

Croton-Harmon UFSD | June 18, 2020 Board of Education Meeting CHUFSD

OK.

All right. Hello, everyone. I would like to call the June 18 Board of Education work session to order. And recommended action, that the Board of Education approves the agenda.

Right now?

So moved.

So moved. Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Opposed? Abstain? Motion carries.

All right. Now, we will move into a very nice portion of our meeting tonight, which is our tenure recommendations. And first, we have recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Justin Duchin, physical education tenure area, Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

We'll move on to Robin Woolley. Recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Robin Woolley, school counselor tenure area, Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

All right. Now, we are on to Rachel Bonilla. Recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Rachel Bonilla, school counselor tenure area, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

And we will move to Marie Sullivan. Recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Marie Sullivan, English as a new language tenure area, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Now, we will move on to Montserrat Ballina-Llosa. Recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Montserrat Ballina-Llosa, world languages tenure area, Croton-Harmon High School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Now, we'll move on to Ilana McConville. Recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Ilana McConville, social studies tenure area, Croton-Harmon High School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

And lastly, our last one would be recommended action, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants tenure to Sophie Wang-Paolicelli, English as a new language tenure area, Croton-Harmon High School, effective August 29, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. Congratulations. Yea.

So while we're on camera-- I think before, I said that we were not on camera. But first, congratulations. And I want all of our tenure recipients to know that in the fall, when we can be together again, we will have a formal recognition, where your principals get to say, wonderful things about you and embarrass you in front of the crowds.

So we wouldn't want to miss that. But we are so very proud of you and for being a part of our Croton-Harmon family. And congratulations to all of you.

[CLAPS]

And I did take your picture. Anyway, thank you, Sarah.

Thank you. And congratulations again.

All right. Now, we will move on to the reports section of the agenda. We will have a superintendent report from Dr. O'Connell.

Thank you. And before I begin, please know, tenure recipients, you do not have to stay for this meeting. I will not be offended, and neither will the board.

Not at all. Please, go enjoy your evenings.

Yes, thank you. And thank you for joining us now.

So thank you, and hello to the Board of Education and to our public who are viewing this tonight. I just have a brief report that I'd like to continue to update the board and our community of our School Re-Entry Task Force Committee.

We had a wonderful meeting today. We've been meeting about twice a week now for some time. We had another meeting today. If you remember, we have key focus areas. And we have divided our task force members into those key focus areas.

And we were busy at work again today. We did send out our first survey to the community because we wanted to get some feedback on our e-learning that has been occurring from between March and now, because we do believe that information will help inform our work moving forward.

So our first survey went out. And we are in the process of developing a second survey, which will be going out shortly. Again, that is our way, by sending out surveys, to give the community an opportunity to share their thinking with the task force so that it can inform our thinking as a group.

On Monday, I will be holding a community forum. We sent out a K-12 alert. And on Monday, we will have a community forum. People are invited into a Zoom virtual meeting.

And what we did in the K-12 alert was offer the community the opportunity to share a few questions that they may have. I was in it earlier today, and there were already well over 10 questions. So it's nice to see people using that.

We'll also use the Chat feature that's in Zoom for people during the community meeting to share some questions. But basically, the focus of the community meeting is to share the work of the task force to date. And I will say it probably 10 times during the community meeting.

Our task force has been working. However, we still have not received the guidance from New York State Education Department or the governor's office specifically as to what will be required to open schools. But we felt it to be very important to start our task force work earlier than waiting for the guidance to come through so we could wrap our heads around these really important topics.

So I'm excited for the community event forum on Monday. And I hope that people feel free to chime in. Send questions ahead of time, and I will try to embed those in the information that I'm providing that evening-- so really proud of the task force.

We had students join our task force today. They will become full members of our task force moving forward. So things are really looking very nice with how the task force is working. And that's what I wanted to share.

Great. Thank you very much, Dr. O'Connell.

We will now move on to new business. And we have recommended action, that the Board of Education approves the resolution to waive a pilot agreement or obligation with regard to the installation of a Community Solar energy system, as presented.

So moved.

Second.

Second.

On the question?

Could Denise explain a little bit to the public what this is? Oh, is Denise on? Is Denise with us tonight?

Yes.

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

You're on mute.

Yeah.

Oh.

Denise is on mute.

Yeah.

I apologize. Hi.

There you go.

So my screen had split. So pilots are payment in lieu of taxes. So pilots are used to promote industrial development. And Community Solar has an arrangement with the village to put solar panels on the municipal building next to the bus garage.

And the village is waiving the pilot payment and has requested that the district do that, as well, to promote growth with this company. It's a very insignificant amount for the district. So we discussed it with our attorneys, and this is a common practice. And they've offered the supporting documentation from our attorneys which supported the village request.

Thank you. Thank you, Denise. I just found there's a lot of interest in our city putting solar panels up. So I just wanted everybody to know exactly what it was.

And we-- yes. And they are trying to promote that sort of growth in the community and this organization, Community Solar, does.

Great. Thank you.

One thing I just want to-- on the question, I will note that the village has a preliminary proposal for the installation of solar arrays at the train station parking lot, which will be a much larger project, which will have potentially a greater impact on our district if there is a request made, as there may be, for a waiver of any pilot payments for that project.

That may not happen for another year or two. But I just bring it to everybody's attention because at that point in time, we will have to consider whether or not we want to grant that. And I don't want this to be considered to be any kind of a precedent, that we are waiving pilot payments for environmental-related projects, no matter what their size or composition may be.

We may decide-- the board-- at that point, whoever's on it, may decide that we'll waive it, as well, in that project. I have no problem with this waiver.

Any other questions? OK. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

All right. We will now move on to the donations portion of the meeting. We'll start off with recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a graduation banner from the Croton Lions Club for the senior class of the Croton-Harmon High School.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$2,820 from Rob Kaplan as a contribution to the Mark deGroat Scholarship Fund at the Croton-Harmon High School.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

I just think for people who don't know, Mark deGroat was a very beloved member of our community who unfortunately passed away a number of years ago when his children were still in the school. And Mr. Kaplan and other members of the community have been very generous over the years in funding this scholarship and keeping Mr. deGroat's memory alive.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of

\$600 from Antonia Martinez as a contribution to the Antonio C. Martinez Scholarship Fund at the Croton-Harmon High School.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion--

I have to abstain.

There you go. Motion carries.

OK. Recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$200 from Eric Kohler as a contribution to the Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$500 from the Croton Democratic Committee for the Croton-Harmon High School.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oh. Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

OK. Recommended action, that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$4,000 from the Richard Albert Family Foundation as a contribution to a scholarship at Croton-Harmon High School.

So moved.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Thank you to all of the donors who so graciously made donations, many of these for scholarships at the high school. We appreciate and are very grateful for your generosity. Thank you.

We will now move into instructional personnel. And recommended action, that the Board of Education approves the appointment of Michael Gulino as interim athletic director, effective July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 at an annual rate of \$145,000.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Before we do, I might be helpful for members of the community who might be watching if Dr. O'Connell might give us a little-- give all of us a little description of Mr. Gulino's background experience and so on, since he will be joining us in a position of some, I guess, authority, we can say.

Sure. Thank you, Neal. Mr. Gulino is a well-seasoned athletic director through the years. He's been retired from I believe it's Byram-- John Griffiths, you'll let me know if I mix up a district-- but from Byram Hills. He's well-respected and well-regarded in the field of athletics, but, as well, just as a leader in general.

He is also currently doing adjunct work in the field of health for Lehman College. He's been doing interim work in various districts over time. He's currently completing some interim work in Sleepy Hollow, I believe, and comes really well-regarded from athletic directors in the field.

So we are quite pleased to bring Mr. Gulino in the role of interim athletic director. And we are really so looking forward to working with him.

Thank you. All right. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education of the Croton-Harmon Union Free School District hereby approves the side-letter agreement between the district and the Croton Teachers Association and authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions consistent with the terms thereof.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain?

One abstaining.

Motion carries. Right.

Recommended action, that the Board of Education approves the request for an unpaid leave of absence to pursue advanced studies, submitted by Sarah Campbell, teacher, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, effective the 2020-2021 school year, with an anticipated return for the 2021-2022 school year.

So moved.

So moved. Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Recommended action, that the Board of Education approves the instructional personnel leave replacement of Katherine Ellingsen, 1.0 FTE ENL teacher as a leave replacement for Sarah Campbell at 0.6 FTE Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School and 0.4 FTE Croton-Harmon High School, effective August 31, 2020 through June 25, 2021, at an annual salary of \$66,989 MA step two.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

On the question, I guess-- and maybe I'm just missing something-- I note that that leave replacement

is for August 31 to June 25, meaning the beginning date of the next school year to the end of the next school year, does not appear to be prorated. And I guess just to be sure, that is because for keeping personnel, we provide the pay within the period of time that they're actually working as teachers? Or should that be prorated?

No, that's based upon the 10-month cycle.

Based on the 10-month cycle. OK. And as far as some of the work that we will be having between now and the opening of classes, because as Dr. O'Connell said, the Re-Entry Task Force is working-- and I'm sure a lot of teachers will be focused on that before school opens-- will we be able to have Ms Ellingsen provide us with support and assistance in that planning effort?

Yes, she is indeed available.

Good.

OK. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Right. We are now moving into the consent agenda. Recommended action, that the Board of Education approves all items on the consent agenda.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

Yes. If you could just hold on one second so that I can double-check and see that there are no questions.

Sarah?

Yes?

Do we want to state the results of the budget vote and school board election, since it's done in the

consent agenda?

Sure. We can do that. Do we need to pull it out of consent in order to do that?

No.

No.

Just if you let the public know what the various tallies were, then they'll hear it on--

Certainly. That would be-- I'm happy.

So the proposition one, which was the budget-- total number of votes cast in favor of the proposition, 1,687, total number of votes cast in opposition to the proposition, 487. Proposition two, which is the library, total number of votes cast in favor of the proposition, 1,712, total number of votes cast in opposition to the proposition, 419.

Proposition three, which is the bond proposition for the buses, total number of votes cast in favor of the proposition, 1,252, total number of votes cast in opposition to the proposition, 885.

And then the candidates, they go in alphabetical order-- Sarah Carrier, 1,300, Neal Haber, 1,129, Beth McFadden, 1,134, Maria Slippen, 976, and Karen Zevin, 972. And then there were a number of write-in votes, which were one or two votes. So those were the results of the budget.

It says to-- oh, I got it.

That "total votes cast" is just the total votes for the-- all board members, I believe.

Right. Yeah. If you tally up all of the votes, I think is-- it confused me for a second when I read it, too, Iris.

Yes, I was just--

No, actually, it's not.

Every vote cast.

Every vote cast.

Every vote for every position-- so it's vote cast. Got it.

Not just positions, but everything.

For everything.

It's the sum of all those numbers.

Right. So that's a sum total of every single number, which really is meaningless.

Yeah.

It's not a useful number.

No.

That's really--

So the important thing is that we had three openings. So the top three here in the votes are the ones that are selected, correct?

Correct.

Correct.

Which means that Neal and I will continue our board service, and Beth McFadden will be joining the board as of July, when her term starts.

Could we do something which is not really an amendment to the resolution, but just because there was that confusion about 11,967 and the line saying "total votes cast," which is not correct-- is it possible without making an amendment to just--

But that is the correct number. It's just that is the number of votes cast. It's not the number of ballots cast.

Right.

And every ballot had four or five votes on it.

Which is why I'm just saying that's something that I don't think we've ever approved before. I don't know if it's been on prior--

Yes.

OK. Then--

Every one.

I think it's to keep it.

All right.

Just it was confusing to us until we had it explained. But that's fine. Leave it.

Yeah.

Does anyone have any other questions with regard to anything on the consent agenda?

No, ma'am.

All right. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose?

Aye.

Abstain?

Wait.

Yeah.

That was in favor.

She said an "aye." Yeah. Sorry. It was just a lag.

I'm late on my ayes because I'm unmuting slowly. So, sorry.

OK. It is an aye. Good.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right.

Sarah?

Yes?

Sarah, can I just make a statement? I want to just-- I know I said something short on the night of the unofficial results. But I just really want to thank the community.

That 2,000 votes-plus cast is just an awesome showing of community engagement. And I really appreciate the fact that our community participated in what was really a trying and difficult and different way of voting. So I really commend them.

And I also want to commend all the candidates that came out to run for the school board. I think it's really great that we had people that were willing to step up and make the additional sacrifice for the community. So I just want to applaud and thank everyone that participated this year as candidates.

Absolutely.

Thank you, Iris.

Thank you, Iris.

I would say mail-in voting increases participation. Whoo-hoo! A lesson for the country.

Fraud, fraud.

It's true because I was on a Westminster-Putnam School Board call. And every district had three to four times extra votes more than they normally did. So that was across the board, every single district.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

On that--

We definitely appreciate the community and making sure that your voice was heard and taking the time to--

On that question, what I would be interested perhaps, if this is easy for Denise to pick up-- and perhaps we'll be doing this, anyway-- is what would be the comparison of cost for this election as

opposed to our normal election, because the question may well come up. And this may be for an advocacy issue down the road.

Depending on the differences in cost, it may be something that, because of the greater community engagement, it may be something that NISBA or West-Put or someone may advocate to make more permanent. And it'd be good for us and other districts to know what our differences in cost were.

They were-- can you hear me?

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

OK. They were significant. The estimate for the state-- the cost of the mail-in ballot election was well over \$10 million. For Croton-Harmon, we estimated about \$12,000. Is that what we came up with Tracy?

Yes.

About \$12,000, which is probably about \$11,000 more than a typical year.

OK. So the cost of mailing was about \$12,000 more or \$11,000 more than having the voting machines and the hourly--

Than the walking. But that did not include-- it does not include the on-staff time that took, as well. That was just-- those were just real costs, not--

Not personnel costs. I only ask that because one way or the other, that may be something that is proposed. And we will know whether or not-- have to determine if we are in favor or opposed to it, if the proposition is suggested in the legislature or at NISBA or whatever.

I would vote no on that.

Well, don't say--

\$10 million-- over \$10 million for the state is a lot of money.

Understood.

I do think you have to factor in all the other costs, the personnel costs. And if you do it by vote, it's probably pretty reasonably priced, because again, we got, what, twice as many voters as we usually

do.

Right.

More than twice.

It's going to be an ongoing conversation, I think. We're in interesting times. And hey, here we are.

Sarah, would you also like to present our one board member who will be coming up?

Yes. So yeah, I touched on it briefly. But Beth McFadden will be joining the board as of July 1, 2020. Or it'll actually be a little-- few days after, when she has her swearing-in ceremony when we have our next meeting. But we are very excited to have a new board member joining us.

But we will very much miss having Elizabeth Lynam on the board with us. It has been an absolute honor to serve on the board with you. And I'm so glad that I started my board service with you, Betsy.

And I hope-- I like you.

You are muted.

The only time-- see, I told you I was slow on unmute tonight. Thank you all. It's been a pleasure to serve with you all. And I really, really have appreciated it. It's been a tremendous growth opportunity and a learning experience.

And I really appreciate on a very deep level now the amount of volunteerism and the spirit of civic engagement that it takes to do this school board duty. So really, best of luck in the future. You never know. Maybe in three years, I'll be back and ready to go again.

But I really admire you all. And it's been just an absolute pleasure to serve with you all and to do the business of this school district, which is really a wonderful place. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Betsy.

Well, with that, we will now move into the closing of the meeting. And we will be heading into executive session, with the expectation that we will adjourn the meeting immediately following

executive session.

So we will end the recording for this evening once I move the action. So recommended action, that the Board of Education enters into executive session to discuss the employment of a particular person or persons and to discuss a student's record, which must remain confidential, pursuant to FERPA.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries.

Thank you to the community who tuned in this evening. And we will see you all back in a couple minutes in executive session.