TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings | Regular Meeting | February 11, 2020

Ms. Susan Salina called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room.

Roll Call:
Members present: Mmes. Susan Salina, Lydia Tedone, Jen Batchelar and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Todd Burrick and Jeff Tindall.

Members absent: Mrs. Tara Willerup and Mr. Brian Watson.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan, Director of Systems Technology Jason Casey, BOE Student Representative Calah Huie and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE — Public Audience

Alex Picoult, 6 Teacher's Turn, sophomore at SHS stated that he is a graduate of the UConn Conservation Ambassador Program. He presented the research for his "Say No To Styrofoam" capstone project. The goal of his project is to end the use of Styrofoam products in the Simsbury school cafeterias. The board was very receptive to his project.

Jade Hoye, 48 Hayes Road, expressed concern that the Facilities Master Plan survey can be taken by anyone. He suggested there should be a verification process to determine if those taking the survey are Simsbury residents. Mr. Hoye said he is concerned whether the results of the survey are sound.

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS — Communications

Ms. Lydia reported on the National School Board Association (NSBA) conference in Washington, D.C. She stated that the CT legislative breakfast is February 20th and CABE Day on the Hill is March 11th. Mr. Sullivan address the School Facilities Master Plan survey, stating that it is an opinion survey and using the Google platform for the survey allows us to quickly retrieve the results of the survey as well as keep responses anonymous.

Ms. Batchelar reported on the Curriculum Committee meeting that was held at Central School. 2nd and 4th grade teachers had a book club over the summer reading Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension by Sara K. Ahmed. These teachers spoke to the committee about how they have integrated themes from the book into the classroom. Ms. Batchelar stated that the committee also received an update on the grade 4-6 World Language program. She noted that we are tying diversity into the program. Mr. Burrick expressed concern that the public doesn't realize all the work we have done to integrate the topic of diversity in our schools.

Mr. Tindall reported on the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force meeting. Tecton Architects provided additional options to the task force who also reviewed and provided input on the survey. Mr. Tindall noted that the survey is focused on looking

at the immediate needs in the district. The task force will meet again at the end of February. Neighborhood meetings at each of the elementary schools are underway.

Ms. Murray reported on the building based professional development that will take place Friday afternoon. At the elementary level they will do equity work and prep for the SBAC testing. At the middle school faculty will review the results of the homework survey. At SHS staff will work on their passions projects.

Mr. Casey provided an update on the HJMS Phase III project. The first phase of classroom renovations is complete. At the end of February additional classrooms and the library media center will be completed, although furniture and shelving for the media center will not be delivered until March. At the end of April the auditorium will be done, as well as additional classrooms. More classrooms will be completed at the end of June. Substantial completion of the project is anticipated by August 15th. At that time the family and consumer sciences classrooms and gymnasium should be ready to come online. The final completion date is September 22nd. At this point the project is 61% complete and has a healthy remaining contingency/allowance of $2.26 million.

Ms. Huie reported on events at the elementary schools, middle and high school.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2020

Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2020

Ms. Tedone: MOVE to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2020 meeting.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved. Ms. Tedone abstained.

B. Approval of Minutes of February 5, 2020 Workshop

Approval of Minutes of February 5, 2020 Workshop

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2020 budget workshop.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

C. Personnel

Personnel

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirement of Michele Martin effective June 30, 2020.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

D. Acceptance of Gift from Ensign Bickford

Acceptance of Gift from Ensign Bickford

Ms. Murray noted that this was addressed at the last meeting, but a dollar figure was not included in the motion. She thanked Ensign Bickford for their generosity.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Ensign-Bickford Aerospace Defense Company gift of $30,000 over 3 years, to fund STEM programs, be accepted.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

E. Approval of Completed School Building Projects

Approval of Completed School Building Projects

Mr. Curtis stated that a board motion is required in order to close out these projects with the state. The final reimbursement to the town for these projects is approximately $700,000.

Mr. Tindall: MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education accepts as complete the Central School Roof Replacement project (128-0107RR) and the Henry James Phase II project (128-0108A/CV) and authorizes the acceptance of the school building grants.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

F. Adoption of Six Year Capital Improvement Plan

Adoption of 6 Year CIP

Mr. Curtis stated that there are 2 projects on the plan for the coming year. These include replacement of the home side bleachers and press box on Holden Field, as well as technology funding for the replacement of the district's aging servers. He noted that these items have been discussed in prior meetings and at the budget workshop.

Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the Board of Education Six Year Capital Improvement Plan for the period 2021-26 be adopted.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

<u>INFORMATON AND REPORTS</u>

A. 2020-21 Budget

2020-21 Budget

Mr. Curtis thanked his administrative team who were present in the audience. He reviewed the budget development process beginning in November. Mr. Curtis noted that 80% of the budget is personnel. He stated the amount of his budget is $72,384,831 which is an increase of $1,503,853 or 2.12%. Mr. Curtis reviewed the factors impacting the budget: K-6 enrollment; BOF guideline of 2.5%; mill rate under 40; supporting our strategic plan with program improvement; and the pension assumption rate of 6.5%.

Mr. Curtis discussed Simsbury's per pupil expenditure and how it compares to neighboring communities. He noted that this number is enrollment driven. Mr. Curtis reviewed enrollment projections. Over the next 5 years elementary enrollment is projected to increase by 284 while secondary will remain steady. Mr. Curtis provided an overview of K-12 staffing and enrollment over the past 10 years. He noted that there has been a decline of 9.59 FTE over the last 3 budgets. Mr. Curtis addressed student growth and success, noting that Simsbury is ranked 2nd in DRG B relative to the CT 2019 Accountability Index which is comprised of 12 data points

Mr. Curtis stated that the drivers of the 2020-21 budget are contractual obligations, program improvements, insurance and pension. He reviewed the personnel drivers, noting that contracts total an increase of $1,384,007 which is a 1.95% increase.

Once offset by 10 anticipated staff retirements, the increase is $1,134,007 or a 1.6% increase.

Mr. Curtis reviewed the personnel budget themes for 2020-21. He stated that the request for 3.5 FTE will be offset by the reduction of 3 certified staff and 2 non-certified staff positions. This results in a net total of -1.5 FTE. Mr. Curtis discussed additional budget item requests that were not funded in this budget.

Mr. Curtis addressed pension and insurance costs. He stated that the projected 2020-21 increase is $347,700 or .49%. Mr. Curtis provided an overview of all drivers of the budget. The total budget with additions and reductions is $1,503,853, a 2.12% increase. Mr. Curtis provided a second scenario in which, at BOF request, the pension/OPEB cost is increased to 6.5% which raises the overall budget to 2.69%. With the use of $175,000 in non-lapsing account funds the budget lowers to 2.44%.

Ms. Salina asked if typically the additional $400,000 is funded from reserves. Mr. Curtis responded that in the past the BOF has funded through reserves and from the operating budget. He noted that the BOE budget will be below the guideline either way.

Mr. Curtis reviewed the non-public school budget, noting that this budget includes town shared services for field maintenance, nursing and school psychologist services at private schools, as well as transportation reimbursement for residents whose children attend private school in town as mandated. The non-public school budget increase is 0.91% or $4,951. The 2020-21 proposed non-public school budget is $551,383.

Mr. Tindall commended the administration for coming in below the budget guideline at 2.12%. He pointed out that the 2.44% proposed increase would be at the request of the BOF.

Public Audience

PUBLIC AUDIENCE
None

Executive Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION
Mr. Burrick: MOVE to enter Executive Session at 7:53 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter and include Mr. Curtis and Mr. Sullivan.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT
Ms. Batchelar:MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

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Jen Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary