompano.

There was no discussion, objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MR. NICHOLAS PALLADINO, CHAIRPERSON
EAST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**