

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7  
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER  
**SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES – Approved 3.14.18**  
MARCH 8, 2018 – 6 p.m. (Postponed from March 7, 2018)

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Mary Duran (6:45 p.m.)(B), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Katherine Vandiver (N), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Superintendent Dr. Judith Palmer, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins  
**ABSENT:** Ms. Lisa Fragale (C)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Ms. Sexton Read invited represented town officials to provide their input and/or comments pertaining to the District's Proposed Budget 2018-2019.

**INPUT FROM TOWN OFFICIALS ON THE PROPOSED 2017-2018 BUDGET**

Town Selectmen and Finance Officials from Barkhamsted, Colebrook, New Hartford, and Norfolk shared comments and input pertaining to the Regional School District No. 7 Proposed 2018-2019 Budget as follows: A letter was read written by New Hartford First Selectman, Mr. Daniel Jerram who was unable to attend, commending the Board of Education for their efforts hard work, and due diligence in presenting a budget with less than a one percent increase. Enrollment changes have helped New Hartford this year; unfortunately sister towns have not seen the same benefit. Mr. Jerram looks forward to further budget discussions at upcoming meetings. Positive comments from Board Finance Officials from Barkhamsted, Colebrook, and Norfolk pertaining to the under one percent increase; Norfolk and Colebrook encouraged revisiting with the hope of presenting a budget for the 2018-2019 school year with a zero percent increase. Barkhamsted First Selectman, Mr. Donald Stein, contributed his concerns that the Town of Barkhamsted may face a tax increase this year based on RSD's Proposed Budget, and also echoed Mr. Jerram's letter pertaining to the due diligence of Board of Education members and Regional's Administrative team bringing in the Proposed Budget with an under one percent increase. Discussion followed on declining populations and projections for future enrollments. Ms. Sexton Read confirmed that the Board of Education has been actively engaged in planning to address declining future enrollments, however, at this time Regional School District No. 7 is not seeing the same level of decline as the elementary schools. It was agreed that town and school collaboration is critical in order to engage with fiscal responsibility during the current unpredictable state funding climate. Discussion followed.

Ms. Sexton Read reviewed the Budget Timeline and Referendum calendar, and thanked everyone for attending and providing their input for the proposed 2018-2019 Budget. Ms. Sexton Read advised that the driving factor in keeping the budget increase at 0.93 percent is a reflection of, mainly, a decrease in Special Education student outplacement expenditures resulting from students "aging out" of various Special Education Programs.

**DISCUSSION ON WORKING BUDGET**

Mr. Gaskins clarified questions from last week's budget workshop pertaining to: Administrative salary increases, guidance stipend for 504 administration; unemployment line item, special education transportation, building and grounds, athletic equipment, legal expenditures, social studies subscription line item, and Middle School coaching positions. New questions were presented pertaining to: Middle School mentors, Media Department supervisory stipend, tuition reimbursement for administrators, non-certified longevity, field trip line item, and grounds in-house. Discussion followed.

Ms. Sexton Read advised that she feels the need to further investigate and address enrollment concerns pertaining to future projection numbers, and discussion followed as it would relate to a zero percent budget increase and the differences between the elementary schools and Regional School District No. 7.

Public questions followed pertaining to students moving into district or returning from Magnet Schools, and Benefit Line expenditures. Explanations and clarification were provided by both Dr. Palmer and Ms. Sexton Read.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **ADJOURN** at 7:03 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Gauthier, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Duran, Ms. Vandiver, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None.  
**MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa H. D'Aprile  
Board Clerk

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 14, 2018, First Informal Budget Presentation, Botelle School, Norfolk, 7:00 p.m., with regular Board of Education meeting to follow.**