

Groton Board of Education  
Special Meeting Minutes  
April 3, 2017  
Town Hall Annex, CR 2

**Members Present:** Kim Shepardson Watson-Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman-Vice Chairperson, Gary Baker (by phone), Katrina Fitzgerald, Gretchen Newsome, Rosemary Robertson, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

**Also Present:** Michael Graner, Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick

Chairman Shepardson Watson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The Chairman stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and take possible action regarding preparation of budget contingency plans.

Dr. Ackerman was concerned about the Town Councilors' reduction/response to the CIP request.

The Board reflected on the Town Council discussion regarding cuts to the Board of Education FY 2017-2018 budget, which was presented as a 1.67% increase from the FY 2016-2017 budget, largely due to contractual salary and benefit increase. Some members of the Town Council told the Board to take a 5.279 million dollar cut, while others suggested a 1.5 million dollar cut below the FY 2016-2017 budget. The Town Council voted on the 5.279 million dollar cut and it passed 5 to 3.

RTM member Kathy Neugent, Head of the Education Committee, says that they can't vote based on proposed budget cuts. Dr. Graner says that we can only close one elementary school (PV); there is no room in our existing schools to put students from another school. He will meet with the staff at PV on Tuesday morning and noted that PV is one of the 2020 plan closures. Detailed plans can be provided:

Create one class per grade at CB and fill other classes with extra students;  
Accommodate at NEA, CK based on lottery and SBB based on request and enrollment.

April 17, 2017 COW; invite parents; vote at the BOE meeting on April 24, 2017  
April 20, 2017 RTM Education Committee; public can attend  
April 25, 2017 Town Council sets final budget  
May 25-28, 2017 RTM votes (2/3 can restore BOE budget)

Some next Steps:

Study transportation, transfer.  
How do we get 3.7 million dollars more after school closure?  
Come up with list to show 1.5 million dollars and beyond.  
CEA leadership at work, forums for teachers to meet legislators, post card project, community support needed;  
Appropriation and Education.  
One member says, "We can't be speechless, we need to make noise."  
RTM can put money back.  
Is the Town Council premature in this vote?  
The Town will get punished if they deduct this much and ECS cut provisions for reconcile this?

No guarantee that even if funds are returned that it would come back to schools.

**MOTION:** Flax, Grim; to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**