

Tuesday, October 9, 2018

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held October 9, 2018, at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center, 60 St. Stephens Road, Bridgeport, Connecticut

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

Mr. Weldon said a student named Dream White, a 10-year-old 5th grader at Edison, passed away recently. There was a moment of silence.

Ms. Pereira said her death represented the social injustice in cities like Bridgeport. She said the girl's mother indicated it took twenty minutes for an ambulance to arrive even though she lived only three blocks from Bridgeport Hospital.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:

Sayem Fazal and Marouf Housain of Bassick reported on their school. Among the items they highlighted were planning and fundraising for prom, volunteer activities, students working with architects to design the new Bassick, the National Honor Society's recruitment efforts, and real-life experience for students in the construction and culinary fields.

The representative of Bridgeport Military Academy reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were fundraising, the PTSO meeting on October 16th, the open house, SAT and PSAT preparation, a ceremony honoring a school secretary, Ms. Adams, the African-American history course featured in the *Connecticut Post*, and a partnership with the Walter Lockett Foundation.

Ms. Pereira said the article on the African-American history course proves that if the curriculum is relevant to students they will engage. She said it was a great story. She said Ms. Baraka fought for the course for ten years.

Jennifer Martinez of the Aero/Hydrospace School at Fairfield Wheeler, reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were the after-school and intramural clubs, SAT and PSAT testing, the college and career day, and the blood drive organized by the student council.

Numa Chowdry of the Biotechnology School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were U.S. history students' field trip to New York City, data collection efforts in collaboration with the Maritime Aquarium, and PSAT and SAT testing.

Emily Nivello of the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were the debate club, the exhibition day on October 24th, the National Honor Society's Halloween bash and college trips.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Weldon said translation services were available.

Albert Benejan, PTSO president at Bassick High, thanked those who visited and e-mailed him when he was in the hospital. He thanked Dr. Johnson for her support in the visit to a Waterbury school. He said Bassick was going great, everyone was working together and it was a hundred percent better. He expressed concern about the PAC/PTSO budget situation and the expenditure of those funds by principals. Mr. Benejan also discussed the need to have policies on security searching bags.

Gail Janensch said there were only 28 days until the election. She said Dr. Johnson and Harding's Law Academy had reached out to her about her efforts to increase civic engagement. She said she was working with Bassick and Fairchild Wheeler as well regarding voter registration. She said this administration and the board had been done more on civic engagement than in the seven years she's been here.

Sheena Graham thanked Dr. Johnson, the central office, the IT department and all of the board for the outpouring of love shown to her after being nominated as teacher of the year in Connecticut. She said she was forever grateful.

Ms. Pereira said she believed everyone would agree it was an honor to have Ms. Graham as a teacher in our district and especially at Harding High.

Ms. Martinez arrived at the meeting.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

Mr. Walker moved approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 22, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradley. Edits were noted. The motion was approved

by a 8-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Illingworth, Weldon, Martinez, Walker, Sokolovic, Pereira, Allen and Bradley. Mr. Taylor abstained.

Ms. Pereira moved approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 24, 2018, held at 6:00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic.

The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Illingworth, Martinez, Bradley, Walker, Sokolovic and Pereira. Mr. Taylor, Mr. Sokolovic and Mr. Weldon abstained.

Mr. Walker moved approval of the minutes of the second Special Meeting of September 24, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic

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

Ms. Pereira moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 24, 2018. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez. A correction was noted.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:

Mr. Taylor reported on the Facilities Committee meeting of October 1st. He said the committee decided to take no action to move Bridgeport Military Academy to the former

Harding High or moving the facilities department to the same building. He added the tree planting requested by Dr. Otuwa was approved.

Ms. Pereira noted the item on the tree planting had not been placed on the agenda for the board's approval. Mr. Taylor said he did not support adding the item to the agenda tonight by a two-thirds vote.

In response to a question, Mr. Taylor said he had not heard back from Mr. Halstead on the community gardens. He said he would put the item on a future agenda.

Ms. Martinez reported on the Finance Committee meeting of October 3. She said the committee heard an update on the 2018-19 budget. She said the Carver Foundation contract for Classical Studies, the E-Rate and the Protraxx agreements were also discussed.

