

**NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT

MINUTES – January 28, 2020

PRESENT: Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

ABSENT: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, High School Assistant Principal Scott Rohwedder, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Meeting House Hill School Assistant Principal Allyson Story, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh and BOF members Jane Landers and Brian Shea

I. CALL TO ORDER - Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. WORKSHOP

A. Review of the 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino gave a brief overview of the budget and the agenda for tonight's meeting. The purpose of this special workshop was to give administrators, teachers, Board of Education members, Board of Finance members and the Board of Selectmen an opportunity to ask questions about the Superintendent's proposed budget and to give their opinions and suggestions about different aspects of the budget.

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Rich Sanzo announced that he and Finance Director Ed Sbordone met with the actuary to discuss the suggested contribution for both the town and Board of Education pension plans. Typically, the figures are available much earlier in the budget cycle but due to a recent change in the mortality tables the figures just recently became available. It was noted that the change in the mortality table significantly impacts the budget and would cause a change for the recommended funding from \$321,914 per year to \$443,553. It was noted that it may be possible to phase this increase into a two year period and thus there would be a yearly increase to the Superintendent's recommended budget of \$87,086. It was noted that this will not affect the town's bond rating.

Dr. Sanzo further spoke of fuel costs and noted that this can be locked in at a lower rate this year yielding a savings of approximately \$27,000 per year. The combination of the pension fund and fuel prices will yield an increase to the Superintendent's budget of \$59,482 or a percentage increase of 1.9% over last year or 3.3% over last year with the debt service for the building project included.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of the possible change to physical education at Consolidated School and noted that a four day rotation for specials is contractually possible because it still allows for prep time for teachers. Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz spoke of the specials schedule for ELC. There was a discussion among the administrators and the Board of Education members regarding the importance of physical education especially for younger students. There was a brief discussion of other personnel needs for the budget including an Administrative Assistant for the Director of Business and Operations office. It was decided that this will be discussed further at the BOE meeting of February 6.

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to table the decision regarding adding an additional physical education teacher to Consolidated School until the next regular BOE meeting on February 6. Stephanie Strazza seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to make the following changes to the Superintendent's proposed budget:

- Pension: Increase by \$87,086 to \$409,000
- Diesel Fuel: Decrease by \$7,474 to \$101,426
- Propane: Increase by \$700 to \$26,950
- Fuel Oil: Decrease by \$15,180 to \$226,820
- Gasoline: Decrease by \$5,650 to \$4,240

This would result in a net change to the Superintendent's budget of \$59,482 with a percentage increase of 1.90% or 3.30% with the new debt service. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

BOF Chairman Wes Marsh asked about the \$400,000 in the budget for Capital and Nonrecurring. Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross spoke of projects needed at the Middle School and specifically replacement of the roof and removal of the underground storage tanks. There was a discussion of having a comprehensive plan for capital projects. It was noted that there are no plans for capital projects for any schools other than the Middle School.

Other budget topics discussed included the cost of vaping sensors for the high school, upgrading of the district's website, enrichment and theater coordinator, special education outplacement costs and a literacy coach at Consolidated. It was decided that this will be discussed further at the next BOE meeting.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

V. ADJOURNMENT - Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos