



PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE
27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

SPECIAL
PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
33 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CT 06786

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023

5:00 P.M.

MINUTES

PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED OCT 31 2023
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TOWN CLERK

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Showers, Ms. Tilton, Mr. Foote, Mrs. Candrea-Florencini, Mr. Perugino and Mr. Zbuska

Absent: Mrs. Kulesa

Also Present: Mr. Falcone, Superintendent of Schools

1. Call to Order and Pledge to the Flag

Mr. Seaman called the Special Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education of October 25, 2023 to order at 5 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Foote, second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

3. Discussion

**To Rescind the Vote to Close Harry S. Fisher Elementary School
To Rescind the Vote to Reconfigure the Plymouth Public School District**

Mr. Seaman, Board of Education Chair began the discussion.

Summary: The Board of Education and the Town of Plymouth began this journey back in 2018. A study was done back in 2019. Numerous board meetings took place where this was presented along with a Public Hearing that was in place. These will be posted on the website.

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Public outcry, accusations on Terryville Talks, accusations the meeting was illegal, the vote took place in executive session (the vote did not take place in executive session). The vote happened in open session. However, the Board wanted to make certain so legal counsel was contacted to look into the matter. The finding: The content of executive session was legal. The matter was how it was posted on the Agenda. Nothing was intentional or deliberate. There were no backdoor deals. The night of the meeting, there was no public in attendance. Nor was there public in attendance the meeting before, and the meeting before that.

The Board thought they were doing what was right. There were sensitive topics related to personnel and related to our staff that were being discussed. If this was incorrect or wrong, it was not meant to be deliberate. There was nothing that was malicious or ill intent.

The second reason for the discussion, which is the most important, is the parents and people feel their voices were not heard. The work was picked up from 2019. The Board understands it was a mistake. It was not deliberate. There were time lines that needed to be adhered to, staff in the schools were on edge, wondering what was happening, the future of their positions. He believes this is why the vote occurred that night.

It was heard tonight's meeting was held at 5 p.m. so that people would not be able to attend which is not accurate. It was rather a work issue for him in that he needed to return back to work. He explained this Board prides itself on being upfront and honest, with the Board of Finance, the Town Council, the staff, the people and with each other. They all work well together. Therefore, he feels the best course of action is to rescind the votes. Let's hear from the public, what they have to say and their questions. Tomorrow's information session, hopefully, will answer a lot of questions. However, he's certain there will be some questions that will go unanswered as some answers still need to be gotten. Everyone will not agree. There will be different viewpoints which is okay. We don't have to agree on everything all of the time which we know we don't. The Board needs to respect from the public and in turn, the public absolutely needs the respect from the Board. If the public feels that they did not receive this respect, he apologized. The Board is going to work on correcting this.

Ms. Tilton, Board of Education

Summary:

When interviewed by the nominating committee for the position on the Board, the question she remembers most is "Will you have the courage to speak up even if you are standing alone". This is where she feels she has failed. As a parent whose child would be directly impacted by this decision, she feels she did not fight hard enough to ensure that all of the other parents and taxpayers would have their voices heard; to have a say and be included in this decision. She regrets she did not use her voice to advocate for information and sharing addressing concerns. She was caught up in bearing the weight of making these hard decisions and lost sight of why she was here. She is not perfect and makes many mistakes. She tries her best to learn from these mistakes and more importantly to apologize. She is sorry she did not use her voice to advocate for everyone to be included in this decision.

4. Possible Action from Discussion

To Rescind the Vote to Close Harry S. Fisher Elementary School

MOTION: To entertain a motion that the Board rescind the action taken by the Board at the Special Meeting on October 12, 2023 to close Fisher Elementary School at the end of the 2023 – 2024 school year and to turn the building back to the Town of Plymouth at a future date to be determined by the Plymouth Board of Education. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani.

Any discussion. There being none the following roll vote was taken.

Yes, means you are in favor of rescind. No means you are not.

Roll Vote: Mr. Showers - Yes Ms. Tilton - Yes Mr. Foote - Yes

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani - Yes Mr. Perugino- Yes Mr. Zbuska - Yes

Mrs. Lucian - Yes

7 votes in favor – motion carries

To Rescind the Vote to Reconfigure the Plymouth Public School District

MOTION: To entertain a motion that the Board rescind the action taken by the Board at the Special Meeting on October 12, 2023 to reconfigure and reclassify the school according to Option 1 as presented in executive session. Motion Mr. Perugino, second Mr. Showers
Any discussion. There being none the following roll vote was taken.

Roll Vote: Mr. Showers - Yes Ms. Tilton – Yes Mr. Foote - Yes

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani – Yes Mr. Perugino - Yes Mr. Zbuska - Yes

Mrs. Lucian - Yes

7 vote in favor – motion carries

5. Adjournment

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 5:11 p.m. Motion Mr. Showers,
second Mrs. Lucian, all in favor, motion carries.



Patricia Piskorski
Recording Secretary
Plymouth Board of Education