Ms. Martinez moved *"to move Old Business items A and B and to add the Protraxx agreement to the agenda."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez said the committee voted to approve the contract with the Carver Foundation for Classical Studies. She said the committee reviewed language changes to the contract by the city attorney.

Ms. Pereira moved *"to approve the Carver Foundation contact agreement for Classical Studies Magnet Academy with edits."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez.

In response to a question about the commencement date of the agreement, Assistant Principal Lindsay Davis said the

current projected start date was November 5th. Marlene Siegel, chief financial officer, said the program should end by the end of May.

Ms. Davis said the Carver Foundation would not bring in its own people, but working with the school's staff. Dr. Johnson suggested the dates in the contract be October 15th to May 30th.

Ms. Pereira said a reference to the authority to hire a third-party was decided to be changed to "the board of education."

Ms. Pereira said she wanted the contract to state that the board is additionally insured. Ms. Siegel said, upon advice of the city attorney's office, we will insist the certificate of insurance presented by Carver includes the additional insured.

Ms. Siegel said the city attorney's office indicated a reference to sexual misconduct and molestation insurance should be added as part of the certificate of insurance.

Mr. Taylor questioned a motion to approve the contract being made with all these errors in it. Ms. Pereira said a lot of the revisions made in committee were present, but the start and end date had not been previously discussed. She said she was fine with the contract.

In response to a question, Dr. Johnson said along with Ms. Clarke and Ms. Siegel she would make the necessary edits to the document.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez moved *"to approve the E-Rate RFQ VED,*

07097.” The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor.

Ms. Pereira noted Kellogg had been the consultant on the E-Rate for 14 years, which had never gone out to bid. She said she had been fighting to go out to bid for three years, and when that was done Kellogg reduced their price by \$10,000. She said this was why she was so passionate about going out to bid. She added the Kellogg was a woman-owned company, with only one male on the board.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez moved “*to approve the Protraxx agreements for years beginning in 2018 and ending in 2021.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Ms. Pereira said we did not go out to bid on this because Ms. Siegel said under the law it was not required. Ms. Siegel said when instructional services are involved the district explores opportunities with multiple vendors, however, a formal bidding process is not required. She said opportunities through various vendors were explored.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Pereira moved “*to add to the agenda discussion and possible action regarding the City of Bridgeport’s failure to meet the minimum budget requirement(MBR) as required under state statute.*” The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic.

The motion was approved by an 8-1 vote. Voting in favor were members Allen, Bradley, Illingworth, Martinez, Weldon, Walker, Sokolovic and Pereira. Mr. Taylor was opposed.

Dr. Johnson said she reached out to the mayor on the issue and had conversations with Mr. Shamus and Mr. Gaudett. She said they offered to cover the \$250,000 by paying that amount in board expenses. She said she realized it would impact the board's MBR for next year and the board would have to decide whether to accept the offer.

Dr. Johnson said the city said they would put the \$250,000 in the budget next year.

Ms. Pereira said under state statute the only expenditure that can be made under the MBR is cash. She described how under the Fabrizi administration auditors found over \$13 million that the administration stole from the district's 21,000 students.

Ms. Pereira said the city made the \$250,000 offer to pay for expenses because they would come up with crazy numbers for the services they're claiming to pay on our behalf. She added that under statute if the board lets the city fail to meet its MBR they don't have to meet it next year, and the state has the right to double the reduction in a penalty under the ECS grant. She said this could lead to the loss of \$750,000.

Ms. Pereira said the Finance Committee agreed if the matter was not resolved by last Friday we would have our law firm send a letter to the mayor and the City Council about the matter.

Ms. Pereira said we're the most underfunded district in the state. She said the mayor gave the board zero his first year as mayor, gave us \$377,000 in the second year and \$1,000,390 last year. She said all this led to \$36 million in cuts.

Mr. Bradley said if it is illegal for us to allow the city to do what Ms. Pereira recounted, it's a nonissue and there is nothing to vote on. He said the only recourse we have is to place them on legal notice.

Mr. Taylor noted the City Council approved the district's budget. He suggested the board members and the superintendent call the council members to let them know. He said he did not want to spend \$100,000 in legal fees to obtain \$250,000. He said posts on social media could assist in the effort.

Ms. Martinez said it is important to educate the community on this issue. She said the Bridgeport community is fooled too much by people who say they are there for us. She said she had been saying since Day One the board is a department of the city, but they don't treat us as such.

Ms. Martinez moved that *"our attorneys issue a formal letter to OPM, Mr. Nkwo, the mayor, Ken Flatto, Dan Shamus, the City Council as a whole and Tom Gaudett stating that that money should be released to us as it should."* She noted there has already been a meeting with the city officials. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Mr. Illingworth said he agreed with Ms. Pereira's comments wholeheartedly, except it was the City Council, not the mayor, who gave the board \$1million. He said the mayor's administration did everything to make the case to not give us a single penny. He said this keeps happening over and over again. He said the city's goal was to lower the MBR. He said Mr. Nkwo kept referring to the minimum in the meeting. Mr. Illingworth asked if our kids are worth the minimum. He said enough is enough.

Mr. Taylor said he wanted the \$250,000 and what the city did was in poor taste, but he just didn't want to incur a bill. He said Mr. Nkwo works for the mayor, so this was coming from the mayor.

Ms. Pereira said it was important to put this in writing. Ms. Martinez said if the letter is not responded to we should take them to court.

Mr. Illingworth said the first thing the letter should state is we are not going to agree to their proposal.

Mr. Sokolovic suggested the board start with a demand for payment before scheduling a Special Meeting.

In response to a question, Dr. Johnson said the board's counsel was present in the meeting today with the city representatives. She said Atty. Dugas recommended to stay the course and to get the \$250,000 in cash.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Weldon reported on the Governance Committee. Ms. Pereira said she was concerned about the superintendent evaluation process. She said the superintendent still did not have goals and objectives established. Dr. Johnson said she still had two more meetings pending with board members.

Dr. Johnson noted she provided the draft of the goals to the board members.

Mr. Sokolovic referred to the Governance Committee the standard operating procedures for entering and exit policies with the exact same language he referred the matter to the Facilities Committee. He said this would include a policy

regarding beverages.

Mr. Walker reported on the Teaching & Learning Committee. He said the committee met to discuss the agreement with ABCD regarding the early childhood center at Harding High. He noted some highlights of the agreement, which will be a one-year agreement with two additional one-year periods at the board's option. The agreement is based on in-kind services and involves no payments to ABCD.

Mr. Walker said he had visited the early childhood center at Harding and it was wonderful. Dr. Johnson said this was an opportunity to keep student parents in high school. She added a formal policy will be developed for presentation to the committee and then to the board.

Ms. Pereira said the reference to scope of work should have a termination date of 2019, with the board having a right to extend another two one-year terms. Dr. Johnson said although no problems are anticipated, the one-year contract was just to safeguard ourselves.

Ms. Pereira said the policy to be developed should accommodate students ahead of staff members.

Mr. Walker moved *"we approve this agreement with edits as mentioned at this meeting for the ABCD high school early learning center."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

Mr. Walker said the Teaching & Learning Committee will meet on October 16th.

Mr. Illingworth said the Personnel Committee will meet on October 17th.

Mr. Sokolovic reported on the Students & Families Committee meeting of September 26th.

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“to approve the commodity bids as awarded by the nutrition department for commodity cheese processing, commodity vegetable processing, commodity fruit processing, commodity chicken, turkey and beef processing, commodity egg processing, frozen and refrigerated fruit products, snack products, condiment and portion control products, miscellaneous grocery, meat and dairy, cereal and breakfast products, miscellaneous and direct delivery products, paper and cleaning supplies, and bread and bakery products.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Mr. Sokolovic said the bids awarded were basically at the best price and best dollar value. Mr. Taylor said he was sure Mr. Sokolovic, Mr. Walker and Ms. Pereira fully vetted the matter. Mr. Taylor moved the question. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradley.

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

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

Mr. Sokolovic noted the soy and sun butter processing received no bids. He moved *“to send out to bid again commodities soy and sun butter processing.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Mr. Bradley questioned why the motion was needed since the items would just go out to bid again.

In response to a question, Vincent Esposito, acting director of the nutrition department, said if there were no bids the only alternative is to purchase it at the higher price or market value. He said these are popular items as a substitute for peanut butter. He said he will be more aggressive to get companies that are available to provide the products.

Ms Pereira said the nutrition department agreed at the committee meeting that they need to do a better job of outreach to potential bids.

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

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“to approve the milk and dairy product as suggested by the nutrition department.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira.

