

Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were, Candace Anderson, Secretary, Jack Morehouse, Farouk Rajab, Alisa Morrison, Deborah Downie, and Craig Esposito.

Also, present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Comments from Citizens Relative to the Budget

There were no comments from citizens relative to the budget.

2019-2020 Budget Discussion and Direction

Dr. Van Riley noted the change to the presentation date on the Board of Finance 2019-2020 Budget Presentation Schedule for the Board of Education, BOE CIP from March 13th to Tuesday, March 12th at Mystic Middle School. Dr. Riley explained what departmentalization in grades 3, 4 and 5, one teacher will now teach one subject not all subjects. When we were able to use this idea in the previous years our student achievement and scores went up. He also reviewed his document which gave answers to the Board's twenty-six questions regarding the proposed budget. (See attached) He added there was an \$11,000 decrease in the budget. We are purchasing instruments for the music program, we plan to pay this out of this year's funds. Dr. Riley suggested the Board put \$6,000 back into the instructional supply line for the expanded music program, which still leaves a \$5,000 decrease. Some of the questions touched on class sizes, tuition, enrollment health insurance and salaries. Dr. Riley shared a Teacher Staffing Summary for 19-20 by school, grade, projected enrollment and FTE. Dr. Riley answered Mr. Morehouse's question regarding Magnet school enrollments and had a summary sheet listing number of student enrollments at each Magnet school, regular and special ed, and estimated annual cost.

Alisa Morrison asked who decides what tuition will be for the Magnet schools. Dr. Riley answered the school determines the cost. Craig Esposito, who is the chair of the LEARN board, explained it is based on how much it costs to run the school, what they expect to receive from the state and enrollment to figure out per student cost, this year they froze tuition so there is no increase. Jack Morehouse asked if the numbers stay consistent. Dr. Riley answered that some have gone up. Gary Shettle, Director of Finance explained Marine Science has changed a small amount and he budgeted according to the change all other locations stayed the same. Deborah Downie asked if we pay tuition for Ledyard Vo-Ag or Norwich. Dr. Riley answered yes we pay for those schools. Alisa Morrison asked for the Ledyard enrollment. Mr. Shettle will get exact number and tuition to the Board. Mr. Shettle confirmed he budgeted twelve students for Ledyard. Dr. Riley shared a list of schools and which types of energy source they are using. He also spoke about the MOU for health benefits with the Town and the Reserve Account Agreement from 1993. We will be meeting with the town to discuss a new updated document. Dr. Riley referred to the MOU and agreement and noted we have a reserve of \$2,478,000 in the health account. He explained the costs associated with the health insurance and what is budgeted.

Chairwoman, Garvey noted she met with June Strunk of the Board of Finance to go over the MOU agreement and are now developing a new one, but until that is done we will abide by the 1993 agreement. We might attach an amendment to the 1993 agreement or meet with the Board of Finance and Board of Selectman to redo the agreement.

Dr. Riley spoke of the alternative program that will be housed at the new District Office which the plan is to have one full time teacher and one full time tutor. If we bring back tuition students then we might need to bring back another teacher or tutor, but those positions would be paid from the savings of the tuition from the non-public schools. We will be sponsoring three different programs for students. We will also be adding a clerical position for cross training in both the Payroll and Human Resource departments. We will also move the current .4 clerical position for Technology and Facilities to 1.0. With the consolidation we will be eliminating two part-time secretarial positions. We will be also have a reduction in custodial staff of one custodian with the consolidation. Dr. Riley answered the question regarding if the Town can use our facilities and will they be charged. We have not made a recommendation to the Board yet, it is a town building but if there is extra cleaning costs we could consider that. He shared that the Town and Recreation Department mentioned they are interested in using West Broad Street School and the District Office, and as we get closer we would bring the recommendation to the Board. Dr. Riley spoke on the heat energy at each school and the recent change at Pawcatuck Middle School fuel tank which recently was filled with concrete instead of removed. This school is now natural gas only. He explained athletic field trip increase was due to a contractual increase for transportation.

Dr. Riley explained the staffing for 2019-20. Teachers returned their preferences for next year this week. We met with the Leadership team to make the final moves for teachers from Mystic Middle School and Pawcatuck Middle School and made those

decisions, those teachers were notified today. Next step is to have principals, Tim Smith, Alicia Dawe and Jenn McCurdy meet with their teachers and find out what grade they prefer for next year. They will set their schedules, room assignments and then will know what vacancies we will have. We have identified move dates and have a tentative schedule. We will share the schedule at the February Board meeting.

Deborah Downie noted there were no preschool class sizes and asked if there is only one preschool teacher at each school and additional staff. Dr. Riley will add that number to the summary sheet. Allison Van Etten explained yes that is the correct staffing at both schools and they also have similar enrollment, which is 15-16 students in the pm class and 12-13 students in the am class at both schools. Candace Anderson asked if enrollment is based on bus routes. Ms. Van Etten explained students are referred to the program all year long. With one preschool at the high school and one at the Central Office we do our best to put them where they will be received for kindergarten.

Dr. Riley explained the reduction of two dean positions, and the addition of one districtwide dean curriculum position, a reduction of one PE/Health that is a middle school position but we had a retirement at Deans Mill School therefore, will move one person to the elementary. In world language there will be one less position between the two middle schools. There is a teacher that teaches world language now who is filling in for a teacher on leave and wants to go back to teaching language arts. We will still have two full time world language teachers at the middle school, but will have a reduction in one at some point. The nurse positions will be down one from a retirement and the clerical will be from the additional middle school positions and we will shuffle those around. As far as reductions in force it will either be one or two dean positions if one of those takes the new dean curriculum position and one world language position.

Alisa Morrison asked about Alternative Ed Program in regards to if someone gets expelled can we regionalize this and bring in North Stonington students or is each district responsible for their students or can they come to our program. Dr. Riley explains yes we can take other students and will reach out to North Stonington.

Craig Esposito noticed an enrollment discrepancy between West Vine Street School and Deans Mill School and asked can we address this in the future to balance out enrollment or are we stuck with that imbalance. Dr. Riley notes the schools were staffed and built for that difference.

Jack Morehouse asked now with the two new schools, and 5th grade moving down, looks like we share a librarian in the schools, is that going to be feasible, was there any discussion in increasing that position? Dr. Riley explained we did discuss this, there are two parts to that position the books and technology, we will keep this split, but we have a technology person in district that has digital expertise and will have that person come in and teach to help offset the additional students.

Chairwoman Garvey thanked June Strunk for attending she is the Board of Finance Chairperson, if anyone has any questions about the budget process she would be able to answer them. June Strunk went over the schedule of the budget presentations and hearings. She noted the public hearing was changed to before April school vacation. Chairwoman Garvey noted the various meeting dates. Dr. Riley will have the meeting calendar schedule posted on the school website.

Chairwoman Garvey asked the Board if they are ready to send this proposed budget to the February meeting for a vote. Dr. Riley asked the Board if they wanted to use some of the \$11,000 remaining budget funds for musical instruments so it can be added to the final budget. Farouk Rajab asked that the \$6,000 be allocated toward that line item in the budget. Candace Anderson would like these funds ear marked for the new music program with flexibility not specifically for instruments. The entire Board was in consensus and will bring budget back for a vote at the February meeting.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action

There were no comments from citizens relative to board action.

Adjournment

The following motion was made by Farouk Rajab and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 1: To Adjourn at 7:41p.m.

All: Aye

Candace Anderson, Secretary