

Monday, December 9, 2024

MINUTES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held December 9, 2024, at Harding High School, 319 Bond Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m.

Present were Mayor Joseph Ganim, Chair Jennifer Perez, Vice Chair Joseph Sokolovic, Secretary Albert Benejan Grajales, Christine Baptiste-Perez, Akisha Cassermere, Tiheba Bain, Robert Traber, and Willie Medina. Andre Woodson\*\* arrived subsequently as noted.

\*\*remote and in-person participation.

Acting Superintendent Dr. Royce Avery was present.

Mayor Ganim said this was his 20th year of presiding over the annual organizational meeting. He thanked the board members for their hard work.

Mayor Ganim thanked Dr. Avery for the time he has committed and in taking on the leadership position.

Mr. Woodson joined the meeting online.

Mr. Sokolovic nominated Jennifer Perez for chair. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Traber.

Ms. Baptiste nominated Akisha Cassermere for chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Bain.

Mr. Woodson arrived at the meeting in person.

Ms. Perez was elected by a 5-4 vote. Voting in favor of Ms. Perez were members Sokolovic, Traber, Benejan Grajales, Medina, and Perez. Voting in favor of Ms. Cassermere were members Baptiste-Perez, Woodson, Bain, and Cassermere.

Mayor Ganim congratulated Ms. Perez. He thanked all the board members. He noted Faith Acts, and a number of pastoral leaders were present, and he said the community coming together at this time is really important. He said he looked forward to good things happening with the new board in the new year.

Mayor Ganim left the meeting.

Mr. Medina nominated Mr. Sokolovic for vice chair. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Benejan Grajales.

Ms. Bain nominated Ms. Cassermere. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Baptiste-Perez.

Mr. Sokolovic was elected by a 5-4 vote. Voting in favor of Mr. Sokolovic were members Sokolovic, Traber, Benejan Grajales, Medina, and Perez. Voting in favor of Ms. Cassermere were members Baptiste-Perez, Woodson, Bain, and Cassermere.

Ms. Baptiste-Perez nominated Mr. Benejan Grajales for secretary. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic.

Ms. Bain nominated by Mr. Medina.

Atty. Mark Anastasi of the city attorney's office said a second was not required.

Mr. Medina said he was not accepting the nomination.

Ms. Perez said she would nominate Ms. Cassermere if she wanted the role. Ms. Cassermere said she did not want the nomination

Mr. Benejan Grajales was elected by a 7-0 vote. Voting in favor of Mr. Benejan Grajales were members Sokolovic, Traber, Benejan Grajales, Medina, Perez, Bain, and Cassermere. Members Baptiste-Perez and Woodson abstained.

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Ms. Bain moved to approve 2023 organizational meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Medina and unanimously approved.

Mr. Traber moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Medina and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod