

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 26, 2020 – 6 p.m.

APPROVED 3/11/2020

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

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and requested a motion be made to amend the agenda to include correspondence received from Mathematics teacher, Mark Prelli.

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **AMEND** agenda for inclusion of correspondence from Mark Prelli. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell, Mr. Nadeau. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PORTION

Opportunity for Public to Speak on Agenda Items: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **APPROVE** Board of Education Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2020, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell, Mr. Nadeau. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson. **MOTION PASSED.**

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT’S 2020-2021 PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW

Dr. Palmer began the 2020-2021 Proposed Budget Overview thanking James Gaskins, Cheryl DePaoli, and Lisa D’Aprile for their work, and the Board of Education for their support and dedication in making Regional School District No. 7 the excellent school that it is. Dr. Palmer’s Power Point Presentation began with a five-year overview of expenditure increases along with 2020-2021 budget drivers, particularly related to Special Education costs and outplacements accounting for 1.94 percent of the overall increase of 3.31 percent in the 2020-2021 Proposed Budget, and continued with CSDE Next Generation Accountability and notable NWR7 successes including the honor of Northwestern High School once again being selected as a “School of Distinction”. Dr. Palmer reviewed 2019 testing results and NWR7 ranking number one within the Berkshire League for SAT Reading/Writing and Mathematics. A graph showing 92 percent of AP students with scores of 3+ was presented along with per pupil expenditures and member town projections. Major cost control and efficiency measures were presented by Mr. Gaskins demonstrating Regional School District No. 7’s continued ability of providing a high performing school district that meets the educational, social/emotional, and extracurricular needs of all students at an average cost. An Object breakdown of proposed increases/decreases was provided for Salaries including the addition of a Mathematics Interventionist position, Benefits, Professional/Technical Services, Property Services, Other Purchased Services, Supplies, Property, Other Objects, Other Funds, along with Excess Cost Expenditure Offsets, Revenues, and change in Average Daily Membership by Towns for a **2020-2021 Proposed Budget Increase of \$711,215 or 3.31 percent**. A Historical Perspective on Assessments was provided showing a 5-year average of expenditure increases at 2.10 percent and a 5-year average of assessment increases at 2.22 percent as presented by Mr. Gaskins along with further explanation pertaining to major cost control measures taken in order to present the Proposed Budget with a responsible and conservative 3.31 percent increase. Dr. Palmer concluded that Regional School District No. 7 continues to provide a rigorous and comprehensive educational program connecting students with their school and passions, an outstanding facility, and excellent extracurricular opportunities at costs in line with the statewide average and per pupil expenditures in the lower half of the Berkshire League. Brief discussion followed along with a questions pertaining to Mathematics Interventionist position, special education outplacements, social and emotional learning, Excess Cost offset, shifting of staff positions to accommodate reduced enrollment and high school credit requirements, and cost control measures. Dr. Palmer and Mr. Gaskins responded, and both she and Mr. Gaskins thanked Board of Education members for their dedication and continual support, expressing sincere appreciation and gratitude for their commitment as a high functioning and positive Board with a mission of promoting student achievement for all learners and best serves the interests of the community.

Timeline for Budget Development was distributed, and Mr. Nadeau exited at 6:45 p.m. Brief discussion followed pertaining to Town of Barkhamsted Presentation date with Ms. Sexton Read advising she will either confirm or advise of a combined date with Town of New Hartford Presentation as soon as possible.

OLD BUSINESS

Updates: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter outlining various dues/fees for music students and requesting BOE assistance received from Dina Grant, President of the Music Parents Association, acknowledged and followed by questions and discussion. Dr. Palmer will provide a cost analysis of mandatory expenses for Board member review and consideration.

Ms. Sexton Read distributed a draft response to the Town of Barkhamsted sewer project request reviewed by Board members and discussion followed. As the official public spokesperson of the Board of Education, Ms. Sexton Read will finalize and present the Board response to the Town of Barkhamsted.

Dr. Palmer distributed Letter of Resignation received by Mathematics teacher, Mark Prelli. Following a brief discussion, the following Motion was made.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Duran, to **ACCEPT** with regret and well wishes, Mr. Prelli's Letter of Resignation. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **ENTER** into Executive Session at 7:06 p.m. for the purpose of discussion and possible action regarding teacher resignation and inviting both Dr. Palmer and Mr. Gaskins to participate. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Entered into Executive Session: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell, Dr. Palmer, Mr. Gaskins.

Exited Executive Session at 7:14 p.m. with the following **ACTION:**

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ACCEPT** Mr. Peter Eagan's Letter of Resignation with gratitude for his service. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **ADJOURN** at 7:16 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa H. D'Aprile
Board Clerk

Next Scheduled Meeting – BUDGET WORKSHOP - SPECIAL MEETING – March 4, 2020 – Input from Town Boards and Officials, 6:00 p.m. – Newbury Library Media Center