

# Cairo-Durham CSD Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, May 7, 2020 via Zoom

I would like to call the meeting to order. Can we stand for the pledge. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**Present: Steve Brandow, Beth Daly, John Amoroso, Dale Handel, Todd Hilgendorff, Nicole Maggio, Dave Infantino, Bernadette Gavin-Palmieri**

**Absent: Brian Coletti**

Consent agenda items - Can I get approved for motion to approve the Consent agenda Items for the minutes of April 21st 2020? Dave Infantino made the motion, Todd Hilgendorff second motion. Approved. We have all had an opportunity to look at the agenda and we had some late items come on but we had an opportunity to look at the the agenda, correct Michael? Yes it is and for personal items, Transportation supervisor, advisors, micro computer operator and business items donation, Transportation agreement, Health Services, private school transportation, BoE items Data Protection Officer, Library and Durham School building proposition. Can I get the motion I make a motion, Nicole, Can I get a second? I think emotions may by Nicole can I get a second, Beth. All in favor. Next is the presentation and discussions before I got on to that I just wanted to make sure everybody realized that the component of the Durham building and we had to change the date because the initial resolution had that died May 19th which was our original vote date. The next part under presentations and discussions is just a shout out that we'd want to make one of my knowledge Gaurc Distributing Wholesale company for donating a hundred pounds of food for families in the district. The Gaurc family also gives holiday gifts too many families in our district and we just wanted to send them a sincere and public thank you. I do have a few things that I just wanted to discuss real quick the first

team the Durham building which will also be on the vote. I'm going to have you folks muted and I'm going to go through each item of discussion and then we can unmute you. I'm going to start now then will unmute you and make sure you have the ability to ask questions on each item. I've got four separate items. Ok the Durharm building. We sent out a mass communication this afternoon notifying folks that vote that is going to be occurring on the 9th with some basic facts we've attached a question and answer to that email for people to read at the bottom of that Q & A. we've opened up an email if folks can email additional questions to that we may not have identified in our Q&A. Once we have those additional questions, we'll do a video. I'll probably just do it or if board members would like to do the video that's fine. what the answers to the additional questions are, we will post on the website we will send that out to try to make sure that we get to everybody's questions and concerns before that vote that is going to be occurring on the 9th. So I'm going to have Bunny unmute the board right now that way you can ask any questions about that subject. I had someone ask and I spotting a few different Facebook things is ensuring that you know considering our crisis that we're going through right now. Questar would allow and I know you don't answer this but that Questar would still allow our school district to use the Durham building if needed so there's people in the community I just kind of wanted to have that in writing or something. We have access to use the building. I know it's one of the concerns and we put it on the Q&A Bernadette was with social distancing and do we need to space right? So for the bigger issues we don't have staff in the space even if we had additional space. We did incorporate a question for the Q&A you should be getting that email that went out to everybody on the school messenger. I can send that separate to the board so let me know if you don't get that but we did address that. It was a really big question coming up and from a few different people. I just wanted to make sure that you know. I just kind of been telling people that Questar is kind of like a partnership with Cairo-Durham or it doesn't mean that we don't have access to the building and kind of you know just the overall getting the information out to the public for that June 9th vote. Any other question on the Durham building. Just a piggyback, I think we know this is going to be out of Q&A we also, if Questar decides to discontinue the

program that Cairo-Durham has the first refusal. That is in the Q & A and is going to be sent to the Daily Mail so that information will be shared in that capacity as well to try to make sure that we get this in front of his many eyes as we can. That was actually one of my questions because it's great I did get the email today and that's great but it doesn't address the community in general as opposed to just the Cairo Durham families and the other thing though I do think at some point and maybe in the video we need to make it clear because there is all this I don't know there's a lot of talk out there that would school is going to look like when we come back and let the mandates are going to look like and what I think people are not understanding is they think that the governor is going to order us have 13 kids in a class and we're going to have to proceed which obviously looking at our financial numbers is not a possibility so the fact that people are looking to say hey we may need a Durham building because we are going to have to decrease our class sizes. I think it's important to try and get some information out to the public that really without spending a lot of money in the Durham building we couldn't even do that if we had the capability for not going to have the capability to do. Right if people have additional questions on that beyond what we put in the Q&A Nicole we can certainly address that in the video that we're going together. That'll be asked. It certainly will. Right now it's, we don't we don't know what is going to be, but you have to hire a lot more staff. It is not classrooms but school buses. We could get 7 or 8 kids on a school bus if we honor the current social distancing rules. That's a lot more school busses to buy. We'll keep you updated on what questions or if there's additional questions that we're getting in regards to that and then we'll put the follow-up on the website. That we the public gets answers in ample time to make a decision. Todd did you have anything? I'm good. Okay so I will move on to the next topic is my favorite is Budget and Jeff's favorite topic. Jeff and I, since the last board meeting have continued to work to refine some numbers. we had a high cost special education student move out of the district so we got that out of the budget knowing that we still do have a cushion for kiddos that could move in in September and squeezed certain lines as much as we can knowing that, and Todd brought up last time we still have to make sure that we can appropriate 1.55 million next year otherwise we would have another

disaster so yeah updated a budget figure today is \$32,460,538 and change that is a 2.06% budget to budget increase updated Jeff updated that levy sheet. So if we did not increase our tax levy at all with that expenditure number that would leave us with a deficit \$439,000 Jeff emailed everybody the tax levy scenarios where we looked at if we went out with after the maximum allowable limit which is 3.34% force is a reminder that puts us in a minimal Surplus if we went out at 3.15% that would be a balanced budget. These decisions don't have to be made today on where we're comfortable with the levy increase probably one of the bigger areas of concern is May 15th. We talk about that over the last time short of getting federal assistance New York state is running a 13 billion dollar deficit for next year and obviously they got a foot forward balanced budget without that federal assistance we do anticipate next week receiving information that's going to going to be a budget Revenue reduction from the state budget was passed back on April 1st how much is the question. You know they floated the number out to 20% to aid and aid reduction to local municipalities. Local municipalities incorporate a whole lot of folks. Not just schools and whether or not that would be equal across all municipalities. We don't know. Would some municipalities get a heavier cut, we don't know they So I would say the worst case scenario is at 20% which would be about 2 million dollars which would be devastating. I don't know if you know there would be mass difficult decisions that needed to be made if we had a budget of \$2,000,000. We certainly make that up in a levy increase. Hopefully it's much better than that and hopefully the federal government passes an aid package that supports state and local governments. We have got a whole lot of unanswered questions which makes a complicated because we have a very small window once we have that information on the 15th we are going to adopt their budget on the 21st which is the next board meeting we have and that is the last day in which we can adopt a budget so we cannot adopted any later than that between the 15th and the 21st we're going to have to make significant adjustments from where we are today and that point on the 21st you're going to be voting on a number that can exceed on the expenditure. We are voting on a total expenditure allocation that we cannot exceed right so we will adopt in on the 21st and then after that they're still going to be significant conversations about what

we need to do to get to that number. We're not going to have all those answers from the 15th to the 21st to be six days is not time to make all the decisions we're going to need to make sure those conversations will continue we are pushing our public hearing back as late as we can for the same reason so that is going to be June 2nd. Your vote is June 9th. The ballots have to be to us June 9th. It is not postmarked June 9th they have to be to us by then. It's a very tight window particularly in a year when we're looking at potential dramatic cuts like we haven't seen. The last time we saw this was 2008/2009. What is the timeline for the ballots? When do we as a district send them out? We cannot send them out until after our next board meeting on the 21st because we need that board adopted figure to be able to have on the ballot to send them out right I understand again just give me the timeline of when they're going out. Are they going out the following day? NTS can not print them until we give them the information on the 22nd. So NTS will be able to then print them out and then get them out the following week. We're adopting on the 21st we anticipate that they are going to go out to the public the week of the 25th. That is a really tight turnaround time to get them back to us by the 9th. This is the timeline that the governor set up. I know. Can people drop them off at the school or do they have to be mailed back? No, we are providing sealed envelopes that have postage on them. They can either throw in the mail or yes they could drop a sealed envelope off at school. When you say drop them off at school is there a location at school where they can drop them off. It has to go to Bridget as the district clerk. That will be articulated somewhere written down or sent out to the community I think that's important we need to make sure that the community is aware of every avenue that they can get these returned to us. I was also informed today that there will be no revote so if the vote does fail we have to go straight to a contingency budget. What does that mean? So in general the Board of Education decides on what a contingency budget and initials but in general it would be no raises for non-aligned staff it would be no equipment purchases. Your administrative percentage can't be higher than it was the year before but I got to be honest if we're looking at the kind of reductions that we were anticipating getting next week we're going to our budget number will be below contingency number anyway. I don't see any further significant reductions if

we had to go to a contingent this year for the programming component. One of the questions we talked about last time, if we went out at 3.34% I know there's concern about the end it's understandable. What does that mean? We can talk about equalization rates but what does that 3.34% mean for somebody and their pocket? Jeff put together a nice little analysis so if you live in, and we've got eight or nine townships, I'll just go over Cairo & Durham because those are by far the largest population. Just to give you an idea what we are looking at. If we went up to the 3.34% on the levy increase if you live in a home assessed at \$100,000 you live in Cairo you would have to pay \$6.35 more per day in taxes if you lived in Durham you would have to pay \$5.84 more per month in taxes if you if your home was assessed at a hundred fifty thousand if you live in Cairo you would pay \$9.53 more and if you lived in Durham it would be \$9.43 per month tuition give me an idea of what that what is 3.34% actually means. Is that information that we're going to provide somewhere to the public and we can let them know that if we decide to go out a 3.34 this is what it's going to mean? The one we just did now in too tight we would be part of a slide deck that we would make for the public hearing I would include that information so people could see that impact then obviously let you know they can extrapolate roughly what it would mean for them and whatever their houses assessed at. Hey Jeff can I ask you a quick question? Can you please email the board that please? Of course. I think right now in these times we are in, I know you we just did to the public in here but we normally send something to the public but it's either a mailer or something like that I don't know if that's something that we're still doing this year but if it is I would love to see a little table that just says get out of these are the township for every hundred thousand dollars at your home is assessed at this is what your taxes will go up. We will still send out a newsletter Nicole and we can absolutely include that information in the newsletter I think that's very important and again so you know I think it's the next the next meeting when we adopt the budget we we've got to make that decision on what we're comfortable with it in a year like this with the reductions we're having to make like I said last time my recommendation would be to go out at the money limit and allow the community to the if you do go out that limit if we didn't increase taxes and we had to cut another \$400,000 out of a budget there's

there's additional significant ramifications to that. Well I think what you said before it's important to know to is that if we go out a 3.34 in the vote comes back no and we have to go to contingency the contingency maybe more than what our budget was going to be anyway so we are kind of in a win win here. There will be some cuts under a contingency. It's a relatively small risk to go out of the cap. It's much smaller this year than typical years. I wanted to share with you and relationship to that, so each year Questar gathers information in regards to districts their tax cap, what they're going out with on the budget so far we have 15 districts that have answered 12 are going out at cap one is going to exceed their cap and 2 are going out below their cap. The two that are going out below their cap are going out with zeros. But we don't know how far below their cap they are. Yes, one is 3 and a half and one is 2%. Most people are going out at the maximum. So I didn't know if that would be important information to help you folks inform your decision. Are there any more questions about the budget? Actually Mike, can you email the information you just gave us to the board too? The one thing I could potentially do is have Jeff X out the district name so you don't see what district name. I don't need to know the name. Whatever you said 12 of the 15 responding are going out above the cap, that is good information when we're talking to people about why we are making the decision we are. I will put that in my notes to you. Thank you. Anything else on budget. So one difficult conversation to another difficult conversation, graduation. I don't know doesn't seem like anything we talked about it's pleasant right cuz even though we are going to do everything we can to make a special graduation it's still not what we want. So we had a we have a little graduation committee that met today so the one thing that we are proposing and would like to do is to move graduation date to July 17th. The reason we want to do that is we want to get it as late as possible in hopes that the later we go the better chance we have to have a traditional graduation. If things get better and our state starts to open up more you know maybe there's an outside chance we could have something more traditional in the building even if it's not exactly the same if we could get in the building walking across the stage that is certainly our first choice so we would like to move graduation to Friday night July 17th. Mike I understand that. I want to know if the governor doesn't open us up and if we don't go the

way we want, what is our second alternative if we can't get our children to walk across the stage? What is our plan? I need to know a redundancy plan a b and c, A the graduate can walk across the stage B. If we can't do a virtue and what is c? That's what the committee is working at so we're pushing it back to July 17th if the boards okay with that we will communicate that to parents tomorrow so they can kind of save the date and the committee is going to continue to meet, Steve, to put those plans together they kicked around ideas today of possibilities everybody's been a kind of sleep on it. We're going to continue to meet to establish what those various other additional plans could look like we're even talking about potentially coming up with those plans and then sending them out to parents. The parents and the students have them prioritize which ones they like better to try to give them input on what their graduation day should look like. So that's the purpose of the committee is to put those together. Is there a timeline on when they're going to come up with a 3 or whatever? If we're taking the graduation to July 17th I would say early June we want to have that. Mike, I'm okay with that. I think it's a great idea. I know that some colleges and universities are or going as far as pushing graduation to August. Hoping to try to get it in and make a full-scale and it's also God forbid we had a Resurgence. There's a small little window that seems like they are trying to get this graduation in. August would be tough. And the reason August will be tough, and I can speak from personal experience, my step daughter leaves for college on August sixth. Everyone typically goes on vacation early in August. I don't have any opposition so we're going to officially move it. Mike I just want to make it clear that we have got to have a plan in place and and all our kids have suffered especially our seniors not being in school and all the kids are suffering now playing sports to seniors it's an important year as we know we all graduated. You know we just need to make sure that we do everything special and everything we can do make it a good day for the children and the families and community on graduation. Please we just can't hold back. We can do everything together and make it as successful as possible but that's what we need to really focus on. The other thing, I want to make sure that there has been communication with all of the members of the senior class in their family that this committee has put together we are working on it and there's a timeline because

you are going to start having people freaking out now because will it close we're not doing anything we don't care which is clearly not the case so I do want to make sure that there's communication with the students and their families about the fact that there's a committee being put together if there is a timeline and this information will be put it out there. That is going to be a part of the email. Paula's on so she's listening. That is going to be part of the email Dr. McEwen will send out to the seniors and their families tomorrow. Perfect thank so it's going to go out to the senior families when we decide what we're going to do or whatever that option to you're going to allow the senior class or the senior advisors to maybe pick what they want to give them options is that what I'm hearing? So the senior advisors and the graduation committee, we have parents and a committee of seniors, we have other staff on the committee. I just want to let folks know that the graduation has officially been moved to July 17th and that the reason that we wanted to move it was the hope that we pushed it back later we could have a traditional graduation but that's how we are meeting us a committee and then putting together alternatives if that isn't to happen. That will go out tomorrow once we have more options. That's when we would need to decide if we are sending that out to parents and kids or kind of privatization to those that plan those alternative plans Steve. I think it's a great idea. I think one of the things that you might want to also include is who's on the committee. This way they recognize that there are other folks on the committee, not just educators. Yeah we can look at that I don't want to create other issues. We could put out a generic list without mentioning names. I will talk to Dr. McKeown about that in the morning. Thank you. Any other questions and comments about graduation. No, I think we covered it. Okay that's all I can on my list. Were there any questions on the vote and the procedures of the vote. I kind of lumped that into the budget talk. Does everybody understands how that's working completely absentee ballot on we work with a company to send the ballots out. With the ballots there is a self-addressed stamped envelope for the ballots to return and then they have to be at the district office on June 9th by 5:00 PM and we count them at the district. Were there any questions on this year's vote process? I think it's pretty clear Mike thank you. The counting piece is handled by us. That is an internal process. We appoint those folks

and they take care of it. we had the board many reports I don't believe there's any board committee reports correct. The audit committee met last week. Jeff do you want to talk about that and then the others can chime and I know Brian's not with us tonight. We had a meeting last Wednesday, two items on the agenda one was our claims audit reports from December through March they improved dramatically. I had much less write ups in that time. So I reviewed those the second item and was just going over the procedure for external audit so the committee members especially new ones knew how with the external audit works from the beginning of preliminary order work right through the audit report that the board has to adopt and approve an action plan that has to be in October. We reviewed that process. Right now we ended preliminary work and we're heading into regular audit work in the summer so that's where we are right now and then we just said our next meeting date which I don't have the agenda whatever the June 15th? Whatever that June meeting was. Nicole did you have anything else with the audit committee meeting? No. So I want to recognize our teachers and other educators for what they have done for our children. They are doing it from home and have their own families to deal with. I saw the electric sign from the high school and elementary school. I think that's a nice touch and just want to appreciate teachers' week and what they do to our district and what to do to our children really. I couldn't agree more Steve but I thought I'd like to extend that to everybody because everybody within our school system from custodial to transportation to our support staff or nurses administrator has done an absolutely amazing job in this times. I heard it was positive about all our staff and faculty and I just it's been it's been good and I will push it forward. Make sure that when you know talking to the teachers in and your faculty and staff and whoever, that we appreciate everything they're doing during these difficult times. Make the motion to adjourn the meeting. I will make that motion, Second? I will second it. John Amoroso made the motion and Todd seconded it. Meeting adjourned.