

**SPECIAL JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
AND  
BOARD OF APPORTIONMENT & TAXATION**

**DERBY CITY HALL – MARCH 5, 2008 - 6:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

Ken Hughes, President of the Derby Board of Aldermen called the Special Joint Meeting between the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Apportionment & Taxation to order at 6:04 p.m. All rose and pledged allegiance to the flag.

**Roll Call – Board of Aldermen**

Present: Kenneth J. Hughes, Joseph M. Bomba, Anthony Szewczyk, James Allaire

Absent: Ron Sill, Beverly Moran, James Benanto, Jr., Scott Boulton, David M. Lenart

**Roll Call - Board of Apportionment & Taxation**

Present: Carolyn Duhaime, Chairwoman, Julia Romano, Judith A. Szewczyk, George F. Kurtyka, Karen J. Getlein, Paul C. Varsanik, Jr., Mark Nichols (arrived at 6:07 p.m.)

Absent: Anthony J. DeFala, Jr., Leone A. DiSorbo, Joseph J. Laskowski

Also Present: Sheila M. Parizo, President, Board of Education (left meeting at 6:06 .m.)  
Joseph T. Coppola, Corporation Counsel  
Philip Robertson, Chief Administrative Officer

**PUBLIC PORTION**

Mr. Hughes asked three times if anyone would like to address the boards. Hearing no one from the public wishing to address the boards...

**PUBLIC PORTION CLOSED**

**DISCUSSION WITH C.A.B.E. (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education)  
CONSULTANT (Aliza Holcomb) REGARDING SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS SEARCH  
PROCESS**

Mrs. Parizo thanked everyone for attending this evening. She said the Board of Education is in the process of searching for a new Superintendent for the Derby school district. She said they have hired Aliza Holcomb from C.A.B.E., who is present this evening to hear the boards' thoughts on what is important in a Superintendent. Mrs. Parizo then turned the meeting over to Aliza Holcomb.

Ms. Holcomb informed the board members that she would like to bring everyone up to date in terms of what they have done to date so that everyone is aware of the process and the timeline that they have put forth. C.A.B.E. was hired by the board in early July

and they immediately had a planning meeting with the Board of Education where they discussed getting the word out in advertising for the position. Ms. Holcomb said the position was advertised in "Education Week" on July 20<sup>th</sup> and they created a beautiful vacancy brochure that describes the City of Derby and talked about quality and application process. That brochure was distributed last week to the "network" with the network being all sitting Superintendents within the State of Connecticut. She said they also have a connection with the "National School Board Association" so through that network they were able to email the brochure to about forty states that do what they do, which is recruitment on behalf of school boards. Ms. Holcomb informed the boards that her company just received an invitation to speak at Harvard next Thursday and Friday. She will distribute the brochures at the venue. She said it is their hope to conduct interviews mid to the end of April; however she does not want the timeline to be a deterrent. If they have a quality pool of applicants they will proceed with interviewing. C.A.B.E. will partner with the Board of Education during every step of the process until a contract is signed. Ms. Holcomb said they are helping to develop the leadership profile for the Board of Education and she said she the information that they gather is going to be put together in a report called the "Leadership Profile Report", which will be presented to the Board of Education. She said the last focus group is on March 17<sup>th</sup> and hopefully the report should be completed approximately a week after that last meeting. Ms. Holcomb noted that this is a public document and she will make sure that both the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Apportionment & Taxation members receive a copy of it and it will also be placed on the City's web site.

Ms. Holcomb stated that they have put together a press release to share with the community the dates and times of the focus group meetings. She said she is personally visiting all the schools and meeting with the faculty, support staff and administrators privately. She will be meeting with the rest of the schools this week, with Central Office on Tuesday and then back to City Hall on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Two public forums will be held and she would encourage the public to attend. Ms. Holcomb informed the boards that they have also developed a "Leadership Profile Form" and she would ask each board member to take the time to complete the form. She would also encourage members from the community to take the time to complete the form. They really want to be able to highlight to candidates for the position the expectations of the community and the challenges that they will be facing.

