

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

BOARD OF EDUCATION

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL AQUACULTURE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

EDUCATION CENTER

60 ST. STEPHENS ROAD, BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

DECEMBER 9, 2019

PRESENT:

JOSEPH GANIM, Mayor

JESSICA MARTINEZ, Chair

HERNAN ILLINGWORTH, Vice Chair

BOBBI BROWN, Secretary

SYBIL ALLEN

JOSEPH SOKOLOVIC

JOSEPH LOMBARD

CHRIS TAYLOR

ALBERT BENEJAN

JOHN WELDON

MICHAEL J. TESTANI, Acting Superintendent

Transcribed by: John McLeod

1 (The meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m.)

2 MAYOR GANIM: Not only do we have a quorum, it looks like we
3 have a full – a full complement of members.

4 All right. If there is no – it seems like looking around – I've just
5 kind of looked and kind of informally gotten nods from everyone that
6 people seem to be ready to go. It seems like we have not only a quorum,
7 but a full complement of board members; all the technical people are
8 here; the microphones seem to be working. Members of the public and
9 press seem to be here. We have two members – two members of the
10 City Council; the city clerk's here; one of the members of the city
11 attorney's office is here; members of the public are here. Let me just say
12 good evening.

13 And there's a printed agenda, which is rather short, but just let me
14 formally say we are opening now the first – or the annual organizational
15 meeting of the Board of Education, being held this day, Monday,
16 December 9th, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. It is approximately 6:00 p.m. We are
17 at the Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture, Science and Technology
18 Education Center.

19 And there's a brief agenda; there's four items on that. And I'm
20 going to take them in the order that they are – and I'll just read all four
21 and then we'll go to the first one. They are election of officers; then they
22 are, number two is approval of 2018 organizational meeting minutes;
23 three is approval of calendar year 2020 schedule for regular public
24 meetings; and four is to adjourn.

25 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Mr. Mayor. I'm sorry – I'm sorry to interrupt, I

1 would like to make a motion to table something because it's going to
2 require some discussion –

3 MAYOR GANIM: All right. Well, I'm going to proceed with the
4 election of officers, and we'll go from there. Okay.

5 MR. WELDON: Mr. Mayor, if I may.

6 MAYOR GANIM: Yeah.

7 MR. WELDON: I've had the privilege of serving this board as
8 chairman for the last two years. In that time I'm proud to say that I've
9 had the ability to lead the board and move it forward in many ways.

10 I've served in this role at a time when the board faced operational
11 challenges, many of which have been addressed and corrected under my
12 leadership. By way of example, a program of yearly workshops covering
13 areas such as the Freedom of Information Act, Robert's Rules of Order,
14 and development of board goals and objectives has been instituted. This
15 has allowed the board to develop its own professional ways not seen in
16 years.

17 Additionally, last year, for the first time in ten or fifteen years, the
18 board conducted a performance review of its superintendent as required
19 by law, which was reflective of the honest, individual views of each
20 board member.

21 Also, previously strained relationships with our collective
22 bargaining units, the teachers' and administrators' unions, have been
23 repaired to the point where we've now started to work together with them
24 in a more collaborative fashion.

25 In addition, earlier this year, board bylaws which hindered effective

1 board operation were completely overhauled, resulting in board policy
2 and procedure being so clearly defined that parties who formerly
3 manipulated them were no longer able to do so, and ultimately became
4 so frustrated that they threw up their hands and left, which opened the
5 door for other people who truly care about serving Bridgeport Public
6 Schools to take their place. And that's a good thing.

7 Last, as a result of these initiatives, our meetings no longer last
8 three to four hours. Instead, over the past year our work has been made
9 to become focused to the point where we're able to hear from the public,
10 receive committee and staff reports, and transact our actionable
11 business efficiently in no more than ninety minutes. This allows the
12 public we serve to be able to observe the workings of the board in a
13 reasonable time frame that allows them to do so without sacrificing other
14 areas of their lives.

15 My more vocal detractors have accused me of being a maniacal,
16 power-hungry, gavel-wielding dictator. In reality, I've simply been a
17 strong chairman serving at a time when the board needed one to help
18 put it on a path of stability and progress, and I feel that I've achieved
19 that as evidenced by the examples I've just given.

20 Having said all of this, I'd like to make a nomination of our current
21 Vice Chair Jessica Martinez to serve as our chair for the upcoming year.
22 Jessica has expressed her interest in this role, and given the successes
23 I've just described as having had in it, I'd like her to have the opportunity
24 to shine her light and make her own imprint on the workings of this
25 board.

1 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I second.

2 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. There's a nomination on the floor for
3 Jessica Martinez, and I think I heard a second.

4 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yes, your Honor.

5 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. And let the record reflect the second was
6 made. And just so it's clear – I know I didn't take attendance, but unless
7 someone has something to say, it appears that every board member is
8 here. We can go verbally take it, but I don't know that that's necessary.

9 MS. BROWN: Mr. Mayor.

10 MAYOR GANIM: Yes.

11 MS. BROWN: Is this open for us to be able to say something?

12 MAYOR GANIM: Yeah, what we're doing is – let me just go
13 through it. We're taking nominations and seconds. So there's been a
14 nomination of Jessica Martinez and a second. Now I'm going to ask if
15 there's any nominations. We're going to go through the nominating
16 process of the chairman or the president of the board first, and then the
17 next.

18 If you'd like to second the nomination or nominate someone else,
19 you know, anybody can have the floor and I'll recognize anybody for a
20 nomination.

21 MS. BROWN: I don't have a nomination, but just a clarification, I
22 guess, if I can put it.

23 MAYOR GANIM: Sure, on the voting?

24 MS. BROWN: Oh, not on voting.

25 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. So we're going to vote – what we're going

1 to do is we're going to go through, do the nominations and the votes,
2 and if there's any questions on that I'll try to clarify. And then I'm either
3 going to stay or any other points of matter people want to bring up can
4 be brought up at that time. But right now we're doing the nomination of
5 the officers.

6 Do you want to make a nomination?

7 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Yes.

8 MAYOR GANIM: Okay.

9 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I've been a member of this board for two years;
10 I've got a 97 percent attendance rate. I've pushed – my committees
11 have pushed through almost every issue that's come before this board
12 for action. Since the last two years of chair we have lost a lot.

13 To my left, where Ms. Brown and Ms. Benejan – Mr. Benejan – are
14 sitting, there used to be students there. They used to be able to give
15 reports to their school. Through those super new bylaws those students
16 are now gone.

17 I am very reluctant – I have nothing against Ms. Martinez, I think
18 she's a wonderful person. I think she's definitely for the children, but as
19 a paid charter school lobbyist, I think it's very dangerous to have a paid
20 charter school lobbyist as the chairperson of Bridgeport Board of
21 Education, a public school. Because when you advocate for charter
22 school dollars, you take only from one pool of tax dollars, and that's the
23 tax dollars.

24 Every dollar that goes to a charter school is one dollar less that
25 goes to Bridgeport Public Schools, and for that reason I'm going to

1 nominate myself, who can move this board forward. Thank you.

2 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. There's a nomination on the floor. Is there
3 a second?

4 MS. BROWN: I'll second it.

5 MR. SOKOLOVIC; Thank you, Ms. Brown.

6 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. Motion – so we have two – two
7 nominations for president. Is there any other nominations?

8 MR. BENEJAN: Mr. Mayor.

9 MAYOR GANIM: Yes.

10 MR. BENEJAN: As a new board member, I nominate Jessica
11 Martinez to be the chair of the Board of Education.

12 MAYOR GANIM: Okay, you could – you can do that, I Guess, but
13 she's already nominated, it's already been seconded. So it's in, you can
14 support it, but what I'm going to do, is there any nominations? I'd open
15 – keep the floor open for any other names, anybody else that someone
16 would like to nominate for president or chairperson of the board.

17 Sybil.

18 MS. ALLEN: Mr. Mayor, I ask that the nominations be closed as
19 this point.

20 MAYOR GANIM: There's a motion to close nominations.

21 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I'll second it.

22 MR. TAYLOR: Second.

23 MAYOR GANIM: Seconded. Unless there's an objection – all in
24 favor say aye.

25 ("Ayes" were sounded.)

1 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. So nominations are closed; there's two
2 names. So this is where I might need – I know the board here, at least in
3 the past, has used paper ballots. Is that the tradition and the rules? And
4 if that is, if you could help us work through that. You have two – I don't
5 know if there's names. You can instruct us on how you'd like to do it with
6 paper ballots.

7 MS. ALLEN: I move that we use paper ballots.

8 MAYOR GANIM: Thank you, Sybil.

9 MR. TAYLOR: Second.

10 MAYOR GANIM: I'll vote – we'll vote on that, if you have to. All in
11 favor?

12 (“Ayes” were sounded.)

13 MAYOR GANIM: Any opposed? She's passing out – the record will
14 reflect, they're passing out preprinted paper ballots. When I say
15 preprinted, I'm assuming – I haven't seen them yet – but there's no
16 names on them. And there's spaces where you can write the name of
17 the person for chair – the position of chair. And I'd ask all the members
18 to fill that out, and to – what is your tradition, pass them – you come
19 back and collect them? Okay.

20 You can just – yeah, why don't you do that

21 MR. WELDON: Read it out.

22 MAYOR GANIM: Yeah, read – you can just read them in any order
23 the names that are there. We can all kind of add them up and count, and
24 I'll make – I'll announce the results officially here and we'll go from
25 there.

1 MS. VALLE-SHASTRI: So we have Joseph Lombard voted for
2 Jessica Martinez. Sybil Allen: Jessica Martinez. Chris Taylor: Jessica
3 Martinez. Hernan Illingworth: Jessica Martinez. Jessica Martinez for
4 Jessica Martinez. John Weldon for Jessica Martinez. Albert Benejan for
5 Jessica Martinez. Joseph Sokolovic for Joseph Sokolovic. And Bobbi
6 Brown for Joseph Sokolovic.

7 MAYOR GANIM: Okay. Well, I think that would be 7 to 2. So
8 unless someone reads it differently, Jessica, you are – you have been
9 voted in with a majority vote present as chairperson. Congratulations to
10 you.

11 And I think rather – rather than me pass over the microphone and
12 the gavel, I'm going to step out, let you move closer to the center and
13 take charge. You have the rest of the two items and an adjournment – so
14 it's not going to be a long meeting.

15 MS. MARTINEZ: Thank you.

16 MAYOR GANIM: Congratulations, and thank all the members of
17 the board for your help on this and to a good year. I look forward to
18 working together with all of you.

19 MS. MARTINEZ: Well, I would just like to have a brief, brief
20 statement. I want to thank all of my colleagues for believing in my
21 leadership. I've been fighting for all of Bridgeport children in my zip
22 codes, all of Bridgeport children, for many, many, many years. And
23 there's no better team to fight alongside of. And we have – we have a lot
24 of goals; we have a lot of plans; we have a lot of things to accomplish
25 together. And we've started already and much to do.

1 And I look forward to partnering with whomever wants to be a
2 partner to better – to make a better district for this city. So I'm excited.
3 Thank you.

4 So now we have to elect the vice – vice chair. Any nominations?

5 MR. LOMBARD: Yes. I nominate John Weldon for vice chair.

6 MS. ALLEN: I second the nomination.

7 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I would like to nominate Hernan Illingworth for
8 vice chair.

9 MR. BENEJAN: I nominate Mr. Hernan.

10 MS. MARTINEZ: You second?

11 MR. BENEJAN: I second.

12 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Is there any other nominations for vice
13 chair? Anybody want to close the nominations?

14 MS. ALLEN: I move.

15 MR. TAYLOR: Motion to close the nominations.

16 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Second.

17 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. So we're ready to vote for the vice chair.

18 Okay. All in favor of closing the nominations?

19 ("Ayes" were sounded.)

20 MS. VALLE-SHASTRI: Mr. Lombard votes for John Weldon. Sybil
21 Allen: John Weldon. Chris Taylor: John Weldon. Hernan Illingworth for
22 Hernan Illingworth. Jessica Martinez for Hernan Illingworth. John
23 Weldon for John Weldon. Joseph Sokolovic for Hernan Illingworth. Albert
24 Benejan for Hernan Illingworth. And Bobbi Brown for Hernan Illingworth.

25 MR. ILLINGWORTH: 5 to 4, John is vice chair.

1 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Congratulations, John.

2 MR. WELDON: Hernan. Hernan won.

3 MR. LOMBARD: Hernan got it. It was five-four for Hernan.

4 MS. MARTINEZ: Can you repeat that?

5 MR. WELDON: Why don't you reread then,

6 MS. VALLE-SHASTRI: Bobbi Brown for Hernan Illingworth. Albert
7 Benejan for Hernan Illingworth. Joseph Sokolovic for Hernan Illingworth.
8 John Weldon for John Weldon. Jessica Martinez for Hernan Illingworth.
9 Hernan Illingworth for Hernan Illingworth. John – Chris Taylor for John
10 Weldon. Sybil Allen for John Weldon. Joseph Lombard for John Weldon.
11 So it's five-four. So Hernan Illingworth is voted in as the vice chair.

12 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Next is the secretary. We will be taking
13 nominations for secretary.

14 MS. ALLEN: May I?

15 MS. MARTINEZ: Yes.

16 MS. ALLEN: I would like to nominate Bobbi Brown for secretary.

17 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I'd like to second that.

18 MS. MARTINEZ: Is there any other nominations?

19 MR. WELDON: I nominate Chris Taylor for secretary.

20 MR. TAYLOR: I'm going to respectfully decline nomination. Thank
21 you. I appreciate it.

22 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Close nominations.

23 MS. MARTINEZ: Does anybody want to make a motion to close
24 nominations?

25 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Motion to close nominations.

1 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I second that nomination.

2 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

3 (“Ayes” were sounded.)

4 MS. MARTINEZ: Congratulations, Bobbi Brown.

5 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Still got to do – technically, we’ve still got to –

6 MR. WELDON: We’ve still got to take a vote.

7 MS. MARTINEZ: Do we? She’s the only –

8 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Just make it official.

9 MS. MARTINEZ: She’s the only option. Okay.

10 MS. MARTINEZ: Yes, for the record.

11 MS. VALLE-SHASTRI: Joseph Lombard votes for Bobbi Brown.

12 Albert Benejan votes for Bobbi Brown. Bobbi Brown for Bobbi Brown.

13 Joseph Sokolovic for Bobbi Brown. John Weldon for Bobbi Brown.

14 Jessica Martinez for Bobbi Brown. Hernan Illingworth for Bobbi Brown.

15 Chris Taylor: Bobbi Brown. And Sybil Allen: Bobbi Brown.

16 MR. TAYLOR: Finally this board is unanimous on something.

17 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Next –

18 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Nobody called me –

19 MR. WELDON: Say that again. I can’t hear you.

20 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Well, if I don’t say nothing, then
21 nobody’s going to know who I am.

22 MR. WELDON: Okay. Who are you?

23 MS. MARTINEZ: We’re currently in a meeting.

24 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Because I came over to two meetings
25 and they were cancelled, so today I really, you know –

1 MS. MARTINEZ: Do you want to sign up to speak?

2 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Yeah, I want to –

3 MS. MARTINEZ: Once this meeting is adjourned, then the regular
4 board meeting will commence, and you can sign up to speak then.

5 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I mean, tonight they will address this
6 meeting? I mean, whatever –

7 MS. MARTINEZ: You can sign up to speak.

8 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Well, what happened was a tree – I was
9 working at a school, a tree came down, it hit – it landed on my truck, and
10 I was – I was parked at the specific sign by the school to park in that
11 sport. The truck got damaged, -

12 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Madam Chair.

13 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: - and they supposed to – I went to the
14 superintendent and –

15 MS. MARTINEZ: Thank you, Maria. So the next item is approval –
16 the approval of the 2018 organizational meeting minutes. Those who
17 were in attendance on the Board of Education at that time are the ones
18 that can vote.

19 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Motion to – I'm sorry.

20 MS. MARTINEZ: Go ahead. Yeah.

21 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Motion to approve organizational minutes from
22 the year 2018.

23 MS. MARTINEZ: Is there a second?

24 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Second.

25 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

1 ("Ayes" were sounded. Voting in favor were members Martinez, Illingworth,
2 Sokolovic and Weldon.)

3 MR. TAYLOR: Abstain.

4 MS. MARTINEZ: Do you need a roll call.

5 RECORDER: I think we have one, two, three, four in favor –

6 MS. MARTINEZ: He abstained.

7 RECORDER: Mr. Taylor abstained. Ms. Allen might vote.

8 MS. ALLEN: We're voting – would you clarify what –

9 MS. MARTINEZ: We're voting for the 2018 organizational meeting
10 minutes. Those who were on the board, elected, and in attendance can
11 vote. That would include you.

12 MS. MARTINEZ: Would you like a roll call vote?

13 RECORDER: I think if Ms. Allen just says yes, we have five to zero
14 and three abstentions, hypothetically.

15 MS. MARTINEZ: Do you vote in favor of passing the board
16 meeting minutes?

17 MS. ALLEN: Yes.

18 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Point of order, Ms. Martinez. I apologize
19 because we moved a little quick. We didn't have discussion.

20 MS. MARTINEZ: Did you have any edits?

21 MR. SOKOLOVIC: No, I just –

22 MS. MARTINEZ: Do you want to discuss?

23 MR. SOKOLOVIC: No. I just wanted to - that's fine, that's fine. I
24 just wanted to make sure we opened it up for discussion in case
25 anybody else had it.

1 MS. ALLEN: Yes to that question. Yes.

2 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. So we voted yes.

3 RECORDER: Then it's five-zero, one abstention.

4 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay.

5 RECORDER: Or actually four – five-zero, four abstentions.

6 (Members Lombard, Taylor, Brown and Benejan abstained.)

7 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. So now, we are moving onto number
8 three, the approval of calendar year 2020 schedule of the regular public
9 meetings.

10 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Madam Chair.

11 MS. MARTINEZ: Yes.

12 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I'd like to make a motion to postpone that to
13 the regular and add it to the regular meeting agenda because there's a
14 couple – there's a couple problems with the schedule.

15 MS. MARTINEZ: Do you want to have a deeper discussion?

16 MR. SOKOLOVIC: It requires some discussion, yes.

17 MS. MARTINEZ: Is there a second?

18 MR. ILLINGWORTH: We would need two-thirds to add it to the
19 regular agenda.

20 MS. MARTINEZ: Is there a second?

21 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I second it.

22 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

23 ("Ayes" were sounded.)

24 MR. TAYLOR: No.

25 MR. WELDON: No.

1 MS. ALLEN: Roll call.

2 MS. MARTINEZ: There was two noes.

3 MR. LOMBARD: Is there a reason for this?

4 MS. MARTINEZ: He wants to move it to the regular meeting so
5 that we can have a deeper discussion. Can we have the discussion now?

6 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Right.

7 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Yeah, but we're pushing up on the regular
8 meeting at 6:30 –

9 MR. LOMBARD: That's okay. I don't want to vote if I don't know
10 what it's about.

11 MR. SOKOLOVIC: – and we've got a special meeting in the
12 interim.

13 MS. MARTINEZ: I mean, is it that – are –

14 MR. SOKOLOVIC: There's – there's one date that conflicts with
15 spring break; there's two other dates with special meetings which need
16 some discussion whether we want to have special meetings where the
17 public don't speak or move them to Tuesdays. I guess that might be little
18 involved.

19 MS. MARTINEZ: Yes, sir.

20 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I – I don't have a problem discussing it now.
21 My only concern is I don't – you know, we will need a two-thirds
22 requirement to add it to the regular agenda. I don't know if those – I
23 mean, I don't know if those votes are – are here to go to add that to the
24 agenda. So I don't know if you want to take that risk and not discuss it
25 here, because –

1 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Okay. I guess we could – I was just trying to do
2 it in the interests of time.

3 MR. ILLINGWORTH: That's all I'm saying. And I know we're
4 coming up on our regular meeting time, but this is something we've got
5 to get done.

6 MS. MARTINEZ: Yeah.

7 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Okay. Discussion.

8 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay, let's discuss. What are the dates in
9 question that you are concerned about?

10 MR. SOKOLOVIC: The first date would be Monday, April 13th,
11 which is the first Monday of spring break. Students and staff will all be
12 on vacation; myself and possibly everybody else would like to take a
13 break. So that date right there is no good.

14 And then you've got two other dates – Monday, May 25th,
15 Memorial Day, it says no meeting, a special meeting may be called on
16 another date.

17 Now, the problem with a special meeting is the public needs a
18 chance to speak. We've got twenty meetings a year. To cut them out of
19 these next two meetings without a chance to speak and voice their
20 opinion, I don't think is fair to the public. I think it would be preferable to
21 move these two Monday dates to the following – the Tuesday following,
22 just to give the public an adequate chance to speak, and for us to do
23 business.

24 MS. MARTINEZ: John.

25 MR. WELDON: The purpose of our regular meetings is not to

1 receive public comment; that's not the purpose. We grant – we grant that
2 because we want to hear what the people have to say. And if we have a
3 meeting, a regular meeting that happens to fall on a holiday, the normal
4 thing to do would be to schedule a special meeting in its place, and if
5 you wanted to have public comment at the special meeting you
6 absolutely could make that an agenda item. There's nothing preventing
7 it.

8 MR. SOKOLOVIC: We've had –

9 MR. WELDON: You can do either/or.

10 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Since I've been on the board – since I've been
11 on the board, the Monday meetings on holidays have always followed on
12 the following Tuesday with the regular meeting scheduled, last year
13 included. This special meeting stuff has just started in the last year.

14 MR. WELDON: And that doesn't mean that that was the right way
15 to handle it. Okay.

16 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Well, you handled it before.

17 MR. WELDON: Stop.

18 MR. SOKOLOVIC: No stop. The chair stops it, not you.

19 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Do you have something to say, Hernan?

20 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yeah, just a point – a point of clarification.
21 So the – the first date that is in question is the first – is the Monday that
22 happens to be on the first day of spring break?

23 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Correct, that's April 13th.

24 MR. ILLINGWORTH: All right. Now –

25 MR. SOKOLOVIC: And we could reschedule that –

1 MR. ILLINGWORTH: Now, usually – yes. Usually, I mean, I – I
2 think that could be a typo or an error that someone possibly missed,
3 because that – normally we do always because staff and everyone is
4 entitled to a break, and that's why we definitely don't have meetings that
5 week.

6 The other meeting, yes, it's – you are correct, if it falls on a
7 holiday we normally do Tuesday. It doesn't mean we have to. So, you
8 know, we could just do one – one meeting that month, and if we need an
9 additional meeting we could always do a special meeting. And
10 remember, we could always suspend the rules and allow public
11 comments as well, so if the chair sees fit – as long we add it to the
12 agenda, I don't see a problem with it.

13 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Yes. Yeah, as far as the spring break, I'm not
14 comfortable not having – we've got twenty meetings, two per month
15 during the school year. And I'm not comfortable in a school system with
16 20,000 children, 2700 employees, with there not being enough
17 information to hold a meeting. I mean, we've got always something to
18 do. If anything, there could be updates from the superintendent; if
19 anything, there's public speaking.

20 I was elected to listen to the public. I want to know what the public
21 thinks about the issue in a timely fashion before I get to vote. I would
22 like to know the public – the public – I mean, if we're not here to listen to
23 the public, what are we doing here? What are we doing here if we're not
24 here to listen to the public? A special meeting in our bylaws does not
25 require public speaking, but a regular meeting requires the public

1 speaking. By voting for a special meeting we're taking away our right
2 and making it a privilege.

3 MS. MARTINEZ: So, Joe, what do you propose?

4 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I propose just making those two – moving the
5 spring break because that's not the public speaking thing – to maybe the
6 week before – I don't know if it's going to conflict with a City Council
7 meeting, but we could also the Tuesday thing if we look into it – and
8 then the two Monday meetings, just hold them on Tuesdays like we've
9 done traditionally for the last – I don't know how many years.

10 MS. MARTINEZ: Right.

11 MR. SOKOLOVIC: So it would be –

12 MS. MARTINEZ: Do we know when we could change the April 13th
13 meeting to? Is the week before good or the week after better?

14 MR. TESTANI: Before is two weeks after the prior meeting, so that
15 would work.

16 MR. BENEJAN: After.

17 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. So we could do the Monday before?

18 MR. TESTANI: April 6th.

19 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. And then the other two meetings?

20 MR. SOKOLOVIC: I would like to see – personally, I would like to
21 see Tuesday, May 26th, for a regular meeting rather than a special
22 meeting; and Tuesday, October 13th, for a regular meeting rather than a
23 special meeting.

24 MR. TESTANI: So the 6th will conflict with the City Council if
25 everyone's okay with that. Just an FYI.

1 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Yeah, it's just for one meeting; it wouldn't be
2 an issue. If it is an issue, we can move it to the Tuesday as well.

3 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. We will handle that when – when that time
4 comes. So would you like to make a motion of that sort?

5 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Yes. I make a motion to approve the schedule
6 of regular public meetings with the following – as presented with the
7 following edits: Monday, April 13th, 2020, be moved to April 6th, 2020 as
8 a regular meeting. And Monday, May – May 25th be moved to Monday –
9 I mean Tuesday, May 26th, as a regular meeting. And Monday, October
10 12th, be moved to Tuesday, October 13th, as a regular meeting.

11 MR. LOMBARD: I'll second.

12 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

13 (“Ayes” were sounded.)

14 MS. MARTINEZ: Any opposed? Any abstentions? Motion carries.
15 Thank you.

16 Okay. The last item on the agenda is to adjourn this meeting.

17 ATTY. ANASTASI: Madam Chair, I don't mean to interrupt, but I
18 think you just amended the schedule. You should probably now vote to
19 adopt the schedule as amended.

20 MS. MARTINEZ: Vote on the main motion? Okay.

21 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Thank you.

22 MS. MARTINEZ: Oh, I take that back. Is there a motion to approve
23 the calendar year 2020 with the – with the amendments?

24 MS. ALLEN: Madam Chair, I move to approve as amended.

25 MR. ILLINGWORTH: I second.

1 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

2 (“Ayes” were sounded.)

3 MR. TAYLOR: Abstain.

4 MS. MARTINEZ: Any – any noes? One abstention and everybody
5 else – motion carries.

6 A motion to adjourn.

7 MR. SOKOLOVIC: Motion to adjourn.

8 MS. MARTINEZ: Second.

9 MR. LOMBARD: Second.

10 MS. MARTINEZ: All in favor?

11 (“Ayes” were sounded.)

12 MS. MARTINEZ: We will take a five-minute recess prior to the
13 next meeting – the regular meeting starting. Thank you.

14 (The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.)

15

16 *APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON DECEMBER 7, 2020*

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE
AND ACCURATE TRANSCRIPT OF A TAPE RECORDING OF
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF
EDUCATION, AT THE BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL
AQUACULTURE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
CENTER, 60 ST. STEPHENS ROAD, BRIDGEPORT,
CONNECTICUT, ON DECEMBER 9, 2019.

DATED THIS 17TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2019.

JOHN McLEOD