

Monday, October 1, 2018

MINUTES OF THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held October 1, 2018, at Classical Studies Magnet Academy, 240 Linwood Avenue, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Committee members present were Chair Chris Taylor and Hernan Illingworth. Board members Joseph Sokolovic and Maria Pereira were present. Committee member John Weldon arrived subsequently as noted.

Mr. Taylor moved to table approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 4, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The next item was a tree planting. Assistant Superintendent Christiana Otuwa said students at Fairchild Wheeler wanted to plant a tree near the school. She said the school principal was in favor of the project and the facilities department was okay with it.

Mr. Taylor moved *“to approve the tree planting at Fairchild Wheeler.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the playground at Multicultural Magnet.

In response to a question, Alan Wallack said the city funded the renovation of the High Horizons playground, which has been completed. He said there was a fundraising effort going on for Multicultural with the target of \$6,800. Dr. Luis

Planas, principal of the school, said the young man who initiated the effort was only able to raise \$1,495. He said the work would not be a new playground, but basically to fix what is there.

In response to a question, Dr. Planas said the playground was not current usable.

Mr. Wallack said John Ricci, city public facilities director, volunteered to take care of it.

Mr. Illingworth and Mr. Taylor thanked Mr. Ricci, who was present.

Mr. Ricci said he would try to get it done in thirty days.

Mr. Wallack said this had been going on since last June.

The next item was on the garden program. Mr. Taylor said this was the item raised by Bob Halstead that Mr. Walker referred to the committee.

Mr. Taylor said Mr. Halstead got a copy of the agenda and a phone call from him this morning. He noted no one was present to speak on the matter.

Mr. Illingworth moved to table the matter. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on a solution to problems at Classical Studies.

Ms. Pereira said this was her referral of a longstanding item. She said Classical Studies had been advocating for a consolidated location. She said the swing space on the UB

campus was built as an elementary school that can house up to 750 students. She said Bridgeport Military Academy(BMA) is currently in the swing space, but under utilizes the space due to its low enrollment.

In response to a question, Dr. Otuwa said the BMA enrollment was about 367.

Ms. Pereira said the original Harding High, which was built for high school students, is now vacant and will be so for at least two years. She said the suggestion is to move the BMA students to Harding, where they would have gymnasiums, along with a track and a field.

Ms. Pereira said she wanted to consolidate Classical Studies in the swing space, which would better utilize the facility. She said she believed an analysis is needed. She noted the wing in Harding High mostly used for science classes could accommodate the BMA students. She said the Connecticut Avenue facility, which is outrageously expensive, could be moved into Harding as well. The board would be out from under the St. Peter's and Connecticut Avenue leases.

Ms. Pereira suggested Mr. Wallack do a cost analysis of repurposing Harding compared to the lease savings.

Mr. Taylor said he was not prepared to take that action. He said Mr. Illingworth was welcome to put the concept forward.

Mr. Illingworth said he thought the agenda item had to do with problems at the current Classical Studies. Ms. Pereira said that was not her referral.

Mr. Taylor said he met with PAC president Dasha Spell of Classical Studies and listened to her ideas

Dasha Spell was recognized. She said she made it very clear to the board at its meeting that if the school is going to continue to be in its two current buildings some basic maintenance work was needed such as screens on windows and portable air-conditioning units.

Mr. Illingworth said he struggled with the idea that the district and the community felt Harding was not feasible for students any longer.

Mr. Weldon arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Taylor asked if Mr. Illingworth wished to make a motion. Ms. Pereira said she wanted to comment. Mr. Taylor said he was going to reserve comments for right now.

Ms. Pereira suggested the matter be handled in the Students & Families Committee.

Mr. Illingworth said he did not believe a motion was necessary to do that.

Mr. Illingworth moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod