

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7  
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER  
**SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES - APPROVED 3.13.19**  
MARCH 06, 2019 – 6 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Mr. Ben Nadeau (N), Superintendent Dr. Judith Palmer, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins

**ABSENT:** Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Mary Duran (B)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Ms. Sexton Read invited represented town officials to provide their input and/or comments pertaining to the District's 2019-2020 Proposed Budget.

Town Selectmen and Finance Officials from Barkhamsted, Colebrook, New Hartford, and Norfolk shared comments and input on the Regional School District No. 7 Proposed 2019-2020 Budget pertaining to issues regarding lack of control with population variations, State of Connecticut ECS reductions, grand list decline, large town capital expenditures, enrollment, school staffing, and future planning preparation with community participation, fiscally conservative budget contingencies going forward, reallocation of benefit line and major roof repair project. Ms. Sexton Read, Dr. Palmer, and Mr. Gaskins addressed questions and provided clarification with regard to State of Connecticut graduation requirements and High School Reform, efficiency measures continually being evaluated, and agreed to provide historical as well as future planning efforts pertaining to population predictions, realigning in effective ways, and student enrollment at Regional School District No. 7. The Board's goal is always to bring a budget to referendum confident that it will be supported, and both Ms. Sexton Read and Dr. Palmer thanked all community members for their attendance, and welcomed their contributions, questions, input, concerns, and ideas. Dr. Palmer advised that she and Mr. Gaskins are always available should additional questions and/or concerns arise.

**BOARD DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED BUDGET**

General Board discussion began with Mr. Gaskins distributing a budget spreadsheet providing an overview and clarification of budget highlights by Object. Board questions followed pertaining to: benefits and reallocations, grounds, excess cost grant, staffing, special education and special education staffing. Ms. Sexton Read, although comfortable with the proposed budget, requested for comparison purposes for the towns with large assessment increases due to student population increases, that Mr. Gaskins provide where budget town assessments utilizing a zero percent increase would stand. Mr. Jerram advised that he was comfortable with the proposed budget increase of 1.77 percent, and additional questions followed regarding Principal and Assistant salaries, miscellaneous purchased services, library technician position, electricity budget line, benefit reallocations, and contingency plans in place for future student declining populations, travel reimbursements, custodial FTE positions, summer work and credit enhancement, which were addressed by Dr. Palmer and Mr. Gaskins. Ms. Sexton Read reviewed the Budget TimeLine Calendar. New Hartford Board of Finance member arrived at 7:00, and Ms. Sexton Read briefly reviewed earlier questions from member town legislators and thanked him for attending.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to **ADJOURN** at 7:27 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Mr. Nadeau. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa H. D'Aprile

Board Clerk