### **QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Mr. Szewczyk – Is there any – like let's say whoever the new Superintendent is hopefully it's a very good one but let's say it's a terribly bad one is there a way that we could cut our losses with this person?

Ms. Holcomb – Well it all depends – contractually within the State of Connecticut you're allowed to give three year contracts. So typically there is a three year contract with Superintendents.

Mr. Szewczyk – Well let me be blunt about it – what if the person is a total zero?

Ms. Holcomb – You know what I hope that the fact that you hire someone...

Ms. Romano – I think that's why we hired her.

Ms. Holcomb – I hope that – thank you – I hope I reduce that margin of error. I've been doing this for six years and I take personal responsibility, even though I'm not the one who picks the candidates, part of my job is to bring the candidates forward and hopefully have a winner in the bunch. But the one guarantee that we give to the board in the event the person does not succeed in your district, within 12 to 24 months we'll come back and do the search at no cost to you. I mean that's the guarantee that we give you and we hope that we can reduce that margin of error.

Mr. Szewczyk – By the way it's nothing personal it's just that the best of us whatever our professions we always have bad days so sometimes things slip through.

Ms. Holcomb – And sometimes health – anything can happen. It's a very human business.

Mr. Hughes – Anyone else have any questions on procedures? *NONE WERE RAISED.*

Ms. Holcomb – What are the strengths of Derby public schools?

Mr. Hughes – Sense of community.

Ms. Duhaime – Sufficiently funded.

Mr. Bomba – Diversity.

Mrs. Szewczyk – I think that we're small is a strength because if we take advantage of it literally the whole school community can know each other and know who is doing what. There's no reason that any corner of Derby doesn't know what the people are doing on the other side. (Inaudible) it's difficult. So I think that small can be a strength.

Ms. Holcomb – Gentleman (Mr. Allaire) at the end – I'm not trying to pick but any thoughts in terms of strength?

Mr. Allaire – Not yet.

Mr. Szewczyk – Maybe I'm prejudiced because I'm from Derby but I lived out of town for about four decades and all my children, five of them, went to Fairfax County schools (inaudible.)

Ms. Holcomb – I'm familiar with that school district.

Mr. Szewczyk – (Inaudible) and Thomas Jefferson (inaudible) that ours went to.

Mrs. Szewczyk – I think there's a lot of people – a lot of citizens in town that want the education to succeed – there are supporters or whatever you want to call them.

Mr. Hughes – I think that goes hand-in-hand with community pride. People want to see the kids succeed.

Mrs. Szewczyk – Yeah – it's not like they're all saying well they're your kids, you guys educate them. Then there are some people like that but for the most part we consider it something to do with the City not just those parents that have school aged children.

Mr. Szewczyk – One thing for decades that has been like a constant is like the emphasis on sports, especially football. Like it's like an identity thing with this town. A lot of people relate to the old days when Derby was number one in the State and for a small City it's kind of like there with more weight than say most other towns. I don't know if it's still true but at least it was when I was growing up here from what I hear nowadays.

Ms. Holcomb – Meeting with some of the teachers they talk about the Derby pride so proudly – that's so prevalent in this district.

Mr. Hughes – I think one of the good things that we have going for us is the new Middle School is being built as I'm sure you know.

Ms. Holcomb – Yes and that's in our vacancy brochure too. What are some of the issues and challenges – and be honest with me I mean this is your opportunity – I have the courage to put it in report and the reason that I ask that you be honest with me is because I'll be spending a lot of time with candidates and there's nothing worse than having a candidate say to you six months after their employment, well Aliza you weren't dead honest with us in terms of... and we want to be able to use the challenges and issues as a matrix for skill sets and look for skill sets that may compliment or address some of the issues that you may have.

Mr. Hughes – I think there's an issue with discipline up at the schools.

Mr. Kurtyka – There's a big issue there. Unofficially the police have been up there almost 150 times since the first of September between the High School and the Middle School for calls for service whether it's somebody getting their keys locked in their car until the other end of the spectrum – violation of criminal law. I myself being a police detective in town have gone up there numerous times in my thirty year career here in town and the demographics have changed here in Derby, we don't have a School Resource Officer up there. I just saw on the news today that East Haven is looking into having one at their school. We used to have a School Resource Officer up there – for some reason this year we haven't had anyone up there. But like Mr. Hughes said discipline, which goes into what's going on up at the High School – I can't speak freely about the cases that I've done up there and the people who went through the juvenile process plus the criminal process but I guess it goes all in all with discipline up at the High School.

Mr. Varsanik – Aliza if you go back to the earlier one I think a new program that just recently kicked off the first of the year was the Youth Service Bureau in conjunction with the Police Department and the gentleman heading that up has a tremendous insight and he really, really wants to be out there to help the children succeed so I think that's an advantage for the district having someone in that position who is a lifelong Derby resident and actually went through the Derby school system.

Ms. Holcomb – What's his name?

Mr. Varsanik – John Saccu. So I think he's a definite advantage to the system.

Ms. Holcomb – It would be interesting to talk to him just to get his take on some issues. I'll make sure Sheila gets me his information.

Mr. Allaire – Test scores are a concern.

Ms. Holcomb – So student academic achievement.

Mr. Allaire – They can do better.

Mr. Varsanik – And in the past a lot of people think the more money you throw at it the better the tests scores are going to get and in the last three years that's proven that's not the answer but people still seem to think that the more money you throw at it the easier it is going to solve and I think over the last two years the system as a whole has improved with bringing in fresh blood, fresh ideas, so I think that has changed the outlook or the opinion of the community as to basically “old blood stays with old hat.” So you're getting more new teachers and it brings in new ideas and it brings in fresh ideas to help the kids learn. The old ways obviously don't work so we need to come up with fresh ideas – maybe technology, something like that to really gauge their interests.

Ms. Romano – But I think an important part of that is also remaining consistent on what the City was built on. This is a very deep rooted community and I think that sometimes is perceived as a negative instead as a positive.

Ms. Holcomb – Tell me about what your perception on deep rooted ness is. Explain it to me as an outsider. There's a great deal of passion attached to it.

Ms. Romano – Well my family has been here for generations. My parents went to Derby High School, my parents went to Derby High School, I went to Derby High School, my siblings and my cousins went to Derby High School. So I feel like I understand what Derby High School is supposed to be about but I don't pretend to understand what it is now because I am not part of the system at all other than my job here on the Tax Board. But I don't pretend to know what the answer is to solve the problems. I know maybe what I think about some of the situations that I hear about but I think the most important thing to me at this point and what I understand is that we need a Superintendent with a vision and a vision that works with the what the rest of the City perceives it to be or what it wants it to be.

Ms. Holcomb – Someone coming in should take the time to listen to different (inaudible) then synthesize that information and create a vision; not come in with their outside vision.

Ms. Romano – Yes.

Mrs. Szewczyk – If they come in with their vision for like Arizona it might be a nice vision but not necessarily – people here would kind of go like well that's your vision.

Ms. Holcomb – Someone who could create a new Derby vision with understanding of the deep rootedness of what you're all about.

Ms. Romano – And I think shows the want to understand what this community stands for. And what people like myself and the members of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Education and the rest of the Tax Board what they perceive to be the right track for the City. And I think that, in my personal opinion, I think that Sheila Parizo and the rest of the Board of Education I think this is a great thing in what they're doing. I think it's definitely a step in the right direction and I commend it because I don't think that anything like this has been done in the past. But I think it's important to have a Superintendent on board who also wants to do those things. That doesn't see the Tax Board and the Board of Aldermen as the big bad wolf.

Ms. Getlein – It's partnerships with the Board of Aldermen and Taxation.

Mr. Hughes – And as far as I can remember there's always been a perceived disconnect between like the Board of Education and the City. It was always like an us versus them attitude. And I think we can get a lot more accomplished if we work together.

Ms. Holcomb – Unfortunately maybe I'm jaded by the work that I do (inaudible) sixty searches I think the founding fathers created (inaudible.) Because greatness comes out of the conflict but I've also seen models where there is a strong partnership and greatness does come out of that and you're small enough where that could happen. I think if you're willing as boards...

Ms. Romano – But I don't think that we have to agree all the time and I don't think that that is the answer. I'm not looking for a love fest with anybody. But I'm just saying you know a sort of a mutual ground of understanding of where everyone is going or would like to (inaudible.)

Mrs. Szewczyk – I think there's an issue in Derby that ironically although we're a small community like I said in the advantages and the disadvantages we have separation here – we have an East Derby and we have the rest of Derby. And I think there's a lot of people who have trouble – people say that I want my kid to go to school on this side of town, I don't want to go on that side of town – you guys are different. It's a cultural kind of a perception – a cultural difference, which I don't really think exists if they really sat down and looked at it I don't think they would have any differences. But there's that perception and it's hard sometimes to combine resources if people are saying well this is ours – they're separate.

Ms. Getlein – Well I think there's a socio-economic difference. I mean you have East Derby, which has a lot of new families – a lot of families that relocated from Fairfield County and then you have a school like Irving School where you can't even go on a school trip because they don't have any money. So there's a big socio economic difference between the two sides of town.

Mrs. Szewczyk – Well I don't think it's as big as it appears to be. I think if you go to a lot of those on the other side of town there's a quite a bit of debt. It's true you'll find quite a bit of people living in modest homes that have quite a bit socked away and people living in big fancy homes that don't own their toothbrush, so there is a difference but I'm saying I don't think it's as big at first glance.

Ms. Getlein – But how many (inaudible) on this side of town are on some kind of public assistance versus the other side of town. Is there a big disparity?

Mrs. Szewczyk – I don't know that.

Ms. Getlein – I think if we looked at that...

Ms. Romano – I would be curious to know how many of those families on public assistance have kids in our school system.

Mrs. Szewczyk – But I think that goes to the point because it is your perception and that's my whole point. It is your perception, which I'm not sure is based in reality. Somewhat, yes, but I don't think it's what we think, what we see on the outside.

Ms. Holcomb – So (inaudible) educational leadership help address or educate community members in terms of programs available in public schools than the equities that are created (inaudible) the socio economic diversity.

Mrs. Szewczyk – By way it shows how we're the same and have the same goals and the same objectives and we can work together.

Ms. Romano – And another issue kids that shouldn't be in the school district that are falsely using other people's addresses to go to our schools.

Ms. Holcomb – Residency.

Ms. Romano – We don't have any method – we don't have a Truancy Officer – we don't have any method in place to verify that the students that belong in our schools actually belong in our schools – that are in our schools belong in our schools.

Ms. Duhaime – And one thing that's a concern just because Derby is small I think also and it's happened we really need a Superintendent that's not going to view Derby just because it's small it's going to be a stepping stone in their career to move on to bigger things quickly. We do want somebody who is going to be dedicated in here basically for the reasons for education as opposed to their own personal career because Derby is too small to get hurt too easily with that.

Ms. Holcomb – I will make that commitment to you, but even though the teachers pointed that out too, it's the hardest piece of our job. Because, and it's not only in Derby, this sized district has become that stepping stone unfortunately and if they're successful, it won't be me calling them to recruit them away I promise you for at least five years.

Ms. Duhaime – No but we extend them a contract – we really can't break it unless basically there's gross misconduct and we would expect the same consideration.

Ms. Holcomb – And I hope that they would have longevity with you; that's our hope. And we make sure we can assess that with candidates.

Mr. Varsanik – I think another concern is we don't want a first time Superintendent. We want somebody with some experience, especially with High School experience. A Superintendent in a school district that has a High School.

? – And small I think.

Mrs. Szewczyk – Somewhat like ours. If they come from a real big district they may not understand our problems.

Ms. Getlein – But if they come from a large district where there's say a principal of a High School that's probably the same size or scope as the Citywide system that person might be successful too.

Mrs. Szewczyk – They would have to be able to relate in some way.

Ms. Romano – We want the perfect candidate so go out and find one.

Ms. Holcomb – The Board of Education doesn't even know this but I have been very excited about the preliminary inquiries on this, so that brings me joy. I mean I don't want to be unrealistic but I'm excited about the preliminary inquiries that we've received so far. Hopefully we'll continue their interest. And what's exciting is I'm glad we had the timeline that we did because I was just mentioning to Sheila that within the last four days I've received four calls for bid proposals for school districts – Watertown, Groton – I can name them all so that's why I said let's advertise immediately. And we hope – we're saying that we're going to conduct interviews at the end of April and I said if we have a quality candidate and if we can move the interview date up I'm the kind of search consultant that's competitive in terms of retaining the interests of candidates and we'll do that and I think the Board of Education is responsive to that.

Mr. Kurtyka – Another issue that over the years and that's why I didn't go to Derby High I went to (Inaudible) in Fort Walden Beach, Florida but I moved up here and the reason why I didn't send my kids to the High School was because the school was about to lose their accreditation. So I sent my kids to private schools. So there's another problem that the New England Board of – whatever it is that does the certification has advised Derby that their in jeopardy of losing their accreditation.

Ms. Holcomb – The High School?

Mr. Kurtyka – Yes. So the new Superintendent has to come in here and you know make sure the district doesn't lose their accreditation.

Mr. Varsanik – I thought that was resolved.

Mr. Kurtyka – It was resolved?

Mr. Varsanik – I thought that was resolved as a result of (inaudible)...

Mr. Bomba – It's in the process of being resolved – the way I understand it.

Ms. Duhaime – The problem was the space issue.

Mr. Hughes – I think one of the big issues, which came up recently, which ties in with the separation of sides of town is the issue of redistricting. Whether or not that needs to be addressed again.

Ms. Holcomb – Did they redistrict.

Mr. Bomba – No.

Mr. Kurtyka – People from the east side were very upset that their kids would have to come to school on the west side here.

Mr. Bomba – People need to be reminded that it is public education and you know we can't be playing favoritism because of sides and what's best for the kid is what is best for the student. I mean we need to get off of all of that. We have the perfect opportunity right now in this town with what's happened in the last year as far as the referendum went to build the new school, the City putting money into the school buildings, this is a big step for the City and its children future and we don't want to make mistakes.

Ms. Holcomb – So you're at an exciting crossroads for the perfect candidate.

Mr. Bomba – Absolutely. This is one of the biggest things happening in the school system since before referendum votes for a school building. A new Superintendent with a new vision – I mean it could only bring good things.

Ms. Holcomb – And you all seem to be inspired to partner with that person.

Mr. Bomba – Absolutely.

Ms. Holcomb – Any other qualities?

Mr. Hughes – Is there anything that we didn't touch on that we should have?

Ms. Holcomb – No I think that you have given me a lot to mull over. I mean the piece with the Superintendence experience I just would like to ask the full group how many of you believe the Superintendence experience is significant – by show of hands.

Mr. Hughes – You mean having experience prior to coming here?

Ms. Holcomb – Yes.

Ms. Romano – I think it's all relative.

Ms. Holcomb – But if we have a star that has (Inaudible)...

*NUMEROUS VOICES COULD NOT DISTINGUISH*

Ms. Romano – Has risen through the ranks and has shown progression in their career I think that would be an equally good candidate.

Mrs. Szewczyk – I think hire for talent, not experience.

Ms. Romano – But it's important that somebody has experience with the budget process. It is very important as we all have learned in last couple of years. It's extremely important.

Ms. Getlein – I mean in a larger school district I would think that a principal of a very large High School would be involved in that process in some way – in a larger City.

Ms. Romano – I don't what the rules change from size to size – I don't know that.

Ms. Getlein – I'm just saying that I think a Superintendent in an extremely large urban area relies upon their school leadership to provide assistance during that process. So I mean the person has to get the experience somewhere.

Ms. Romano – Understood – and I don't care how they have it but I think that experience with budgets whether a Principal or Superintendent or Superintendent or janitor they need to have it – the budget experience.