Mr. Sokolovic noted the lowest bidder was not selected. He said there had been issues in the past with the condition and delivery of the product. He said the scoresheets showed Wade's Dairy far outperformed Cream-O-Land Dairy. He said he wanted the board to be fully aware of the price disparity. He said the top three items will cost about \$8,162 more.

Mr. Taylor asked why we send things to committee to come back to be micromanaged. Mr. Sokolovic said the committee wanted to bring this forward and give the board full

information. He said there could be a \$57,000 savings by splitting the bids between Wade's Dairy and Cream-O-Land.

Ms. Pereira said Cream-O-Land had a lot of problems with delivery due to being located in New Jersey. She said the committee was trying to be transparent; she recommended the bids be approved.

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

Ms. Pereira referred the issue of organizing parents in schools around the upcoming board budget to the Students & Families Committee.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS/AGENDA:

Dr. Johnson said conversations have begun with principals about scheduling ten community meetings with City Council members directed at the 2018-19 budget process. Ms. Pereira asked that the dates be scheduled only if the City Council members agreed to attend on those dates. Dr. Johnson said it was important to hold the meetings even if the council members were not present.

Mr. Illingworth said it was important to spell out to the council members and parents what would happen if the board did not get the resources it needs. Ms. Pereira said she asked Dr. Johnson to prepare information on the cuts that directly impacted the schools where the events will be held.

Dr. Johnson said October is Bullying Prevention Month. She said there was an aggressive campaign, including social

media and appearing before the City Council on October 11th. She said on October 23rd there will be Unity Day events.

Dr. Johnson said the Tauck Family Foundation gave \$40,000 to BCAC to assist with social-emotional learning in the district and another \$5,000 to manage those funds.

Dr. Johnson said the District at a Glance section had a list of school visits that have taken place so far.

Ms. Allen moved approval of personnel items I to IV. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

The next item was on the RFP for expelled student services. Dr. Johnson noted Mr. Taylor put the item on the agenda, however, the item needed to go to committee. Mr. Walker said he had it on the agenda of the Teaching & Learning Committee. Mr. Taylor said he had reservations on the RFP that he would raise at the committee. Ms. Pereira asked the size of the font of the RFP document be increased.

Mr. Walker said if members were unable to attend the committee next Tuesday, they should send him an e-mail about any concerns and he would address them.

The next item was on outside beverages in schools. Mr. Taylor said he put this on the agenda as an olive branch to Mr. Sokolovic because it was not covered at the committee meeting.

Mr. Sokolovic said he referred the item to the Governance

Committee.

The next item was on the March for Education having space or an office in a school. Mr. Taylor said he attended the march. He said the organizer, Timothy Cooper, was an extraordinary man with a very moving story.

Ms. Blake of the March for Education read a letter from Mr. Cooper who said he unfortunately was not available tonight to present his proposal for summer and after-school programs. Wayne Winston said the organization was oriented towards advocacy and making sure every kid has an opportunity to go to college. He said if the board provided space it would enhance their ability to get the message out to students.

Mr. Sokolovic said the board had no information on the foundation. In response to a question, Mr. Winston said the foundation does not raise money; it is paid out of our own pocket. He said they had received donations from Stop & Shop and partnered with the University of Bridgeport, buildON and the Boys' and Girls' Club.

Mr. Sokolovic said the group's Facebook page had an entry about a controversy in 2015 during a talent show when some people preyed on children and took advantage of them. Mr. Winston said about \$200 was raised in Stratford that went towards the parade. People who said they were music producers did not produce promised opportunities.

Mr. Sokolovic noted the district had its own foundation and he questioned why a competing foundation should get a facility to compete for the same dollars. Mr. Winston said his organization did something different with the parade. He said Senators Murphy and Blumenthal had supported the effort.

Ms. Pereira said the organization was not registered with the secretary of state, which is a violation of state statute. She said she could not grasp from the website what the organization does. She added that only two 501(c)(3)s have space in our buildings, buildON and a math program from the Bridgeport Public Education Fund. She said Mr. Winston's organization did not seem to directly work to help student outcomes. She said numerous nonprofits would ask for space in the district for free if the request was granted.

Mr. Winston said if the district does not make space available they will find some other place to hold meetings, which take place about once a month.

