

BOE Special Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2015

Approved

Meeting called to order by Chair Karen Bergin at 6:02 p.m.

Attendees: BOE members Karen Bergin, Alison Romkey, Katherine Galle, Matt Giuffre, Richard Hayes, Ron Rousseau, Julie Begin and Superintendent Kristin Heckt.

Bolton Resident (24 Pond View Road) and Board of Finance Chair, Bob Munroe, requested clarification on the superintendent's budget presentation regarding the grant awards and open seats for Choice. Superintendent Heckt stated there will not be any seats opened in the high school and there will be six seats open in kindergarten, with the possibility of additional seats being opened for siblings, but it is too soon to know that need at this point.

Bob Munroe further asked if we were being conservative with the number of projected Columbia students and Superintendent Heckt stated that this number changes throughout the school year, so, yes, the budget number is a conservative number.

Mr. Hayes provided information from a recent article in The Hartford Courant regarding state funding for education for 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Chair Bergin called for recommendations for additions or deletions of the budget.

Matt Giuffre presented a **motion** to add \$5,400 to the budget for impact testing and trainer costs; 2nd by Ronald Rousseau, motion passed 6-1 with Kate Galle voting against.

There was discussion on the legal services line and Superintendent Heckt noted that the custodian contract will be negotiated this school year.

Matt Giuffre presented a **motion** to reduce Pay to Play from \$75 to \$50; 2nd by Karen Bergin. Members Matt Giuffre and Karen Bergin voted yes; Members Rich Hayes, Julie Begin, Alison Romkey, Ron Rousseau and Kate Galle voted no. Motion failed 2-5.

Matt Giuffre presented a **motion** to reduce pay to play from \$75 to \$0; 2nd by Karen Bergin. Members Matt Giuffre and Karen Bergin voted yes; members Rich Hayes, Julie Begin, Alison Romkey, Ron Rousseau and Kate Galle voted no; motion failed 2-5.

After discussion on the 3-5 world language program, a **motion** was presented by Alison Romkey to add the 3-5 world language position back into the budget; 2nd Karen Bergin. Members Alison Romkey, Kate Galle, and Karen Bergin voted yes; members Julie Begin, Rich Hayes, Matt Giuffre and Ron Rousseau voted no; motion failed 3-4.

Rich Hayes requested that the Board try and get the budget under a 3% increase. Superintendent Heckt shared that the only place to cut is salaries/benefits and it is a

disservice to the district to not be able to hire the right person and hire the best, not the cheapest. She also added that the teacher wages and benefits piece of the proposed budget is 2.9% of the total 3.4% that was presented.

With the budget proposal now being 3.41% with the inclusion of the passed motion presented by Mr. Giuffre, there was discussion on past and current health insurance costs and the need to keep the volatility of this market in mind, the decline in enrollment, per pupil cost increases, increased mandates with little or no funding to support them, grant funding options, lack of growth in town business from a tax base standpoint, and the Board's role as advocate for the schools.

Matt Giuffre presented a **motion** to approve the Superintendent's budget increase of 3.41%; 2nd by Julie Begin; members Alison Romkey, Karen Bergin, Kate Galle, Julie Begin and Matt Giuffre voted yes; members Rich Hayes and Ron Rousseau voted no; motion passed 5-2.

Rich Hayes presented a **motion** at 7:15 PM to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, 2nd Kate Galle; MUP.

The Board came out of Executive Session by consensus at 7:50 PM.

Kate Galle presented a **motion** to adjourn; 2nd by Rich Hayes; MUP. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Submitted by,

Alison Romkey, Board Secretary