APPROVED MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION July 26, 2016

PLACE:

Darien Public Schools Board of Education Meeting Room 7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Harman, Chair; Mesdames Hagerty-Ross, Zuro, Stein and Sullivan; and Messrs. Burke, Dineen, and Martens.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ms. McNamara.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Susie Da Silva, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Shirley Klein, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Student Services; Ms. Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources.

VISITORS:

Approximately 25.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Harman called the meeting to order at 7:46 p.m. The next Regular BOE meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 23, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Darien Board of Education Meeting Room.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Mr. Harman thanked everyone who was in attendance. It has been a year since the Board has begun working on their efforts to go paperless and noted improvement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Gurliacci, Editor of the Darienite, said that he was surprised to see the schedule in the agenda. He said that he was not able to cover the meetings because they are scheduled on the 4th Tuesday of every month, which is the same time for the Planning and Zoning Commission.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Brenner said that this would mark the end of the first year of tenure for the Central Office staff. He said that he believed that all the staff felt they were fortunate to have come to Darien.

Dr. Brenner provided an update on the summer facility work.

• DHS

- The locker pods are being converted to classrooms as scheduled.
- Construction is moving forward on Stadium East and completion is on schedule with a possible October 15th completion date.
- Trees are being trimmed. New trees have been planted on parking strip.
- Sod has been installed on the old JV baseball field.
- Band shell is on order, due September 12th.
- A wooden guard rail will be installed opposite the oval.
- LED lights are being retrofitted at the high school.

MMS

- 10 classrooms have been painted.
- Estimates for crumbling curbs have been obtained.
- A significant amount of poison ivy is being removed from the front of the school.
- Fencing and guard rails are being ordered.
- Shut off water main valves will be installed.
- The new clock system is on order.

Central Office

- The back parking lot has been newly paved. Lines will be painted in soon.
- Exterior LED lights are being installed.
- The building's hydroponic heating system is being installed.

Hindley

- Light poles have been straightened and repaired.
- The sump pump in the boiler room is being replaced.

Holmes

- The generator installation is almost completed.
- New sidewalk will be installed on August 8th.
- New blacktop will be installed in the bus loop.

Ox Ridge

- Installation of the new digital controls is almost complete.
- The main office will be reconfigured and new counter top installed.
- A broken light pole will be replaced.
- The black top will be replaced.

Royle

- A new generator will be installed once plans are completed.
- Bids on the fire alarm upgrade have been received.
- Heating units are being installed in the first grade wing.
- Black top repair is underway.
- An art room and a sink have been moved.

- A computer lab is being converted into a classroom.

In conclusion, Dr. Brenner said there was a significant amount of work underway and that the buildings would be ready when the students return to school in September.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

June 28, 2016 Special Meeting and Executive Session

** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 28, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION.

** MR. BURKE SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 28, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH SIX IN FAVOR (SULLIVAN, HAGERTY-ROSS, ZURO, STEIN, MARTENS, AND BURKE) AND TWO ABSTENTIONS (HARMAN AND DINEEN).

June 28, 2016 Regular Meeting

** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 28, 2016 REGULAR MEETING.

** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 28, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH SIX IN FAVOR (SULLIVAN, HAGERTY-ROSS, ZURO, STEIN, MARTENS, AND BURKE) AND TWO ABSTENTIONS (HARMAN AND DINEEN).

July 11, 2016 Special Meeting

** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 11, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING.

** MR. DINEEN SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 11, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

July 25, 2016 Special Meeting

** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 25, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING. ** MR. DINEEN SECONDED.

** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 25, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH SEVEN IN FAVOR (HARMAN, HAGERTY-ROSS, ZURO, STEIN, DINEEN, MARTENS, AND BURKE) AND ONE ABSTENTION (SULLIVAN).

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS.

There were no Committee Reports to present at this time.

** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO SUSPEND TO ADD OR MODIFY TWO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA. ** MR. MARTENS SECONDED.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO ADD AN AGENDA ITEM REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF MS. SHELLEY SOMERS AS PRINCIPAL OF MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL. ** MR. BURKE SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

** MR. BURKE MOVED TO MODIFY THE WORDING OF AGENDA ITEM 7A TO INCLUDE THE WORDS "AND POSSIBLE ACTION" ** MR. DINEEN SECONDED.

** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Dr. Brenner said that he was pleased to recommend Ms. Somers as the new principal for Middlesex Middle School. He requested the members of the selection committee that were present to stand, which they did.

Ms. Somers is currently a principal at Central Middle School in Greenwich. Ms. Somers was previously named as the State of Connecticut Middle School Principal of the Year in 2015. Dr. Brenner gave a brief overview of her resume for the Board.

** MR. BURKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MS. SOMERS AS THE PRINCIPAL OF MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL. ** MR. MARTENS SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

<u>UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE STADIUM LIGHTS</u> (File #2529)

Dr. Brenner said that the information packet contains the formal recommendations from Central Office Administration. There had been some questions that had been left open when this issue was last discussed.

He said that there had been some discussion about the natural barrier that would run from left field foul pole of the JV baseball field to the right field foul pole of the Varsity baseball field along the fence line. Dr. Brenner said that he had reached out to the DAF about this and the DAF had respectfully declined to become involved in the project. Therefore this item will have to be included in the budget and the estimated cost is about \$20,000.

Dr. Brenner said that in discussion about when the lights would be shut off for practices or games, currently, the lights are shut off at 7 p.m. He said that since they have the lights, the administration should allow regulation games to be played. The lights will be shut off at 8 p.m. to allow the games to finish.

Dr. Brenner said that the final estimates on the cost had been omitted from the packet and the lights will cost just under \$600,000. The audio system will cost approximately \$65,000 including the sound board. While the specifications for both the lights and audio systems were included in the information packet, the shut off times for both systems was not. The use of the systems during practice times are managerial issues and he was willing to work with the neighbors. He then reviewed the details for using the audio system and when it would be utilized. This information will be added to the packet before it is submitted to Planning and Zoning.

The referral will be submitted to Planning and Zoning on or about August 25th and P&Z will issue a report in September. Providing that the report is favorable, a formal application will be submitted in late September. The P&Z will schedule a number of public hearings with a formal decision in January.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) I'm still concerned about the shut off times for the lights and audio. I think 7:30 p.m. should work for practices and 8:00 p.m. for games. I don't know how we can approve this without the audio portion included at this time. Does the audio deal with just the stadium field and not the front ovals? What fields will this be applicable to? (Dr. Brenner said that the audio system would only be used on the stadium field. The audio quality would be significantly better and the volume of the sound will be significantly lower than it has been in the past. He also pointed out that in the past, the problem was not the sound system on the stadium field, but the sound on the baseball field. This is a management issue that needs to be brought under control by both Mr. Manfredonia and the Superintendent.) b) Similar to that point, if we don't start by having it in the document, it makes it that much more difficult to regulate. If we carve out that the system will be available for use on game days for both music and announcements during games but also state that the P.A. system will shut down at 6 p.m. so people aren't listening to loud music during their dinner, it will afford Mr. Manfredonia a backdrop to manage against, if that is our family. We could also get hung up with Planning and Zoning if we don't address this. (Dr. Brenner said that he had not been through this with Planning and Zoning like everyone else had, but felt that there was a difference between the governing principle and management. He said that by using the governing principle, it was easy to shut off lights at 8 p.m. but if that template was used only for games, he asked what would happen on Saturday afternoons. The Board could limit it just to games, but what transpires is the use of big boom boxes, which is what happened in the past. He explained that he was not minimizing the problem but trying to figure out a solution.) c) I hear the concerns and my sense is that the Superintendent can manage them, but if it is that big of an issue, why not excise the sound system from the approval request. It is currently both lights and sound. We could have time to create all kinds of different proposals concerning the regulations of the sound system. We could pay for and install the system and not use it until the details could be worked out. However, I would hate to see the lights proposal cancelled out because of the sound. d) I agree. I think that is wise, especially if we are having issues with it now, with or without the lights, we need to address this. e) I would assume that this is what the Athletic Director is proposing because this is what he is looking for. We lay out what we are looking for and what is realistic to go through the P&Z review process and there is no guarantee that the next steps would not be affected. f) I agree. I think we are anticipating potential problems, which may be valid, but we are discussing potential, anticipated problems down the road. I think we should go with what the administration has given us and deal with it as the issues come up. g) I also think we have spent a lot of time on this proposal as it is and to separate the two and have a whole different set of meetings just on the sound system when there are many other issues that we need to focus on, I would say no. h) The prior proposal had the sound system in it and there were parameters set up and it sort of guided how the school uses the sound. So I think we need to put something in such as "the band cannot play after half time." To me, the band should be playing after half time. But there shouldn't be music when the lacrosse team holds its two on two tournament on Good Friday. It's how you manage. We've always had that piece in here. I think we have to include something in here and I think it has to go to P&Z as a full proposal. i) But for the purposes of tonight, it is 3.3. So we could excise 3.3 and pass this without the audio specifications and revisit them within the next week or the next meeting. i) This is the 3rd and this has to be in by the 25th? k) Were you given guidance to take the sound guidelines out? (Dr. Brenner said that he was not and that there were two sets of sound guidelines. One set was proposed by the neighbors who came forward. Those were their hopes and wishes and he did not work off of their guidelines. Dr. Brenner said he digested everything they said but did not work off of those guidelines as a proposal. He focused on the

sound quality and the information contains a significant amount of data as it applies to the sounds and decibels. Regarding the regulations of when the system is turned off, Dr. Brenner said that he was not sure what regulations they were working off of at this time. Mr. Manfredonia replied that it was common sense. Dr. Brenner said that he would suggest that the current model was a failed model and needs to be adjusted.) I) We have sound up there now. What are the guidelines now? (Dr. Brenner said that the installation of the audio system comes with a sound board. One of the ways that the audio would be controlled is by limiting access to that sound board. If only the High School Principal, the Superintendent and the Athletic Director have the password, it will be controlled. If someone else obtains access, the password can easily be changed. That would provide the administration with a level of management that does not currently exist. Managing the spillage of the sound and how to control and minimize the sound were the key focus of Dr. Brenner's work. He added that he was sensitive to the fact that the neighbors should be able to be in their backyards without having to listen to music they don't find tasteful during a Tuesday practice night. On game day, it would be something different.) m) Can we just not edit this but add something simple such as "the sound system will be utilized during varsity games only"? (Mr. Manfredonia asked if they would include only high school games.) n) High School games only because it could be a JV or varsity game, but only during games. o) But they use it during practices. p) But that's a management issue. Dr. Brenner said it wouldn't be used during practices. It could be as simple as just one edit. (Dr. Brenner said that he would be comfortable with that. If the edit said it would be "high school games", then it would allow the system to be used during varsity and JV games. It will be managed by the administration.) q) Just to clarify, because I have a child at Notre Dame, the band is a major part of the football game. We're going to let the band play, correct? Would the band and the sound system be the same thing? Will the band be able to play for the entire game as well? Why would we differentiate between the two of them? (Dr. Brenner said that he would not differentiate between them. He added that it was a school function.) r) The band would not be going through the sound system. (Dr. Brenner said that it would not.) s) In the past, the band has only been allowed to play at half times. What is happening now at many football games is that the band leads many of the cheers. They should be there for all the quarters. (Dr. Brenner asked if the band was only allowed to play at half time during a Saturday game.) t) It used to be only half time. (Dr. Brenner pointed out that there were two things going on. In essence, the issue is sound pollution. This is about the impact of the sound coming off the field, whether it is the band or the P.A. system. It impacts the neighbors.) u) I think that where we are trying to be sensitive is that at 7:30 when someone is trying to have their dinner, if the lights are on and there are tons of people there, which is great, we aren't also broadcasting loud music. There needs to be a turn off. (Dr. Brenner said he needed to hear from Mr. Manfredonia because he had only been in Darien for one year, while Mr. Manfredonia had been there for many years. He asked Mr. Manfredonia what the impact would be in using the sound system for high school games. Mr. Manfredonia said that the youth in town have used the sound system and the comment about DYLAX use of the sound for the three on three Good Friday games was accurate. There are a handful of other events that DYLAX or other groups use the sound system. However, it is the High School's campus and the High School is a priority. If it means that they eliminate or restrict the use of the sound system, so be it. Dr. Brenner said perhaps the way to handle this was to back into it. He suggested that the Board vote on the lights and he would provide the Board with something on the 23rd. He said that he now sees the issue and it was similar to working on managing the traffic.) v) This year, there has been a major improvement in the management of the traffic and flow of people in the high school. I've been very encouraged by that and I am, therefore, willing to entertain your management of the proper sound. (Dr. Brenner pointed out that there was another caveat built in and that the administration had said that they would do it, which was building in a space for feedback for those involved and the neighbors. He said that they would come back to the Board with a report and let them know if they didn't manage the system properly and need to make adjustments.) w) That would be the 3.0 portion? (Yes.) x) Listening to these comments, my remarks were not in dissent. I believe in the Superintendent's ability to manage this along with the Athletic

Director. I'm prepared to vote favorably on the proposal. y) I think it's fine. We're going to put it forward and P&Z will come back to us and say give us more specific parameters, which we can do at that point. It is fine.

** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR STADIUM LIGHTS TO PLANNING AND ZONING. ** MR. DINEEN SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PROPOSED MUSIC DEPARTMENT FIELD TRIP (File #2530)

Mr. Sadlon came forward to present the proposed DHS band trip. It has been the practice to alternate years for the overnight trips for the Band & Chorus and the Orchestra. He gave an overview of the proposed Jazz Ensemble, the Wind Ensemble and the Concert Band trip details.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) I was curious as to how many students you were hoping would participate. (Mr. Sadlon said that they try to include all 125 plus, but usually it works out to about 80%.) b) What has been the previous experience of fund raising? Are you able to raise that amount? (Mr. Sadlon said that it would not be a major issue. The students don't do the majority of the fund raising any more. We will subsidize the parent fund raising. The parents do some of the fund raising. The money that is raised reduces the cost of the trip for everyone.) c) Is there financial support available? (In the past, the staff has always said that if there was a student who wanted to go, the staff would find a way to make that happen. With all the new Student Activities Accounts rules and regulations, the staff has to adhere to the process. Everything needs to be documented. I would like to say that there is, but I can't say that every student that wants to go but can't afford it will have 100% of their costs covered.) d) I understand that the program is only on those two days. Has there been any discussion about the athletes that won't be able to go because of practices? (There will always be some athletes that won't be able to go.)

** MR. MARTENS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED MUSIC DEPARTMENT FIELD TRIP. ** MS. ZURO SECONDED.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

<u>UPDATE ON SUMMER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ESY ENROLLMENT</u> (File #2531)

Dr. Da Silva presented the enrollment report to the Board. She said that there has been an increase in the number of ESY (Extended School Year) students enrolled as a result of PPTs. Last year there were 261 students. This year there are 307 students. She gave a brief breakout.

REPORT AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PRE-K THROUGH GRADE 12 ENROLLMENT CAPACITY (File #2532)

Dr. Da Silva said that the figures can change daily, but Tokeneke Grade 5 was not sectioned off like Ox Ridge was. The Board had concerns about this. Dr. Da Silva said that Tokeneke had actually decreased in enrollment. The other enrollments have remained steady.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) On the third box, the enrollment as of July 28th. At Ox Ridge you have 4 with 68, but only 3 sections showing? (Dr. Da Silva said this was an error. She clarified that it was 4 sections, but the numbers below are inaccurate. She said that she would make the adjustments in terms of the number of students in the classes. It did decrease from 70 to 68 students. That is just there for understanding what the numbers would be.) b) I don't know why it would be four sections. You would need 69 to hit it to 4, but it's only 68. You would need 70 to hit it to 4. It should be 3. (Dr. Da Silva said that it could go down. You are right. I'll check that. There is a possibility of that number going down. There was no indication from the principal that he was anticipating fewer students. It could be that there are two packets that have been sent out but students are not yet enrolled.) c) We're voting on the section count. (Dr. Brenner asked if this was being approved as of July 31st or at the present time. Mr. Harman said that it was for approval right now. Dr. Da Silva said that the most recent number that she had for Ox Ridge was 68.) d) So what was in the budget? (Dr. Da Silva said that they had budgeted for 4 sections.) e) What is the total number of sections in the budget? (Dr. Brenner said that they were up one with 5th grade at Ox Ridge.) f) You have to give us some sort of feeling as to how these are going to break. (Dr. Brenner said that his major concern was the kindergarten class. He would prefer to have the 4 sections in the budget and explained why. He said that he would rather run the risk of sections with 18 and 19. He added that he was comfortable with sections that were up to 23 or 22 for kindergarten. There has not been a conversation about the philosophy of class size.) g) Space wise are we okay? (Yes.) h) At Tokeneke there was an issue. (Dr. Brenner said that looking at Tokeneke, he had never seen numbers jump like they had jumped there. Originally, there were 77 students and it dropped to 72. It could easily jump the other way, also. Dr. Da Silva said that there would be sections with 17 students in them.) i) They have to give us the number of sections that they want us to release tonight. i) I'm just asking the question. k) And I'm just explaining what we are voting on. l) My question was that on Ox Ridge, if you look at the third grade, there are four sections. One section has 24, one has 23, and two have 22. Why does one have 24? (Dr. Da Silva said that it was just the way that it was originally balanced and went on to give the details of how this was done. They will shift students from one class to another.) m) We are not voting on the number of sections, but on the release of one budget control.

** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF ONE BUDGET CONTROL POSITION AS REQUESTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT. ** MS. ZURO SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FIRST READING OF PROPOSED 2016-17 BOARD GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (File #2533)

Mr. Harman said that the Board has Annual Goals and Objectives to review and update.

Board comments: a) One of the issues was that the way that the Board Evaluation and how Superintendent was reviewed. I would like to request that this be added under Board Development as one of the tasks. b) I would just clarify under policy that the physical manual was now online. I would just add something to indicate it was online.

Mr. Harman said that he would make the revisions and distribute them for the next Board meeting.

FIRST READING OF PROPOSED 2016-17 DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (File #2534)

The Board then reviewed the District Goals with Dr. Brenner.

FURTHER DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON SCHEDULE OF 2016-17 REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS (File #2535)

Dr. Brenner said that there was a change in April because of the dates of the Spring Break. He pointed out that the Board could add in extra meetings, but it would end up with back to back meetings similar to the budget meetings. There is also a Saturday budget date, January 14th, which has been added, for the Board to work through the budget.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Does it make sense to add a date on Saturday for the school walk through in March?** b) **It would give people enough time to prepare their calendars**. (It should be just put on the calendar.) c) The key consideration is that if we have a regular **meeting versus a special meeting is the flexibility of adjusting the agenda. There is a whole budget calendar that will be created in November**. (Dr. Brenner said that in the context of assembling the budget calendar, the administration needs to include the walk through. He asked for clarification on when it was normally scheduled. The Board members told him it was normally the third Saturday in March.) d) These are **not subject to change. If we cancel a meeting, and reschedule it, it becomes a special meeting and we can't change the agenda. But you are bringing up a good point about having a central calendar**.

** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF 2016-17 REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS AS PRESENTED. ** MR. DINEEN SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ACTION ITEMS

PERSONNEL ITEMS (File #2536) Appointments Resignations Leave of Absence

Ms. Cion said that she had provided the Board with revised and updated Personnel Action reports.

** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PERSONNEL REPORT AS REVISED FOR JULY 26, 2016. ** MS. ZURO SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Paul Michalski, Middlesex Road, said that he was disappointed with the process over the last several weeks with the stadium lighting proposal. He said that his disappointment turned to disbelief. There have been slide shows and other things, but no guidelines were ever released. A number of neighbors met with Dr. Brenner and asked for guidelines. Dr. Brenner declined that request and said it wasn't protocol. He said that the neighbors were not only members of the community. The group asked for advanced copy of the guidelines and this was denied. They were told that they would get the information when the general community did, which was supposed to be at 3:30 p.m. earlier in the day. The only information that was available about the proposal were

the paper copies available at the meeting. The agenda listed the item as only an update. No materials were ever posted on the website.

The proposal isn't consistent with the understandings that the neighbors thought they had with Dr. Brenner. The only public comment period was at the beginning of the meeting. It feels wrong. The agenda was amended to take action feels wrong. He said that it might be legal but was wrong. He quoted the Connecticut General Statutes 7.3 regarding public meetings and Board of Education meetings regarding notification of votes.

He said that he did not know what the right answer was, but if the vote was not supposed to be taken, he would like to formally object to the vote having been taken and the legitimacy of that vote. He requested that the Board consider rescinding that vote and putting it off to the August meeting so the public could have time to digest the information in the proposals. He also suggested that Dr. Brenner sit down with the neighbors about the areas they believed there was understanding. At the August meeting, the Board might be able to hear public comment and take it into account.

Ms. Jill McCammon, Old Kings Highway South, asked about the function of the role of the PTA liaison, common entities for general goals, and if it would be appropriate to add an item regarding communicating with staff.

ADJOURNMENT

** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO ADJOURN. ** MR. MARTENS SECONDED. ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schneider Zuro Secretary