Ms. Pereira suggested March for Education come to a Students & Families Committee meeting. She noted the Puerto Rican Day parade was not allowed to use the board's facilities for free.

Dr. Johnson said the district is limited on space and she also had concerns about the vetting process.

Mr. Taylor said a friend of his, Eldorado Anderson, was not charged to use the cafeteria at Tisdale School. He said he was impressed that the March for Education was not asking for a nickel, only a place to hang their hat. He said he wished Mr. Cooper could have been here tonight.

Mr. Bradley said the proposal required more vetting, but he could attest to the great work the organization has been doing in the community. He said pride in school goes a long way with students.

Mr. Illingworth said the March for Education had done

wonderful work over the years. He said the board should be in partnership with the group. He suggested the superintendent meet with the organization to explore if something could be worked out.

Dr. Johnson said she had met with Mr. Cooper in the past and participated in the march last year. She suggested the unanswered questions be handled in the committee.

The next item was on Harding High's print shop for public use. Mr. Taylor said he received an impressive guided tour of the facility by Dr. Johnson. He said the NAACP's monthly flyer has to be printed by the city and he feels there is pressure to censor it. He said it would help with the image of the district to offer printing services to nonprofits because the facility is so impressive.

Mr. Sokolovic said he sends paper donations to his son's school because of the paper shortage, so he wanted to be sure the district would not be incurring expenses. Mr. Weldon said he heard of this being done in technical schools, but the person requesting the service provides the materials.

Ms. Pereira said she has used the Harding print shop to create neighborhood Easter and Christmas invitations, for which she pays the cost of the materials. She said the print shop should not be used for anything political. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Bradley said Ms. Pereira's neighborhood events were political.

Mr. Sokolovic said he just wanted to be sure the district would not lose money. Mr. Taylor urged Mr. Sokolovic write on social media about the positives of the Harding print shop.

Dr. Johnson recommended once a certified teacher is in place at the school that it be publicized extensively.

The next item was on increasing the human resources budget for advertising and outreach to \$200,000 per year or as needed.

Mr. Taylor said the HR director had been left with a hammer without a handle. He said he did not agree HR had a \$30,000 budget; he believed there was no budget. He said he had discussed growing our teachers from students with Dr. Batista at Cesar Batalla. He said it was not fair the HR director had to operate on a shoestring budget.

Ms. Pereira asked if there was any department in the district not working on a shoestring budget. Mr. Sokolovic spoke against the proposal because the board had just closed a massive budget gap and laid off employees. He said the board did not have \$200,000.

Ms. Siegel said the existing budget is \$157,000, which includes \$80,000 for Teach for America. She said the budget is for recruitment, new teacher hires, and \$17,000 for Applitrack software.

Mr. Illingworth suggested referring the item to the Finance Committee.

Ms. Martinez left the meeting.

The next item was on hiring additional cafeteria workers and security officers at understaffed schools.

Mr. Taylor said from his visits to schools he said the security

and cafeteria staff needed more help in the system.

Ms. Pereira said the district had more security officers than ever. She said regarding the cafeteria workers Ms. Siegel had specific allocations for schools based on the number of students in the school, which are not based off the top of someone's head.

Ms. Pereira said if she thought she had the votes she would cut the security guards in half and put every dollar into social workers and psychologists. She said security guards and police officers only perpetuate the student-to-prison pipeline, especially for black and Hispanic males.

Mr. Taylor said it was just a suggestion and he did not have analytic data. He said the security officers are active members of the schools and they're ready to respond as the frontline of defense to dangerous situations. He said the security guards wear their uniforms with pride and have positive relationships with the student body.

Mr. Sokolovic said we just came off closing a very deep budget gap and the district was still in danger of having to make cuts.

Ms. Siegel said the staffing of security guards was reviewed last week with the HR department. There are 83 security guards, with two positions recently filled. She said there are five inactive positions for individuals on workers' comp or medical leave. She said as of last Friday there are three part-time security guards, which is short of the maximum allowable number of eight. She said Lt. Grech was looking at the situation carefully and will make recommendations for hires as soon as he has candidates available.

The next item was on referring to board security officers as “officers” and not “security guards.” Mr. Taylor said the security officers would like to be referred to as “officers.” He said he checked at the state level as well about this. He said it seemed they don’t get the respect they deserve and are at a lower scale of pay. He said it would not cost us anything to refer to them as security officers.

Mr. Illingworth said he agreed, however, the guards belong to a union and he wondered what the contract referred to them as. Ms. Pereira said the NAGE contract refers to security guards. Mr. Illingworth said any change should begin at the contract level.

Ms. Pereira said the term “officer” gives the impression of the power of arrest or certification. Mr. Weldon noted the board does not negotiate the NAGE contract. Mr. Sokolovic said he agreed with Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Bradley left the meeting.

Luis Santiago was recognized. He said he works in the camera monitoring location. He said security guards are state certified as security officers. He added that he was the treasurer of the NAGE union and he could share with the union the contract verbiage.

In response to a question, Mr. Santiago said he took an eight-hour course and a test to get his license.

Dr. Johnson said Mr. Santiago’s wife and son are also guards in the district.

Mr. Weldon said it would seem the board is not in a position to change the job title. Mr. Taylor said it sounds like we’re

arguing semantics. Mr. Santiago said he would bring the issue to the NAGE union.

The next agenda item was the addition of a device to provide cell service in the Harding High cafeteria for staff.

Mr. Taylor said for two weeks the phone system was down in Harding and there was no communication in the cafeteria or kitchen. Additionally, the cafeteria's staff cellphones do not work in the kitchen. He said this was not fair or safe. He said it would be a minimal expense to correct this, which should be billed to the city or the general contractor.

In response to a question, Jeffrey Postolowski, the IT director, said wifi was available in the cafeteria area. Mr. Walker said there would be a lot of schools that would think to not have cell service would be the biggest blessing in the world.

Mr. Postolowski said there are multiple forms of communication in the school including walkie-talkie. He said when the issue was brought to his attention there was a full phone test of every phone in the building and the claim of the phones being out was not substantiated. He said such reports are taken very seriously and addressed immediately due to safety concerns.

Mr. Postolowski said the short version of the cellphone situation is the district would have to solicit a vendor to come in and put femtocell devices in. He said Harding has a substantial cellphone service issue, but it cannot be addressed by just putting a device in. He said he is looking at options for putting in femtocells for different carrier or a universal version. He said a universal femtocell would have to come out of our budget.

Mr. Postolowski said the problem has not gone unnoticed and he had experienced it personally. He said there was not an instantaneous solution.

Mr. Taylor said it should have been included in the building construction, even though it wasn't the responsibility of Mr. Postolowski or the board. He said to have not have cell service in this day and age is not acceptable. He said he could bring it up at the City Building Committee.

Mr. Postolowski noted the full building had full wifi service, so any cellphone made in the last two years should be able to use wifi. He said there was a lack of understanding on the staff on how to use their devices in that way and suggested information be circulated on this.

Mr. Walker referred the item to the Facilities Committee for further investigation.

Ms. Pereira said she had a friend who works in Harding who has not mentioned this. She noted there were issues with Harding's phone listing on 411 and with MapQuest directions.

Mr. Postolowski said the day the issue came up, action was taken. He said we put a request in to update the mapping service with Google and other companies.

In response to a question about the expense of enhancing cell service, Mr. Postolowski said the same would have to be done for Fairchild Wheeler and a lot of Central High. He said the problem is improper building penetration.

Mr. Taylor said the issue was why this was not taken care of

when the buildings were constructed.

Mr. Sokolovic said this type of issues could be more efficiently dealt with in committee. Mr. Taylor said this was coming from a man who wanted to burn a half an hour talking about the milk bid.

The next item was on establishing a naming committee for the Harding High library. Mr. Taylor said Councilwoman Jackson called him and asked him to table the matter.

Ms. Pereira moved to table. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was standard operating procedure for guards and entrance and exit policies.

Mr. Taylor said he was hearing numerous complaints about this. He said one policy was needed for all the schools.

Mr. Sokolovic suggested the matter be addressed in the Governance Committee.

Ms. Pereira said this has been an issue for years. She said the board asked Officer Collazo to draft a proposed policy for the Facilities Committee, but he never brought a single written recommendation. She said she agreed it needs to be updated.

Mr. Taylor said he thought the security officers and school staff should have a say in drafting a policy. He said he was not a big fan of the police.

Dr. Johnson noted the Bassick soccer team's record was 8-1-2 and they are ranked number five in the state. They have

also qualified for the state tournament.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Draft