



BOARD OF FINANCE

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, February 19, 2015
7:00 p.m.

CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room "A"

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: Bruce Cornwell, Chairman, William Kingston, Patricia Smithwick, Eileen Freebairn, Claudia Stephan, Gary Regan and Timothy Draper. Also in attendance were members of the Board of Selectmen, Comptroller Robert Kozlowski and Assistant Comptroller Brad Heering.

Bruce Cornwell called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 .m.

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Department Budget Presentations

450 - Board of Education

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 request \$43,382,535

Lawrence Craybas, Chairman of the Board of Education, Dr. Christine Carver, Superintendent of Schools, Kristin Brooks, Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Theresa Yonksy, Director of Fiscal Services presented the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 request in the amount of \$43,382,535.

They noted that again this year, the biggest drivers to their budget were the cost of health insurance and salaries. They've been actively seeking cost saving alternatives with the health insurance plans and have moved most employee groups to a health savings account. Health insurance represents a 7% increase; Salaries are a 2.38%, Transportation 2.25%, and Special Education – a 2% increase.

They shared student achievements, which included, exceeding National common core benchmarks in reading and mathematics (grade 2-11), exceeding State achievement benchmarks in Science (grade 5, 8 & 10) and exceeding State in SAT scores in reading, mathematics & writing.

They shared the goals of strongest professional teaching force; incorporating effective Professional Learning Community process at each grade level, data teams that examine student assessment results and plan for individualized instruction, development and implementation of a district developed teacher evaluation system, receiving a SDE waiver. Continued work with the Danielson Group & Instructional coaches provide embedded professional learning.

Discussion took place regarding the budget priorities of maintaining appropriate teacher-student ratios in the elementary grades, increasing opportunities for direct instruction for students with disabilities, continue to work towards a 1:1 model of students with devices and enhance technology integration in instruction through program development and support. They did note that enrollment is holding steady and they are not seeing the decline that other districts are experiencing.

With the pending retirement in the IT Department and the amount of technology in the system, they are increasing a part-time position to full-time.

They will look at the fee schedule for the Circle of Friends program.

460 - BOE – Maintenance

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 request \$500,000.00

Lawrence Craybas, Chairman of the Board of Education, Dr. Christine Carver, Superintendent of Schools, Robert Germinaro, Facilities Supervisor and Theresa Yonksy, Director of Fiscal Services presented the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 request in the amount of \$500,000.00

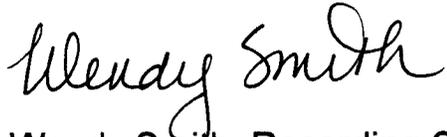
Mr. Germinaro explained that there is no proposed increase in the budget. The proposals for this budget were submitted by School Principals and the Facilities Supervisor, they were prioritized and \$194,842 in actual projects are included in the proposed request, while \$68,950 in projects were excluded from this year's budget proposal in order to keep the same funding level as the current year.

Mr. Germinaro explained some items will go under the five year capital plan highlighting critical projects. Discussion took place regarding the expansion of the Berry School parking lot. This project has been before the Planning & Zoning Commission and with the plan approved by them, now has a projected cost of \$200,000. The project now includes drainage, landscaping and lighting. The safety issue remains until the parking lot issue is resolved.

Discussion took place regarding the "renovate as new" both Johnson and Rockwell Schools as approved by the Board of Education. This is estimated to be approximately \$25,000,000 per school with a 46% reimbursement.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, Patricia Smithwick made a motion, which was seconded by Eileen Freebairn, to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'W' and 'S'.

Wendy Smith, Recording Secretary