

NEW MILFORD, CT

**New Milford Board of Education
 Special Meeting Minutes
 December 28, 2015
 Lillis Administration Building – Board Room**

2015 DEC 30 11:56

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Present:	Mr. David A. Lawson, Chairperson Mr. Robert Coppola Mr. Bill Dahl Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach Mr. Brian McCauley Mr. J.T. Schemm
Absent:	Mrs. Angela C. Chastain Mr. Dave Littlefield Mrs. Tammy McInerney

1.	Call to Order	Call to Order
A.	Pledge of Allegiance The special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.	A. Pledge of Allegiance
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Discussion and Possible Action	Discussion and Possible Action
A.	Orientation regarding superintendent search <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CES consultants Tom Jokubaitis and Jim Ritchie presented information to the Board for discussion regarding the steps to complete the superintendent search. A draft timeline was discussed, with January 13, 2016 proposed for focus group meetings. • Mrs. Faulenbach said she was very pleased with the aggressiveness of the timeline. • Mr. Lawson suggested that the January 13, 2016 date be used for the focus groups with the consultants making any necessary adjustments to time or place with district administration. • Mrs. Faulenbach asked if Board members should be present for those meetings and Mr. Jokubaitis said generally the Board is not there. • Mr. Jokubaitis asked if the Board had any 	A. Orientation regarding superintendent search

	<p>changes to the suggested make-up of the focus groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Lawson said he would like to see at least two community/parent focus groups offered, one during the day and one in the evening.• Mr. Dahl said a day meeting would perhaps be helpful to seniors since they do not always like to drive at night.• Mr. Dahl asked why the student focus group only included high school students and not middle school age. Mr. Jokubaitis said they had not had much success with that age group in the past whereas the high school level tends to have very insightful comments.• Mr. Schemm suggested piggybacking one of the sessions with a PTO event if possible to reach out to that group specifically. Mr. Lawson said they could come to the community groups as well.• Mr. Jokubaitis said they have found it difficult to get teacher participation if the meeting is held after school hours with just a general invitation to all due to the busy schedule of most teachers. He suggested that the Board consider having each school meet as a group beforehand to discuss focus group topics then allowing one or two representatives from each school to come to the focus group at the end of the student instructional day. Principals would provide for any needed release time for travel.• Mr. Lawson said he wants to make sure anyone who wants to participate can.• Mrs. Faulenbach said she would like to limit interference with the instructional day.• Mr. Coppola said it was important to provide the opportunity for inclusion.• Mrs. Faulenbach said a more structured invitation to the teachers would show that the Board truly wants their input.• Mr. Lawson said he thinks it is important that the public have another opportunity to weigh in when final candidates are being considered.• Mr. Coppola agreed, saying that was part of the Democrat campaign.• Mr. Jokubaitis said they would work on a	
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	<p>revised schedule and send it to the Board for final approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Lawson asked if the Board was okay with him as Chair giving final approvals versus calling another meeting.• Mrs. Faulenbach said she would like to see the revisions first.• Mr. Jokubaitis said if the Board chose to appoint itself as the search committee then these types of approvals could be done informally as part of the personnel search process and would not require a posted meeting and vote. He said others could be added to the committee over time if the Board wished.• Mrs. Faulenbach said she thought it was a good idea as it would give extra flexibility and move the process along.• Mr. Schemm agreed. <p>Mrs. Faulenbach moved to appoint the Board of Education in its entirety as the Superintendent Search Committee, seconded by Mr. Lawson.</p> <p>Motion passed unanimously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Jokubaitis presented a draft Focus Group Framework document for the Board’s consideration. He said it would be used to provide structure to focus group discussions as well as consistency from group to group. He said the plan is to record responses during the group meeting and display them on a screen so that the group would reach consensus on the topics under discussion. This same framework will be used for the online survey.• Mr. Lawson said he would like the topic “personnel management” added to question #3.• Mrs. Faulenbach asked if this was a standard framework with some tailoring to New Milford specifically and Mr. Jokubaitis said that is correct. Mr. Jokubaitis said the information provided by the focus groups will help structure applicant interviews further in the process.• Mr. Jokubaitis said they would run the online	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to appoint the Board of Education in its entirety as the Superintendent Search Committee.</p>
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	<p>survey roughly at the same time as the focus groups with some overlap so that focus group participants can be encouraged to take that one as well. The consultants will then prepare a formal leadership profile for adoption by the Board at a meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Schemm asked how the online survey would be promoted. Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Jokubaitis said they will use a press release, social media and the district’s website and school messenger service.• Mrs. Faulenbach said based on the timeline it appears there are six weeks to accept applications with the goal to hire a superintendent in March. Mr. Jokubaitis said that is correct; the recruitment brochure will go out at the beginning of January at the latest. Mrs. Faulenbach said if the profile was to be presented at a public meeting and formally adopted by the Board the group should look at dates now.• Mr. Lawson suggested that the presentation of the leadership profile to the public could be done at a special meeting on February 9th prior to the regular Board meeting.• Mr. Schemm asked for clarification that the information on the profile is not privileged and Mr. Jokubaitis said it is not; it is a summary of what the community desires in a candidate.• Mr. Jokubaitis presented a draft recruitment brochure for consideration. Mr. Ritchie said they would like to release this as soon as possible to start recruitment.• Mr. Lawson said he would prefer the reference to New Milford as a suburb of Danbury be removed. He would also prefer the term “historical” houses in the brochure.• Mr. Schemm asked if there was a way to incorporate the district’s mission statement in the brochure as it guides so much of what we do.• Mr. Jokubaitis said he would make the suggested changes.• Mrs. Faulenbach said she liked the general compensation description used in the brochure	
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as it does not box in the district. Mr. Jokubaitis suggested the Board would need to consider compensation specifics down the road, including salary and/or annuity. He said it would be helpful for recruiting purposes if the consultants had a range to refer to. He also suggested that the Board should consult its legal counsel as this item progresses.

- Mr. Coppola said he is not interested in hiring a superintendent at the same level as Dr. Paddyfote who had been with the district for many years.
- Mr. Lawson said the Board will be reviewing the contract for changes they might wish to make and he would consult the Board attorney.
- Mr. Ritchie reminded the Board that it is a seller's market so a compensation range will come into play.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked when the consultants would need this information and Mr. Jokubaitis said by the first interview stage. He suggested using the Board attorney as an intermediary.
- Mr. Coppola said he liked that idea as it gives the Board some distance as negotiations take place.
- Mr. Lawson suggested that an executive session be added to the agenda of the February 9th Board meeting so the Board can discuss compensation. He said he would check with the Board attorney to see if he could attend. Mrs. Faulenbach suggested that Mr. Lawson ask the Board attorney for the proper motion.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the position requirements section included a statement about upholding Board policy. Mr. McCauley said policy is referenced in bullet #4.
- Mr. Jokubaitis said any other information the Board would like could be requested at the interview stage. He reminded the Board of the importance of confidentiality regarding applicants who might have unfavorable consequences if it was known that they were looking to move positions.
- Mr. Jokubaitis asked if the Board was interested in having informal conversations

	<p>with candidates who may be interested but who had not yet applied. He said it is a way for the Board to practice interviewing and for a potential candidate to take a closer look.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Coppola said he was uncomfortable with this idea as he thinks it gives the potential candidate a leg up on others who may have actually applied.• Mr. Lawson agreed and said all candidates should go through the same process.• Mr. McCauley suggested it might be a good idea to attract a candidate who is on the fence since it is such a seller's market.• Mr. Dahl said he too could see the advantages in perhaps finding additional candidates and practice interviewing.• Mr. Ritchie said the pool at this point truly is a "puddle" and that the state is considering declaring the superintendent position a shortage area in 2017-2018. Mr. Jokubaitis said the consultants will work hard to find the right person for New Milford.• Mr. Lawson reminded the Board that they are not bound by the time framework. If a suitable candidate is not found, they can keep looking. The last superintendent was interim for three years.• Mr. Dahl said he thought it was important to involve the community at the interview stage. He suggested adding the NMEA and PTO at the first interview.• Mr. Jokubaitis said if the Board chooses to do this then the participants should be of an advisory nature only and must be strongly cautioned regarding confidentiality. Candidates may drop out over this.• Mr. Lawson said if that is the case then he is not interested in that candidate.• Mr. Ritchie said he also thought there was a danger in doing this as it can cause more of a rift than cohesion over who is selected and who is not. It can also be very problematic if the advisory group and the Board don't agree on a candidate.• Mrs. Faulenbach said she preferred to include	
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	<p>all the community versus singling out participants. She said it is ultimately the Board’s responsibility to choose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Schemm suggested participants could be solicited from the focus groups. • Mr. Coppola said the district has previously included advisory members when hiring administrative positions. • Mr. Lawson said he thought it was important to have some kind of community involvement at the end of the process, not just the beginning. • Mr. Jokubaitis suggested that if they wanted to include an advisory group that this could be done as a separate interview with each candidate prior to their interview with the Board. Perhaps the group could then rank the candidates in order of preference. He said the Board would have to determine how the advisory group would be selected. • Mr. Dahl mentioned that he has a health issue which may prohibit him from meeting attendance and asked if the Board would like him to excuse himself from the search committee. Mr. Jokubaitis said that would not be necessary since the search committee offers flexibility for input including telephone and email. The Board agreed that Mr. Dahl’s input was valuable. 	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m., seconded by Mr. Coppola and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:

Wendy Faulenbach

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Secretary
New Milford Board of Education