

Board of Education

January 23, 2016

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in Special session on Saturday, January 23, 2016, at 9:00 a.m., in the Stillman Building, Lower Level Meeting Room, 127 Hartford Avenue. The following Board members were present: Ms. Moon; Mrs. Hughes Granato, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Forrest, Mrs. Vasel, Mrs. Steinmiller-Paradise, Mr. Cascio and Mr. Hill. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools Mr. Emmett; Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Mrs. Dastoli; Director of Maintenance and Operations, Mr. Bushey; Business Manager Mr. Kozaka; Mayor Montinieri, Deputy Mayor Barry; Town Council members Mr. Martino, Mr. Hurley, Mrs. Latina, Mr. Spinella, and Donna Hemmann.

1. Call to Order: 9:00 a.m.
2. Town Budget Update – Mayor Paul Montinieri opened the meeting with general overview of the major factors affecting 2016-17 town budget, citing concerns regarding the mill rate as expressed by many citizens. The second issuance of bonds for renovation of the high school and a large increase in MDC costs will be important proponents. Healthcare costs will hopefully continue to be favorable. He has requested that the Board of Education begin the budget process conservatively with a 0%, to see what that would look like. The Republicans on Council are suggesting -2% based on concern that ECS funding could possibly be cut. Mr. Montinieri has asked town finance staff to research the impact on MDR. He also urged continuing dialogue between the Town and the Board during this process.
3. Discussion of the 2016-17 School Operating Budget: Mr. Emmett began by highlighting the immediate costs that will impact the budget, including immediate hiring of an accounting supervisor in the Business office, as recommended by BlumShapiro in the recent audit; making permanent the long-term subs who were hired in September to maintain class sizes in the elementary schools; anticipated costs associated with the move

of the Wethersfield Transition Academy to a new location; and contractual obligations resulting from four union contract renewals, the largest of which was teachers. Class sizes are being carefully monitored; an-up-to-date report was included in the budget packet. The three now-permanent hires will be placed wherever required once final numbers are determined. Board members inquired as to whether there was a way to better predict final enrollment, and both Mrs. Dastoli and Mr. Emmett indicated that despite constant monitoring and review, there continues to be a sizeable number of students who are enrolled in August and often not until the school year begins. This occurs despite out-reach to the community and advertising to raise awareness in young families with Kindergarten age children.

Mr. Emmett then turned the program over to Mr. Kozaka who distributed the budget packet. He explained the changes in object codes occasioned by the Uniform Chart of Accounts that is now required for school districts. He then reviewed the budget material.

Board members were asked to review the information and send any questions to Mr. Emmett or Mr. Kozaka prior to next week's workshop.

4. Mr. Cascio MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Forrest and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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John Morris, Vice-Chairperson-Secretary

*Minutes by Polly Moon, Chairperson*