

Monday, January 22, 2018

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held January 22, 2018, at Bridgeport City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport, Connecticut, at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center, 60 St. Stephens Road, Bridgeport, Connecticut

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m.

Present were Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Maria Pereira, Joseph Sokolovic, Sybil Allen, Dennis Bradley and Ben Walker. Secretary Jessica Martinez arrived subsequently as noted.

Supt. Aresta Johnson, Ed.D., was present.

Mr. Weldon said translation services were available/

### **RECOGNITIONS:**

Dr. Johnson said student Reyes Huerta of Bassick was the lone Bridgeport student to perform at the Western Regional Festival, a consortium of 400 students from 33 districts. Reyes then performed the song, "Fly Me to the Moon." He said he felt he represented a whole, huge city and felt happy. He said he was not afraid to say he was from Bassick. He said he got involved in music from Spanish culture and when he met a vocal teacher he was introduced to choir music.

Mr. Walker said students such as Reyes are qualified to audition for all-state. Dr. Johnson's acknowledged Reyes's parents.

Dr. Johnson said Central High student Arnold Stetiadi gained admission to Yale University on a full ride, while Issac Vargas, a junior, received a prestigious U.S. Senate page internship in Washington to Sen. Chris Murphy for one semester. She

acknowledged Dr. Anekwe, principal of Central Magnet.

Dr. Johnson introduced Classical Studies Magnet student Kiara Powell, a 7th grader, who won second place in the Martin Luther King essay contest sponsored by the *Connecticut Post* and Fairfield University. She received a cash prize of \$150.

Dr. Johnson introduced Natilie Mikhaeel of Multicultural Magnet School, who first place in the Martin Luther King essay contest. She said Natilie also won the districtwide spelling bee.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:**

Daniel Campbell of Bassick reported on his school. Among the items he highlighted were the school's participation in the Klein Center's Martin Luther King celebration, students' participation in a mentoring program that leads to a summer internship, the student council's Valentine's Day dance, and the success of the boys' and girls' basketball teams.

Jarissa Collado of Central High reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were the upcoming midterms, auditions for the play *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, the success of the boys' basketball team, and the College's Board approval of participation in the AP Capstone program for 2018-19.

Jeniel Edmonds of the Aerospace School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on her school. She highlighted the January 10th STEAM exposition and Capstone presentations, a local foundation's donation of \$25,000 for an SAT preparatory program for juniors at Fairchild Wheeler, auditions for the upcoming play and the first Drama Club meeting. She added that among the many college acceptances at the school she will be attending Eastern Connecticut State University, majoring in childhood education.

Numra Chowdry of the BioTech School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were the annual science fair STEAM exposition, first semester exams starting January 25th, and the beginning of the second semester on January 31st.

Angelo Rodriguez of the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on his school. Among the items he highlighted were the final exams beginning on Thursday, the school's visit to the National Geographic Encounter Ocean Odyssey in New York City, and the first STEAM exposition on January 10th.

Shantae Mcintyre of Harding High reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were after-school enrichment for students who want extra support, the STAR assessment taken by 9th and 10th graders, January 18th's science fair, the boys' basketball game tomorrow against Bassick, the girls' team's home game against Bassick on Friday night and the senior nights for both basketball teams.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Crystal Aguirre, a Harding student and a youth leader at Make the Road Connecticut, said there is campaign called Walking Towards a Greater Future. She said the school system has never taken her disorders seriously, which have worsened in high school. She said the classes in high school need to be smaller. She added the metal detectors add to her anxiety. She said she was demanding help for her and other students.

Donuque Daniels, a Bassick High student and a youth leader at Make the Road Connecticut, said the current campaign addresses the challenges from students' walks to school, the lack of preparedness for college and the consequences when we are late to school. She said her mom has to make the difficult choice between working and raising her family. She said teachers have given up on her and her classmates.

Anika Green, a Fairchild Wheeler student and a youth leader in Make the Road Connecticut, said for some time now she has had a difficulty with a teacher. She said she did not believe she should receive a zero for homework assignments despite attempting to do them. She said she feels stuck all the time when checking her grades.

Tania Chapa, an 8th grader in Read School and a youth leader in

Make the Road Connecticut, said she had worries about going to high school next year, including having to walk 30 to 40 minutes to school, being treated with disrespect by some of the teachers, and going into ISS for being late because of the metal detectors. She asked the board to create policies that support all students in being college bound instead of setting us up for failure.

Albert Benejan, PTSO president at Bassick High, asked why the high schools were not preparing our kids for college. He said at college visits he has been told that the colleges themselves have to prepare the kids. He urged the board members visit schools and talk to the kids and staff. He thanked Dr. Johnson and the board members for responding to his e-mails.

Liz Velasquez, a mother of three children in Bridgeport schools, said she was from Mexico and part of Make the Road. She said she was worried about her children going through the struggles the students have talked about at the meeting. She said it bothers her that students are being penalized for being late for conditions they can't control.

Tshon Cooper-Davis, a mother of a Bridgeport public school student and a member of Faith Acts, commended the board and asked them to stay focused on the children. She said the more we fight against each other, the less the children get, while the more we fight together, the more they will get. She urged the board to keep children first.

Crystal Mack said the young student who sang earlier had a wonderful voice and she praised as well the courage of the earlier speaker named Crystal. She pointed to the dangers of the deadly flu going across the nation and the cold weather students have to walk to school in. She urged all schools be made magnet schools and the addition of instruction in cursive writing and bilingual courses, and said money was wasted on charter schools

#### **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:**

Mr. Bradley moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 8, 2018. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen. A

correction was noted. The motion was passed by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Weldon, Illingworth, Allen, Bradley, Walker and Sokolovic. Ms. Pereira abstained.

Mr. Bradley moved approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 8, 2018. The motion was passed by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Weldon, Illingworth, Allen, Bradley, Walker and Sokolovic. Ms. Pereira abstained.

### **CHAIRMAN REPORT:**

Mr. Weldon said through his error Ms. Allen was not placed on two committee as is required in the bylaws. He said he would be placing her on the Finance Committee.

Mr. Weldon said there will be a new member training seminar on January 27th, at 9:00 a.m., which will be noticed as a Special Meeting.

Mr. Bradley moved *"to add to the agenda the 2018-19 food and nutrition budget, the legal services RFQ, and the extension of the refuse removal contract."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira and unanimously approved.

Ms. Pereira moved *"adding to the agenda Columbus School CN contract services."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradley and unanimously approved.

Ms. Warner, a biology teacher at the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler, said she had a great opportunity to organize a trip to California in April. She said it was a STEM-themed trip. The costs cover transportation, hotel, food and admission. Students can earn up to three college credits if they finish all the required coursework. Fifteen students are signed up at this time.

Kayla Medina, a junior who has signed up for the trip, said many people say kids in Bridgeport don't get the same opportunities as in other communities; we just have to push for it. She said she wanted to get the experience to see to what it's like to study in another place and to learn about cultures, climate and lands. She thanked Mr. Bradley for donating to the trip.

Dr. Johnson said no board action was being requested at this time on the trip.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:**

Ms. Pereira said there was a motion approved by the Facilities Committee that she wished to add to the agenda. She moved to *"add a motion to cease all payments to the Bridgeport Police Department regarding athletic events and after-school activities pending a meeting with Chief A.J. Perez."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

Mr. Weldon said Ms. Martinez was not present for the Finance Committee report, but the items that came out of the committee were added to the agenda.

Mr. Weldon said the Governance Committee met on January 17th and was briefed on some boilerplate bylaws regarding boards of education and they are currently being reviewed in comparison to our current bylaws. The next meeting will be on February 21st.

Mr. Walker reported on the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting of January 16th. He said there was a report by John DiDonato on special education compliance and programming. He said the systematic complaint with the Connecticut state Department of Education was been resolved.

Mr. Walker said Mr. DiDonato gave an explanation of the origin of most of the complaints filed against the district. Each October, the district uploads all IEPs to the state. The data is measured to determine compliance with the IDEA law of 2004. This year 3,318 records were uploaded and of those 666 were found problematic. After further review and corrections, 166 records reflected compliance deficits such as timeline issues or provision of service that would trigger a request for due process. Correction actions are being taken to reduce this number.

Mr. Walker said in 2014 the board contracted with CREC to review special education in the district. Although the district has not been

able to allocate all the necessary resources to special education, Mr. DiDonato is developing a plan that considers our current finances.

Mr. Walker said progress on African-American and Caribbean-Latin America courses was also discussed. The committee reported we are on track for implementation in the 2018-19 school year. The courses have been added to the course catalog and funding has been established. Progress has been made on curriculum outline, selecting texts and resources, selecting staff and communicating with consultants.

Mr. Walker said the members of the curriculum committee are Jay Lipp, Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Pat Anekwe, Alicia Robinson, Eric Graf, Angela Bhushan and Dr. Deborah Santacapita.

Mr. Walker said the committee discussed its plans for 2018. Items that will be taken up may include music and art, library/media curriculum, STEAM across the curriculum, curriculum revision work, language arts, consumables in the classroom, transients in the district, and in-district accommodations for out-of-district-placed special education students.

Mr. Walker said the next meeting would be on February 20th.

Mr. Illingworth said the Personnel Committee met on January 18th. Two items were voted out for consideration by the full board at its next Regular Meeting: the special education staff services contract and the substitute teacher staffing services RFP.

Mr. Illingworth said the item on civil service will be taken up at the next committee meeting on February 14th.

Ms. Pereira asked if the contract and RFP would be provided to board members. Dr. Johnson said she had copies available tonight.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Students & Families Committee met on January 11th. He said Dr. Johnson brought forward three finalists for the contest to select a logo for the Board of Education to replace the city seal.

Mr. Sokolovic said the magnet school policy and its connected sibling policy were discussed. He said alternative language has been suggested and there are now two different documents that need to be merged through compromise, if possible, before bringing it to the full board.

Mr. Sokolovic said there was a discussion on parental involvement which centered on strengthening school-based PACs and bringing back a District PAC. Data is being collected on PAC membership in furtherance of strengthening parent involvement.

Mr. Sokolovic said the next committee meeting would be on February 8th, 2018.

Ms. Pereira referred the matters of cafeteria share tables in the district and the bread and breakfast bids to the Students and Families Committee.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND AGENDA:**

Dr. Johnson noted the district was in a cautious state in its fiscal condition. She said the state Supreme Court on January 17th reversed the lower court's ruling in the CCJEF case. The decision focused on four items: facilities, instrumentalities, curriculum and personnel. She said the original decision rightly focused on the ECS formula. The superintendent said the ruling has placed us in more of a predicament.

Dr. Johnson said she hoped the board was in agreement that we reach back out to the law firm that was handling the case for Bridgeport to study next action steps.

Ms. Pereira moved approval of personnel items I and II. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Supt. Johnson made a presentation on the 2018-19 budget request. She said she would be seeking approval for the budget request, which was discussed at the Finance Committee as well.



Dr. Johnson said every budget plan should incorporate the educational plans for the school district and show alignment and coherence with our fiscal and educational needs.

Dr. Johnson said there will be three community stakeholder presentations on the budget planned: February 1st at Batalla School, February 3rd at Tisdale School, and February 13th at Blackham School.

Supt. Johnson said the vision of the district is a culturally responsive, high-performing learning environment where students are able to thrive academically, social and emotionally and civically. She said enrollment is expected to increase by about a hundred students. Sixth grade will be added to Claytor Magnet Academy. The net current expenditure per pupil is \$14,186. As of December 1st our special education population was 16 percent. The budget for special education in 2016-17 was 26.54 percent and approximately 30 percent of the overall general fund.

The superintendent said the fiscal goals include having a structurally balanced budget with a financial plan that's inclusive of all fund sources and a school-based budgeting model grounded in accountability. The school-based budgeting model uses position allocations, which are determined by the number of students, leading to staffing formulas, making sure that we have equity across the entire school district.

Dr. Johnson said every school receives \$7 per student for parent involvement.

Dr. Johnson said some of the challenges that are faced are utility costs, legal services, transportation, and special education services. She added that Mr. DiDonato is trying to restructure the entire special education department.

Supt. Johnson said absenteeism is a challenge, but in the month of September there was work on reduction of teacher absenteeism. She said everyone pulled together and rowed in the same direction.

Dr. Johnson said the school improvement priorities were developed with a diverse groups of stakeholders, beginning in June 2017.

Dr. Jonson said theories were developed through the meetings with stakeholders. There are all written in the form of a hypothesis, such as “If then” statements.

The four pillars of excellence are student achievement, curriculum and instruction, parent and family engagement and recruitment and retention strategies.

Dr. Johnson said the operating budget for 2017-18 is \$244 million, including Alliance and ECS monies. There were reductions during the year in ECS, the Priority Grant and Title I and Title IIA.

Dr. Johnson said the board requested an \$11.4 million increase for 2017-18, but only \$137,593 was received.

The superintendent said it has been necessary to develop seven budget gap plans this year. The failure to receive \$11.4 million had major impacts on services for children.

Dr. Johnson said since 2016-17 the district has lost a total of 193 positions. The Twilight Program for high school was lost. Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers has had to seek outside funding to survive.

Supt. Johnson said cost savings in 2017-18 were \$437,000, including 100 free field trips, renegotiated contracts with Xerox and the Source 4 Teachers credit, which have filled in gaps and helped the district stay afloat.

Dr. Jonson said the instructional model is the district office is dedicated to servicing schools for school improvement.

Supt. Johnson said curriculum updates continue. Science curriculum materials from HMH are new this year in Grades K to 5. The first payment was made in September. Algebra I is in select middle schools for 8th graders.

Dr. Johnson said the RULER program has been expanded and aligns with PBIS. Restorative practice has been expanded as well. She thanked Batalla School, which received a grant, and there are now 14 certified trainers for restorative practices in the district. Cultural competency training will take place in the spring.

Dr. Jonson said SRBI is being implemented with all tiers of students.

The superintendent discussed some technology issues, including the five schools with Apple iPads and the transition from Outlook 2013 to Office 365. She added the district's website has been redesigned.

Dr. Johnson said for 2018-19, the budget is \$261.5 million for operating. She noted the loss of \$1 million in federal funds from Title II.

Dr. Johnson said an additional \$16.8 million is needed in non-discretionary costs. She said an additional \$3.5 million for discretionary services will be developed through discussions with principals and administrators. The total request is \$20.37 million.

The superintendent said key impacts include adding a grade at Claytor Magnet, the expiration of the lease on the Parent Center, and the potential to maintain Harding High School as swing space.

Dr. Johnson said the \$16.8 million include must-haves such collective bargaining increases, health insurance increases, the ECS reductions, the loss of Title II funds, and special education services.

The budget savings of 2018-19 include \$1.5 million due to staff turnover.

Dr. Johnson said the amount to restore the kindergarten paras is \$2.7 million.

The superintendent said if the district received all or part of the discretionary request of \$3.5 million the funds would be spent on things such as the high school interventionists and performing arts.

Dr. Johnson said if the additional funding does not materialize there

will be have to difficult conversations on how to fill the gap. There will be ongoing conversations with the bargaining units about furlough days and delayed longevity payments.

The superintendent said, although not recommended, there are possible reductions of ten literacy coaches, ten math coaches, assistant principals at schools with less than 500 students, increasing the distance for bus transportation, consolidation of classes and the reduction of the school volunteer office. The items total savings of \$4.3 million.

Dr. Johnson said she was looking for approval for the budget request.

Ms. Pereira moved *"to approve the 2018-19 budget request."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen.

Mr. Walker requested the updated PowerPoint presentation be sent to board members.

In response to a question, Supt. Johnson said the PowerPoint had not been made to the City Council Education Committee yet. She said she would request an opportunity to present it to that committee.

Mr. Bradley said he had serious issues with the proposed budget plan. He said we need bring our partners in the business community to the table. He said he would like to hear further information about special education.

Mr. Bradley said proposed cuts always affect the classroom and the students directly. He said he didn't see anything about what the administrative level was doing. It said we need to pivot our conversations from the same old, same old of Bridgeport not having money(he said people are not sympathetic to that argument) and taking a hard look at what works and what doesn't work. He asked for hard numbers for the results of students that have had math coaches.

Mr. Bradley said he was in favor of continuing to allow principals to allocate funds as they deem appropriate and incentivize principals and schools to create a spirit of competition. However, he said he doesn't see anything innovative or different in the budget, and then

we wonder every year why we're getting less money. He said Bridgeport had been in last place now for the last two decades in funding.

In response to a question, Dr. Johnson said the myOn contract expires in June. She said while she would like to keep the program, there has been a look at the data and we want to be sure students are growing from it. She added we are not seeing the progress that we should see. If we have the money, it would be great as a luxury.

Dr. Johnson agreed with Ms. Pereira's statement that if we don't get the \$15.7 million what we're really facing as a budget gap is \$13 million because of the kindergarten para situation.

Ms. Pereira said the Legislature would be back in session in less than ten days. She asked about plans to meet with the delegation. Dr. Johnson said she believed the budget was being done earlier this year and we can be proactive and not reactive.

Ms. Martinez arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Bradley asked about the legal requirement of the district paying the city for having Harding as swing space. Ms. Pereira said there had been tentative discussions about using that space to help accommodate Classical Studies. Dr. Johnson said she did not have the answer to Mr. Bradley's question yet, but would ask the city attorney. Mr. Bradley wondered if the board would approve of the small expense to inquire of the board's counsel, since the city attorney's opinion would probably not be favorable.

Mr. Bradley noted Optimus was using space in the district to provide much-needed medical services, while receiving reimbursements through HUSKY. He said if we're charging Lighthouse, we should investigate charging a nonprofit like Optimus for space.

The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Weldon, Illingworth, Martinez, Walker, Sokolovic, Pereira and Allen. Mr. Bradley abstained.

Dr. Johnson said a contest was opened to students to design a logo

for the district to replace the city seal. She said the top three logos were presented at the committee level.

Ms. Pereira asked that the logos be provided at the next meeting at the same scale as shown at the committee level.

Ms. Pereira said she liked the yellow one originally, but the one with the hands would be better if the square blue box was removed.

Ms. Pereira moved "*to postpone the item to the next regular board meeting.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradley and unanimously approved.

The next item was on best practices and future direction. Mr. Sokolovic said it was his item. He said he noticed a trend in the freshman tenure of the new board members and the newly hired permanent superintendent. On at least two occasions he had heard the phrase "past practice" when a policy has not been followed or "that's the way it's always been done."

Mr. Sokolovic said he found these excuses unacceptable. He said with a new superintendent and board there should be no past practices. From the top down, past practices of policy and procedural violations should not be acceptable.

Mr. Sokolovic moved that "*with the board's full backing and support that Dr. Johnson draft a memo to be distributed to all executive and administrative staff to re-familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures governing them and their departments and those under their direct supervision, and if they have not already been doing so, to follow these policies and procedures to the letter.*" The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Mr. Bradley said he totally agreed, but we don't want to go down a slippery slope of micromanaging the superintendent. He said the board had to really focus in on what its duties are, providing policies for the district.

Ms. Pereira said she sees both sides of the coin. Everyone is required to follow policy, including board members and

administrators. If the board doesn't follow the policy, we can't expect everyone else to follow policies either. She said she's had administrators tell her that they've never followed certain policies before.

Ms. Pereira said the board only has one employee, Dr. Johnson, who has almost three thousand employees that report to her, so it's not our job to tell her what to do with them. She said the memorandum mentioned in the motion was just a broad statement.

Mr. Weldon said the concept of past practices does not trump established procedure. It should be used when there is no procedure one way or another to address how something is done.

Mr. Sokolovic said it was not an attempt to micromanage but lend the board's support behind a memo and a restructuring of the way things have been done in the past.

Mr. Bradley suggested perhaps the memo should come from the chair, with the superintendent disseminating it to the staff.

Dr. Johnson said if the board feels the letter is necessary she would prefer it come from her to staff.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The next item was on the Gibson Report. Mr. Weldon said the report was distributed in the packet.

Mr. Bradley said a key stakeholder that has not been at the table since he's been on the board is the business community. He said the business community was extremely interested in seeing that the public schools are successful.

Mr. Bradley said he attended a recent meeting of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council. He said discussion at that meeting expressed frustration where the board has been in the past. He said they stressed if Bridgeport is going to thrive and bring in new business tax revenue, we need to have a strong public school system. He said they specifically highlighted the Gibson Report of

2010.

Mr. Bradley said they mentioned items on page 19 of the report that talks about transportation and bell times that would lead to savings. He urged the board show good faith to the business community and that they do have a voice.

Mr. Bradley asked if Ms. Siegel could take a look at the report and if things could be implemented. Ms. Pereira said we did both changes. Mr. Illingworth said the bell times were changed and transportation changes made.