Mrs. Szewczyk – What's the difference in the pool size if you say everyone with experience or if you limit that pool and you say now that you have to have been a Superintendent to get in our pool. How much is it reduced?

Ms. Holcomb – I listen to it but I also follow my gut instinct because if there is a real – for example I just finished Rocky Hill they voted last Thursday and we spent months developing the Leadership Profile Report so it's very clear that in light of the challenges, because there was discussion of a High School renovation, that the Superintendence experience was paramount. But they ended up hiring someone who was an assistant superintendent and he is an up and comer so if I see a star like that even though – and I'm honest with them because I couldn't survive in this business without integrity of relationships not only important with education but with candidates – I always say to my candidates look I think the community is looking for a Superintendent with Superintendence experience; however I believe some of your strengths might be a right match. So if they get discouraged at least I was up front with them but if they've got – I'm going to be looking for someone who has gone through building construction. I don't limit myself because it is getting harder and harder to do our work, but I always remain optimistic because there are people who are seeking the Superintendence and just because I will be spending two days at Harvard talking to urban Superintendents in the Urban Superintendence Program so there are people that are pursuing it as a profession. So I will keep an eye for experience notwithstanding that if there's another candidate who may have an unusual background but the skill set that you may use in light of some of your challenges I think that I will be brave enough to bring them forward.

Mr. Varsanik – I don't know if you heard me before but I said curriculum development.

Ms. Holcomb – Any other qualities?

Mr. Szewczyk – Well you brought it up when you said that whoever comes here should have some kind of building/construction experience. What exactly did you mean by that?

Ms. Holcomb – We talked about in one of the issues that you identified the building of the Middle School so someone who perhaps has gone through that somewhere else or who has experience. Because there's a great paperwork piece in the Superintendent's Office in monitoring of that unless you're different here. Having some experience with that would be helpful I would imagine.

Mr. Szewczyk – I don't know if that brings up another thing though that I think would be a good quality whether it be a Superintendent or anyone else but you know like I noticed that a lot of people that are really good at their whatever it is they know their limits – they don't pretend to know for instance everything about construction I don't think that's what you meant – but if they're the Superintendent they're not acting like the engineer – they have enough sense to ask somebody who actually knows about it to take care of it.

Ms. Holcomb – Knowledge of, you're right. I'm sorry I didn't mean to suggest that someone who knows to monitor construction but someone who has had the experience kind of overseeing it.

Mr. Hughes – I don't know if that's really that important. I mean the school is going to be built I believe Fall '09 so I don't really know if we want to limit ourselves by putting that criteria on someone – being that – I mean it's a plus but once the school is built.

Mr. Varsanik – I think it's a plus for them to have the experience going through opening a new school but not actually building one.

#### *NUMEROUS VOICES – COULD NOT DISTINGUISH*

? – Because they said they don't need new teachers for this school. We won't need new personnel for the school.

Ms. Holcomb – We're hoping to have someone start – ideally if there is a successful candidate have them start July 1 or August 1 so before the start of the school year. Now if they are indeed a sitting Superintendent in another district if they're within Connecticut they usually have a 90 day clause in their contract. So let's assume we make a decision by mid-May – that's just an assumption – then their board may hold them to their contract. But sometimes they have vacation accrued and all the rest so – but it's our hope to have someone start July 1 or August 1 – before the start of school.

Ms. Romano – Once a candidate is chosen do you check the references or does the City?

Ms. Holcomb – We do a couple of things. Hopefully by the time I receive their application packet, and that's on-line please check it, I do some preliminary reference checking. Then I interview candidates – having done it for six years and I've personally been in sixty districts out of one hundred sixty-nine you start seeing some of the faces and you know districts and you know their reputations, so I do some general reference

checking but if I'm very serious about bringing them to a Board of Education I'll go beyond that. If they are a sitting Superintendent sometimes they're very nervous about the word getting out because their role is so public; however if the board interviews them and if they're one of two it's a fair game for us to be aggressive and talking to the Board Chair and other sources. Now, if and when the board does all the interviews and identifies one finalist we work with an external firm to do civil and criminal checks. I do not want in my ten years of doing this work, and it's hard work – I've seen a lot of consultants be embarrassed publicly (inaudible) headlines – you want to make sure they don't have anything in their background that's going to embarrass your Board of Education. Part of my job is to protect the integrity of the City so we do hire a firm that does civil and criminal checks. But unfortunately that's only as good as the papers that are filed. But we Google – the internet has changed our lives – and plus I have to tell you the fact that I'm with C.A.B.E. – I'm an independent contractor and the candidates mail their applications so that they're confidential but I will pick up the phone if somebody is a finalist somehow Bob Grader or Patrice McCarthy at C.A.B.E. will know what's going on if they're within the State. So a part of our job – the more labor intensive and the most complex part is the reference check. And sometimes you might have a great candidate who has been placed in the wrong district and you know part of our job is to research that – I've seen that happen. They may be effective Superintendents but it was the wrong cultural match. So you want to be able to process that.

Mrs. Szewczyk – One thing that I was thinking about – we're one of the smaller districts – if we take a standing Superintendent won't they by definition almost always be stepping down from something from where they're at?

Ms. Holcomb – You would be surprised there are smaller districts – the issue is – District K12 – that's an interesting piece...

Mrs. Szewczyk – It seems to me they would always be going this was kind of harder than I thought, this was kind of more than I thought – I can go to Derby it's a littler smaller – I won't make as much but you know...as opposed to that assistant superintendent who says I'm ready to move up and take on more responsibility. To me that seems more like we would be more in a win situation there.

Ms. Holcomb – I agree with you because I'm very suspicious when someone says I'm going to take a cut in pay to go somewhere. Are they losing their job – when they become a finalist another piece I take is I want to see their contract – I ask the question was your contract extended? I also ask for performance reviews – some say no, I'll give it to you at the end. You know I think it's the private sector person in me – you know you want to see what the boards are saying. Unfortunately people are less likely to be honest or direct with boards than they are with me. Because I don't think I could survive in this business if I didn't keep my mouth shut because there's so much that you see and learn about people. Now with the success that I've had – I did Somers Public Schools – Massachusetts candidates or Rhode Island who have Superintendence experience who may have 20 – 25 years and are in their early 50's and have another 10-15 years and they can come to a newer State and begin so then you have the experience. And they still have fire in the belly because I think that's going to be important here so there are a variety of options.

Mr. Varsanik – What is the salary range?

Ms. Holcomb – I'll be very honest with you that we have not had that discussion with the Board. I think they stated what the Superintendent was making. We did not advertise salary for the reasons that if they knew the max you could claim no one is going to ask for the minimum they're going to ask for the max. So part of my job is to see who applies, what their range is and be realistic with them and we haven't even gotten that close.

Mr. Szewczyk – Would the new Superintendent be entitled to pick their own assistants or would they have to deal with the ones that we have.

Ms. Holcomb – It's not uncommon for districts to have a turn over in staff when new leadership comes in. But I've also done a lot of searches where Superintendents inherit a veteran team and part of their job is to create cohesion and partnership. But it's not also uncommon when leadership changes that other individuals – when change occurs people feel a sense of unrest so that may trigger other opportunities and openings in your district. It might allow a new Superintendent to build their team but I've also seen success take place where Superintendent's have inherited a team. Quite frankly that's what happens most of the time. I just finished Richfield Public Schools about eight months ago and the Superintendent retired and a couple of months later the Assistant Superintendent retired but they hired us to do both and we did a timeline so that we can identify a Superintendent candidate then she was involved with selection of that before she even came on board.

Ms. Holcomb informed the board members if they had any personal questions at any time don't hesitate to contact her.

**Contact Information for Aliza Holcomb:**

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Ms. Holcomb thanked everyone for their time and candor. She said the Board of Education will keep everyone advised on the progress.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION** was made by Ms. Getlein with a second Ms. Duhaime to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia Finn  
Recording Secretary

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND THE BOARD OF APPORTIONMENT & TAXATION AT THEIR NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS.**