



City of New Haven

Meeting Minutes Education Committee

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cityofnewhaven.com

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

7:00 PM

Via Teleconference

(Please scroll down)

Minutes

9-2-20

Education Committee

Chair Ortiz called the meeting to order at about 7:25 p.m. via video conference. A recording of the meeting is online at <https://bit.ly/31QWajO> Passcode: ?W5u7pkc

(please note the passcode must be entered manually as cut and paste is not supported).

Present were Alders Winter, Sabin, and C. Rodriguez.

Non-committee-member Alders present included Walker-Myers, Wingate, Furlow, DeCola, Festa, and Ferraro-Santana. They were allowed to participate and vote.

(1) RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CHANGE ITS CALENDAR WITHOUT NOTICE OR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Public Schools staff present were Ilene Tracey, Superintendent, Fountain Street; Keisha Redd-Hannans, Deputy Superintendent, Meadow Street; Paul Whyte, Assistant Superintendent, Osborn Street; and Typhanie Jackson, Director of Student Services, Wintergreen Avenue, Hamden

Board of Education members present were: Yesenia Rivera, President; Darnell Goldson, West Hills Road; and Matthew Wilcox, Forest Road.

Also present was assistant city of New Haven corporation counsel Elia Alexiades, address not stated, representing the school board and staff.

Alder Ferraro-Santana, item sponsor, presented it to the committee. She said the school board proceeding was not sufficiently posted to enable all interested community members, especially Italian-Americans, to comment. She said there should also have been more comment on the renaming of the Columbus School.

Attorney Alexiades said the legal notice for the Monday, June 22 Board of Education meeting was posted by 4 p.m. on Friday, June 19 in compliance with state Freedom of Information law. Written testimony was received for the Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day agenda item because live comment had been temporarily suspended due to security concerns regarding an earlier threat. He said it is typical for action items to be posted as president or superintendent reports without having been sent to a committee, which he said is not required.

Board member and former chair Darnell Goldson said he did not receive a copy of the action item until halfway through the debate on it at the meeting. He said prior practice was to assign all items to committees. Alexiades said it is not an FOI violation to not distribute items to board members in advance.

Board member Matthew Wilcox said the vote on the item was unanimous. Goldson disputed that, saying he didn't vote for it. (Goldson was later able to use meeting video to prove to Alders that he didn't vote for the item, and said he would pursue a correction to the meeting's minutes which apparently had listed the vote as unanimous).

Goldson said it doesn't make sense for the city and public schools to have different names for the same holiday, and the decision should be discussed by the two parties.

Alder Festa agreed with Alder Ferraro-Santana that there was not sufficient transparency or process for community input. She said the proceeding displayed insensitivity to the Italian-American community.

School board president Yesenia Rivera said the school renaming was sent to a committee,

though the holiday change was not.

Goldson reminded the Alders that minimum compliance with FOI requirements does not necessarily mean a proceeding is transparent or has had sufficient public comment.

Goldson said the school and alder boards should come together on this issue.

Alder Wingate recommended having some sort of public meeting, possibly online, to discuss the name changes.

School board member Wilcox suggested having the meeting close to the Columbus Day holiday on October 12, 2020.

On a motion, duly seconded, public testimony was closed at 8:21 p.m.

COMMITTEE ACTION: On a motion by Alder Winter, seconded by Alder Wingate, the committee voted unanimously by roll call to recommend that the item be read, printed and filed, and that the Board of Alders coordinate with the Board of Education to hold a public meeting on the issues associated with the Columbus Day holiday.

The committee voted to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Mercier
Legislative Aide
Office of Legislative Services

(Board of Alders Notice New Haven) The Education Committee of the Board of Alders will meet on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., via video conference at <https://bit.ly/2C366N7> and by phone at (646) 558 8656 Webinar ID: 954 9254 2227, to hear and act on the following items (for required password contact publictestimony@newhavenct.gov):

ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS TO READ PRINT AND FILE THE
LEGISLATIVE MATTER TITLED "RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF
ALDERS CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE RECENT
ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CHANGE ITS
CALENDAR WITHOUT NOTICE OR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT."

Per Order: Hon. Jody Ortiz, Chair;
Attest: Hon. Michael Smart, City Clerk

These items are on file and available in the Office of the City Clerk, Room 202 at 200 Orange Street; New Haven, CT 06510.

For accessibility related accommodations, please call (203) 946 7833 (V) or (203) 946 8582 (TTY/TDD).

Public comment/testimony may also be submitted via email to publictestimony@newhavenct.gov before 2:00 pm on the day of the meeting.

If you wish to present testimony at the meeting, you must register in advance at <https://bit.ly/2C366N7> or by calling (203) 946 7934 before 2:00 pm on the day of the meeting.

Public can view the meeting at <https://bit.ly/2C366N7> or listen by phone at (646) 558 8656 Webinar ID: 954 9254 2227. Passcode to dial in by phone is 9361675694.