Mr. Bradley said it was never communicated to the organization that paid for the report that these things were done. He said he was only being a messenger.

Ms. Pereira said Mr. Timpanelli knew full well that the TransFinder software was implemented to change transportation routes and bell times were staggered to get more usage out of buses. High schools start times were made earlier and elementary schools moved from a 8:20 start time to 8:40. She said significant savings were realized, although not \$2 million.

Mr. Bradley said the current president of the BRBC has no idea of these things and the savings that have been produced, even though the business community paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for the report. He said it was important to bring these people to the table, and perhaps Ms. Siegel could attend a BRBC meeting. He said it was obvious there is a communication issue.

Dr. Johnson said she had been invited to make a presentation to the BRBC and she did so about a year ago.

Ms. Pereira said the issue of special education had been discussed at length in the Teaching and Learning Committee. Mr. Bradley said that attitude is why we're not having stakeholders come in and participate in the process. He said it should be moved forward and accomplishments celebrated. He said the BRBC and companies like People's Bank should know this.



Ms. Pereira said a state grant paid \$250,000 for the report. The board wanted an actual audit, not this report. She said the state, the city, the board and the business community all put in money.

Dr. Johnson said she was on the e-mail list of the business community. She said she can reach back out and attend those meetings on a frequent basis. She said she could invite the senior leadership team to attend as well.

Mr. Illingworth said he agreed with Mr. Bradley about building bridges. He said people are willing to help, we have to ask for help and make them feel part of the process. He said the business community is important.

The next item was on cessation of payment to the police department for athletic events pending a meeting with Chief Perez.

Mr. Illingworth said he expressed in the Facilities Committee that the overtime costs for the SROs are a concern. He noted Lt. Grech at one time had SROs working afternoon shift, which is no longer the case. He added he wanted to make clear that while adults fight, the students suffer. He said if the board says it won't pay, the city will not send police officers, so at the end of the day safety suffers.

Ms. Pereira said pending a conversation with Chief Perez some of the nine SROs dedicated to the schools should be on staggered shifts to cover athletic events at parks or games at night. She said this is a \$100,000 cost we shouldn't have to pay.

Ms. Perez moved *"to direct Marlene Siegel to stop the payments until there was a meeting held with Chief A.J. Perez."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth.

Ms. Martinez said she wasn't at the committee meeting, but she didn't think it was wise to cease payments prior to the discussions with the chief.

Mr. Illingworth said the most important thing is to open a dialogue. He said we have to make it clear we can't afford this and that we need to have a conversation.

Ms. Pereira said Lt. Grech went to Ms. Siegel, without the board's knowledge or permission, and replaced former SROs with security guards. When there was a \$16 million budget gap the board eliminated the five remaining SROs. The police department then started billing us for police officers to be at public parks and at games. She added she did not believe we needed a police officer at every game.

Mr. Weldon said for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. He asked if we don't pay and then the conversation doesn't happen for months if the police would stop providing the officers.

Dr. Johnson suggested keeping in mind we're in the height of our basketball season. She said she would welcome the conversation first, but would not be comfortable in stopping things in terms of what is coming up. She said she would try to be aggressive with establishing a discussion and said Chief Perez had been very accommodating about meeting in the past. She said she would reach out tomorrow.

Mr. Illingworth said he agreed with those points. He said in the past the chief had been invited by the board and he never attended, which is probably what triggered what may be considered a drastic measure.

Mr. Weldon said he believed we should give Dr. Johnson the courtesy of attempting a discussion with the chief. Mr. Illingworth said he agreed.

Ms. Pereira said charging us \$100,000 is a violation of the law because under state statute and the city charter any goods or service valued at over \$25,000 must go out to bid. She said she was fine with Dr. Johnson reaching out to Chief Perez.

In response to a question, Ms. Pereira said the chair of the Facilities Committee repeatedly requested the presence of the chief.

Mr. Illingworth moved "*to withdraw the motion.*" The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms., Pereira moved the matter “*be postponed to the first Regular Meeting of February.*” The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The next item was the 2018-19 Food & Nutrition budget. Dr. Johnson noted it was presented at the Finance Committee meeting. She requested approval of the budget, which consists of federal and state grants.

In response to a question about references to other sales, 21 sites and anticipated cuts in the document, Sharlene Wong, director of food and nutrition, said that referred to the fresh fruit and vegetable program. She said the state coordinator for the federal grant has informed us that there will be cuts next year and less sites will likely qualify.

In response to a question, Ms. Wong said the 2017-18 budget is \$2 million over the forecast because the supper program has been rolled out and it has a different reimbursement, which led to an increase in revenues. The forecast included ten more sites, but approval for the additional sites has just been received.

In response to a question, Ms. Wong said the regular overtime is at a hundred percent over projection because it was negotiated by the previous food services director. The workers are hired for six hours a day and then they apply to provide the snack or supper programs for an additional two hours a day. They have to be paid at straight time for the extra hours.

Ms. Pereira said it had been projected at \$100,000 for the whole school year, but it's forecasted as \$253,000. Ms. Wong said the projection was based on the snack and supper program and there was a question about paying the staff an additional two hours for pension, sick days and vacation time. The agreement signed increased those values.

Marlene Siegel, chief financial officer, said the district is not losing anything because the supper program generates revenue which pays for the staff costs.

Ms. Pereira moved *“to approve the 2018-19 food and nutrition services budget.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and approved by a 7-0 vote. Members Weldon, Illingworth, Martinez, Pereira, Walker, Sokolovic and Allen voted in favor. Mr. Bradley abstained.

The next item was the extension of the refuse contract with Country Disposal Services, LLC.

Dr. Johnson said the matter was presented in the Finance Committee. There is a possible credit of \$21,821 with an extension at a fixed rate. She requested approval.

Ms. Siegel said the original amount in the budget for refuse and recycling was \$349,393. The agreement with Country Disposal was for \$290,296. Additional sites were added to the contract and the cost increased to \$339,6772 in 2017-18.

Ms. Siegel said the company is interested in maintaining a relationship with the district for another two years. In exchange, they are offering \$21,828 as a one-time credit this year, which will lower the cost this year to about \$318,000. For the next two years the fixed cost will be \$321,000.

Ms. Siegel said the credit is already built into the budget reduction plans pending board approval.

Ms. Pereira moved *“to approve the Country Disposal Services, LLC, contract for two years.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker.

Mr. Illingworth expressed concern about being billed for extra pickups. Ms. Siegel said the company and our team addressed the issue and the company has verbally agreed to cover additional pickups at no cost, and have already done so this year.

Mr. Bradley said this was classic example of pennywise, pound foolish. He said we fought a whole lot to get this \$10,000 savings and burned a lot of bridges to get to this point and are now relying on verbal promises made by a contractor. He said he was worried we'd

get a bill coming down and we'd lose whatever savings we have. He added, like the discussion with the police chief, we get more with honey than vinegar. He said we should look to partner and work with our friends on the city side. He noted there was a whole slate of new council members and there was a new Board of Education, so we shouldn't be trapped by the past.

Ms. Pereira said we're saving over \$30,0000. Mr. Bradley said that was hypothetical.

The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote. Members Weldon, Illingworth, Martinez, Pereira, Walker, Sokolovic and Allen voted in favor. Mr. Bradley abstained.

The next item was on Columbus School Commissioner Network services. Dr. Johnson said the contracts were forwarded to Shipman & Goodwin per board policy and they sent back recommended changes.

Ms. Pereira moved "*to approve Literacy How, Fairfield University and Hill for Literacy, Incorporated, with Columbus School.*" The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez.

The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote. Members Weldon, Illingworth, Martinez, Pereira, Walker, Sokolovic and Allen voted in favor. Mr. Bradley abstained.

The next item was the legal services RFQ. Dr. Johnson said Atty. Dolphin of Shipman & Goodwin provided feedback which was forwarded to the board.

Ms. Pereira said we wanted to know if the city charter language was required to be in the RFQ and the answer was no, but they're recommending it. She said Shipman & Goodwin is writing whatever legal opinion the city wants them to write.

Mr. Weldon asked if we want to press Shipman & Goodwin for a more definitive response. Ms. Pereira said the question to the law firm was, is the language required. If it's not required, we have the right to move forward because it was the city who intervened in the board's

RFQ.

Dr. Johnson said she would e-mail Atty. Dolphin and ask if the language is required, yes or no. Ms. Pereira and Mr. Walker said they agreed.

Ms. Pereira moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradley and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

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