

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BOARD RETREAT
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020
1:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

Members Present: Chairperson Kim Shepardson Watson, Vice Chairperson Andrea Ackerman, Jane Giuliani, Gretchen Newsome, Liz Porter, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

Members Absent: Rosemary Robertson, Rita Volkmann

Also Present: Michael Graner, Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight, Kathy Chase, Katrina Fitzgerald

Chairperson Watson called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Dr. Graner led a discussion regarding the feedback from the Board of Education, Town Council, and RTM joint meeting held on Wednesday, February 5. Dr. Graner and Ken Knight explained the series of possible budget additions as well as deletions. The potential additions focused on campus staffing. The Board of Education discussed the following staffing possibilities:

- Grades 6-12 Media Specialist
- Grades 6-12 Instructional Leaders in four areas (English, Humanities, STEM, Special Education)
- Part-time Career Counselor

Ken Knight explained that the funding for middle school sports and other clubs will be increased so that the total amount will support the same number of programs as are currently available at both middle schools. Dr. Graner explained that for next year alone, Jeff Kotecki could be assigned as the middle school athletic director in accordance with the additional duties per the AGSA contract.

The potential reductions to the current budget includes the following:

- 1 FTE Elementary Health Teacher
- 1.5 FTE PE Teachers

The superintendent's budget includes five additional world language teachers; initially, the middle school administration thought these added teachers were necessary for the middle school schedule. However, after completing the scheduling process, the need for those teachers no longer exists. As a result, \$275,000 in the staff salary account will be reduced.

Ken Knight reported to the Board of Education that he received the Health Insurance report for December 2019. The account is operating slightly lower than last year at this point. As a result, he and Laurie LePine believe that the Board of Education will be able to allocate \$500,000 from the Health Insurance Reserve to offset the proposed budget increase.

The Board Retreat concluded with the proposal to add \$173,000 to the superintendent's budget (\$68,000 for middle school sports and clubs, \$55,000 for a grades 6-12 Media Specialist, and \$50,000 for the Instructional Leaders. The Board of Education also agreed to the staff reductions noted above, which amounts to \$440,000. The final impact on the budget is a reduction of the superintendent's budget of \$271,000.

MOTION: Ackerman, Newsome; to adjourn at 3:02 p.m.