



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by Mrs. Yesenia Rivera, President. The meeting was held via Zoom.

Present: Mrs. Y. Rivera, President; Mr. M. Wilcox, Vice-President; Dr. E. Joyner, Secretary; Mr. D. Goldson, Dr. T. Jackson- McArthur, Mr. L. Conaway, Mayor J. Elicker

Absent: Mr. N. Rivera, L. Arouna

Dr. Jackson-McArthur led members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Rivera reminded members to speak only when recognized and to observe appropriate civility and decorum so that we can have a good discussion tonight.

Superintendent’s Report

Discussion and Anticipated Action: 2020-21 Budget Mitigation Proposals

Dr. Tracey commented that her report is the discussion and anticipated action on the 2020-21 Budget mitigation proposals. Mr. Penn will present.

Mr. Penn began his presentation by pointing out that one of the key elements coming out of the last Board meeting was the reprioritization of the proposed items and leaning towards prioritizing those items that had the least amount of impact on the classroom, Tier 1 and deprioritizing the ones that did, Tier 2. The total mitigation we’re looking for is \$10.5 million and he explained. The total mitigation will leave us with \$5.6 million going into the next budget year which is in two days. Mr. Penn explained both tiers in detail.

Mr. Penn recapped; Tier 1 brings us to \$5.7 million or just above the needed \$5.6 million and Tier 2 is worth just over \$3.64 million, for a grand total of \$9.3 million.

In answer to a question by Mr. Goldson regarding public participation, Mrs. Rivera answered this is a special meeting and at our last regular meeting, which was a five hour meeting, we had public participation. Tonight we wanted to focus on the items on the agenda for this special meeting. Mr. Goldson commented that we have a lot of items on here very important to the public and we are not having any public comment in that process, but it is your decision.

Mr. Goldson asked if they could separate some of the items in Tier 1, and explained why. He asked Mr. Penn about a proposal that was discussed with the teacher’s union, and second, since Tier 2 items are so far out and mainly for discussion at this point, why are we adding potential things such as closing schools. He went on at length. Dr. Tracey commented that we can certainly talk about that in a future discussion. Dr. Tracey also agreed that we can have a discussion around the Tier 2 items.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Mrs. Rivera asked what specific items he would like separated. Mr. Goldson remarked he would like questions around these administrative staff positions, transportation, PreK, shrinking through attrition as well as the part-time positions.

Mayor Elicker commented that he thinks it would be important if there is a proposal to not approve one of these to understand what Mr. Goldson or any other committee member may be offering as an alternative. His fear is that we will go through these items one by one and potentially reject some of them without having an alternative or understanding what the full picture of the impact is. Mayor Elicker commented that one option is to go through these items now and potentially reject some of them without having an alternative or understanding what the full picture of the impact is. Mrs. Rivera commented that is what she was going to suggest.

Mr. Goldson explained his concerns and gave his opinions on this. Dr. Joyner joined the discussion and commented that we have to make some hard decisions because time is getting short. Mr. Goldson added that he is clear where we have to go and if we have to let part-timers and assistant teachers go instead of hiring an assistant superintendent so be it. Mayor Elicker noted that it is important for the Board to approve a balanced budget that does not create an additional problem for the future.

Mr. Conaway, for clarification asked if we are just considering Tier I items or all of the items. Mrs. Rivera answered Tier 1 items as a starting point. Dr. Tracey noted that these items have been on the budget since Mr. Penn started.

Dr. Joyner, for clarification, wanted to know if we have to get to this \$5 million figure and he noted that time is drawing near to make some hard decisions. Mr. Goldson commented that he was clear on that last week when he voted against hiring the assistant superintendent. He explained in detail.

Mayor Elicker remarked that he appreciates Mr. Goldson's point, but those decisions were already made by the Board and we have a budget in front of us that we need to approve. It is very important that this Board approves a balanced budget and does not create an additional problem for this future year. Mayor Elicker continued to explain.

Mr. Goldson remarked that he was trying to be considerate of the time and he could make a counterproposal to each of these proposals. What he is saying is that he is not going to vote for some of these proposals.

Dr. Tracey pointed out that these budget items have been on since Mr. Penn came aboard. Except for Tier 1 recommendation 5% reduction, before and afterschool PreK, and the last one, the 8th floor.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Mr. Goldson continued to express his opinions and concerns and continued this discussion at length. Mr. Goldson asked that we start voting on this separately.

Dr. Joyner commented that he would like to vote on all eight of the items together because we have had time to digest them and we are trying to get to the final \$5.6 million. Unfortunately, when you do this sort of thing you have to look at the whole problem. Dr. Joyner stated to deal with all eight items separately without a plan to replace the amount of money that we would save, would not be productive. He explained further.

President Rivera agreed with Dr. Joyner. We have discussed these at length and she is not going to separate them out.

266-20

Mr. Goldson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Conaway, to vote on Tier I items separately. Mr. Conaway seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

Mr. Goldson commented in consideration of the fact that we, as Board members and the public did not get notice that we were going to vote on these items today at a special meeting, and in consideration of the fact that there is not an opportunity for people to send in public comment, he asked Board members to vote on each item separately so that the public that are watching are clear on what we are voting on and the reasons we are voting on a particular item or against it.

Mayor Elicker for clarification, we are not voting on any of the items just whether or not we are going to decide voting on them separately.

267-20

Vote Tier 1 Items Separately

On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Mr. Conaway, to vote on Tier 1 items separately, it was voted by roll call, with 3 ayes by Mr. Goldson, Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Mr. Conaway and 4 nays by Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner, Mayor Elicker, Mrs. Rivera. The motion did not pass.

268-20

Mayor Elicker made a motion to vote all 8 Tier 1 items together. Dr. Joyner seconded.

Mr. Goldson itemized the list of items he was voting on and the ones he was not. He gave a full explanation on each of those items.

Please go to NHPS.net, public meetings for full explanation.

269-20

Approve Tier 1 Mitigation Items

On the motion by Mayor Elicker, seconded by Dr. Joyner, it was unanimously voted, by roll call, to vote on all Tier 1 budget mitigation items with 4 ayes by Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner, Mayor Elicker, Mrs. Rivera and 3 nays by Mr. Goldson, Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Mr. Conaway.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Dr. Joyner asked a question of Dr. Tracey and Mr. Penn. If going forward, they see other alternatives that might help us with some of the ones that some Board members objected to, would anything prevent you from exercising changes based on that? Dr. Tracey commented that these are done with a lot of consideration in place and listening to arguments and several Board arguments and counter arguments, etc., and we continue to explore other ways. In regards to the early childhood piece, Mr. Penn sent an explanation of that to all Board members.

Dr. Joyner remarked he wanted to give her an opportunity to clarify because he knows she is committed to the district and in making sure its needs are met.

Mr. Goldson commented we voted on priorities, it's clear that the majority of this Board is not here to protect the classroom. Talking about eliminating PreK before and afterschool childcare is not fair to our students and he explained at length.

Dr. Tracey countered that if you read the memo that Mr. Penn sent, it explains what is meant and clarifies that item in detail. Dr. Tracey read the memo into the record.

Dr. Jackson pointed out that parents go to work from 7 to 11 or from 9 to 5, so having their kids there at 8:30 is inconvenient for preschool. Also, Mr. Penn said something that she has said for a very long time and which was part of the discussion around magnet school PreK seats, we are not retaining these students so that is another reason why we should give more seats to our New Haven students.

Dr. Tracey started to explain. Mr. Goldson called a point of order. He pointed out to President Rivera, that her mike was muted and that he had his hand raised and he was not identified. She called on Dr. Tracey who did not have her hand raised.

Mayor Elicker called a point of order and said we have voted on and approved this item and he thinks it is appropriate to move on to the next item on the agenda. Mr. Goldson remarked he's glad you think it's appropriate. Mayor Elicker remarked he just wanted to make sure that committee members are respectful in the way that we speak to each other. Everyone agreed.

Mr. Goldson commented that he wanted to make sure what was voted on and continued to explain. Dr. Joyner pointed out we voted on the item and we have to move on. This is a deliberative body and when we make a vote it is binding on the whole Board and no individual has a right to disrupt that particular principle.

Mr. Rivera agreed and commented to Mr. Goldson we are going to move on to Finance & Operations.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Finance & Operations Committee Report

Mr. Wilcox reported that the committee met today and present for approval one agreement, two contracts and two change orders. Dr. Joyner seconded.

Mr. Goldson made a motion to amend Mr. Wilcox' motion on the First Student agreement and asked if the \$1.5 million could be changed to \$3.5 million and credit back to the New Haven Public School System. Dr. Jackson-McArthur seconded for explanation and clarity. She asked Mr. Goldson to explain his motion.

Mr. Goldson began his explanation from 3½ months ago and he explained in detail. Mr. Goldson noted that they have not transported one kid in 3½ months. The Governor's order suggested that we renegotiate the contract so that we could see what the actual expenses are and we do not have in front of us one piece of paper that identifies that \$7.3 million. Mr. Goldson commented that this is inappropriate to vote on when First Student has not provided any services for 3½ months.

President Rivera asked Mr. Alexiades and/or Mr. Penn to explain the Governor's order.

Mr. Alexiades remarked the short answer is, because we are ordered to do so under an executive order that is the law of the State of CT and also based on additional guidance received from the Department of Education and the discussions that he participated in with Mr. Penn and Mr. Pinto were in accordance with the law. We are directed to pay the actual expenses and the team received information from First Student to back that up.

Mr. Alexiades deferred to Mr. Penn on the numbers and invited Mr. Pinto, subject to recognition of the Chair, to supplement his comments.

Mr. Pinto remarked that the guidance that was issued on April 14th, two weeks after the original executive order, explained what was in and what was out. The initial field trips and other information remained in First Student's initial draft. He explained in detail.

Mr. Alexiades pointed out that they had a disagreement with First Student with respect to the scope of the executive order and he explained in detail.

Mr. Goldson initiated further discussion on this topic. Mr. Pinto, Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner, Mr. Penn and Atty. Alexiades also took part in this discussion.

Dr. Tracey said that she feels her team has done their job in negotiating and going back and forth with different companies being informed from the State Department for the conclusion that they have come to. She is confident that they have done what they needed to do. She also said she feels we have belabored this point. Dr. Tracey noted that she has seen some



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

disturbing facebook comments that she did not care for and she is going to stand up for her team.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur commented that she is not saying anything against Dr. Tracey’s team but she does not trust the bus company. She continued to explain. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked questions of Mr. Penn. Mr. Goldson rejoined the discussion.

Dr. Joyner added that we have a right to ask all the questions that were mentioned and we have the right to have information that will help us make good decisions, but if we go too far we are trying to manage the district and it does not show confidence in the people we voted for to do that. He continued to explain.

Dr. Joyner concluded by saying, he is satisfied that we are following an executive order from the government and that Dr. Tracey and her team have squeezed out as much money as they can from this company. He is hoping that they would do this for every contract, large or small. He continued to explain.

Dr. Tracey commented, for the record, that it takes a lot to upset her; she is not upset and her feelings are not hurt. She has been on this earth for 65 years and she hasn’t seen anything that would cause her to be upset and she has had seven children. She is a calm, cool and collected person.

A discussion ensued at length.

Mr. Goldson wanted to know why we are paying depreciation of the buses. Mr. Pinto remarked depreciation is a real and actual cost to the company. Mr. Goldson questioned Mr. Pinto’s explanation and continued the conversation. Mr. Penn explained to Mr. Goldson that in this case depreciation is a function of age not usage.

**270-20
Call the Question**

On the motion by Dr. Joyner, seconded by Mayor Elicker, it was unanimously voted by roll call with 5 ayes and 2 nays by Mr. Goldson and Mr. Conaway, to call the question presented by Mr. Goldson, “Why are we paying depreciation of the buses.”

**271-20
Amend Motion to
Change First Student
Contract**

On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Dr. Jackson-McArthur, it was voted, by roll call, to amend the motion to change the amount on the First Student contract from \$1.5 million to \$3.5 million, with 4 nays and 3 ayes by Mr. Goldson, Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Mr. Conaway. Motion not amended.

Mr. Goldson initiated another discussion regarding the First Student contract. Mr. Pinto commented that this contract was approved by the Board last year and because it is a multi-year contract it is subject to the approval of the Board of Alders and the Mayor’s signature. He continued to explain.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Atty. Alexiades explained further. Mr. Goldson continued this discussion regarding the signatures that are and are not on this contract. Mr. Pinto, Atty. Alexiades, Dr. Joyner also joined this discussion.

Mr. Goldson asked if we could separate this item out of the report and vote on it separately.

Mrs. Rivera remarked that she is not going to separate this item out.

On the motion by Mr. Wilcox, seconded by Dr. Joyner, it was unanimously voted, by roll call, with 2 nays by Mr. Goldson and Dr. Jackson-McArthur, to approve the following FINANCE & OPERATIONS-RELATED ITEMS:

AGREEMENTS

**272-20
Amendment #1,
First Student**

Amendment #1 to Agreement with First Student to reduce invoices for the remainder of the 2020 fiscal year by an aggregate amount of \$1,507,967.99.

CONTRACTS

**273-20
Renew Contract
Go To
Commercial Cleaning Service**

Renew Contract with Go To Commercial Cleaning Services, LLC for facilities and maintenance, custodial management and energy management and related services from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in an amount not to exceed \$1,496,481.70.

**274-20
Renew Contract
Eco-Urban
Pioneers, LLC**

Renew Contract with Eco-Urban Pioneers, LLC for custodial services to assist with the upkeep of NHPS buildings including part-time labor force and supervision from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in an amount not to exceed \$4,879,045.95.

CHANGE ORDERS

**275-20
Change Order #1,
Nuovo Venture, LLC**

Change Order #1 to RFP70195061 with Nuovo Venture, LLC to increase funding of \$50,000 by \$35,000 to \$85,000 for additional supplies related to COVID 19.

**276-20
Change Order #1,
Precision Food Service**

Change Order #1 to Contract # 21645-1-2 with Precision Food Service, to increase funding of \$140,000 by \$20,000 to \$160,000 for On-Call oven and steam repairs.

**277-20
Adjournment**

On the motion by Mayor Elicker, seconded by Mrs. Rivera, it was unanimously voted, by roll call, to adjourn at 7:05 p.m.



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – June 29, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Ginger McHugh

BOE Recording Secretary

“A video of this meeting is available on the NHPS website, NHPS.net, Public Meetings”