

# ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

## MINUTES

PLACE: ROBERT E. ZURAW, ADMIN. OFFICE BLDG. DTL DATE: 18 JANUARY 2018 TIME: 5:45 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: William Nimons, president

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MS. TRACEY DELIBERO	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	X		
MR. JOHN IZZO		X	
MR. JOE JEANETTE	X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, president	X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS	X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA	X		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

II. 2017-2018 City Budget Decrease

**Discussion:** Mr. Nimons asked Superintendent Merlone to speak to the Board. Superintendent Merlone informed the Board of an email she received from the Board of Aldermen. Due to experiencing lack of funds, the Board of Aldermen voted and will immediately reduce the current BOE budget by \$600,000. She explained how she was told the city overestimated their budget because they did not think that ECS money included Alliance money. Mr. Frank Connolly stated the cut that the BOE is experiencing is the first he has seen. He wanted to explain some potential repercussions this type of cut can have on the BOE budget. Mr. Connolly started a slide presentation and gave detail regarding the budget and line items of the 2016-2017 budget. Mr. Connolly wanted to first bring new members up to date regarding the previous year's agreement that was made with the city regarding Excess Cost. There was an agreement that was made on February 14, 2017 that would allow the BOE to receive their funds that the state reimbursed regarding Special Education costs. These funds help offset the Special Education cost. The city also received \$600,000 credit for their BOE services that had anything to do with the department from the state. Mr. Connolly stressed he is apprehensive regarding spending due to the money being taken back from the city. He also stated the Alliance Grant, which has very strict restrictions, can help offset this loss. He explained this grant was not budgeted because the Board was not sure if it will come through. Mr. Connolly said all money that is received for the grant has to be spent. Ms. DiGiorgi asked if this \$600,000 loss is going to result in any layoffs this year. Superintendent Merlone answered that if this Alliance Grant does not go through, there will be serious financial troubles that may include layoffs. Mr. Connolly added this cut will make next year's budget seem that much larger. He also suggested a meeting take place between the BOE and the BOA to have an open dialect regarding the funds.

III. Discussion and Possible Approval of 2018-2019 BOE Budget

**Discussion:** Mr. Connolly turned the table over to Ms. Lisa Jones regarding the 2018-2019 budget as well as adjustments to the current year's budget after the cut from the city. Ms. Jones reviewed the slide presentation and explained the adjustments that are being made. She pointed out the budget that was presented last week does not take in to account any salaries that will need to be adjusted. Adjustments for the Alliance Grant will reduce the budget and changes including salaries and other expenditures, can be made to help offset after the funds that are going to be taken from the city. She also mentioned any funds given have to be spent in that same year. Ms.

Jones added the application process regarding the Alliance funds and spending are very different than last year and commended Dr. DiBacco and Ms. Eileen Ehman for their work. Dr. DiBacco added this grant came with specific targets that have to be hit. He also said the writing of the grant called for very creative writing and hopefully will be accepted. He wanted to mention this is not the answer to help our budget going forward. Ms. Jones added the state does not offer the grant funds to offset the BOE budget and should not be used as general budget funds. Ms. Jones also added the state does not want the cities to become reliant on grant funding to offset their budget. Mr. Connolly noted the city did not know that of the \$15.7million, \$1.4million has to be turned over to the BOE because these funds included the ECS funds that were to go to the BOE. Almost half of the budget is made up of ECS funds. Mr. Connolly continued with the slide presentation, showing the Board the budget with, as well as without, the Alliance Grant funding. He also explained some adjustments for the current year's budget that need to be made. Showing the decreased budget based on receiving the Alliance Grant and adjusting for the \$600,000 the city will be taking. Mr. Connolly read a brief statement from the agreement that was signed February 14, 2017 stating the city and the BOE will meet to discuss the state funding for education. He added it is time to meet and have an open dialogue between the city and the BOE. Mr. Connolly noted the Board should direct them as to how they want the numbers to go and it will be added and presented to the city. He also said it will be possible to show both sets of numbers regarding with and without the Alliance Grant. Mr. Phipps stated it is not an option, it is a priority that the mental health specialists be added to the budget for 2018-2019. He said these positions are necessary for the students. Dr. DiBacco agreed and added the investment will help in the long run with discipline problems. The discussion continued regarding state requirements and funding for discipline problem students. Members of the Board and Dr. DiBacco agree the funds being taken away from other important services like mental health, will hurt in the district. Preventative programs for mental health were discussed and servicing students within the surrounding districts, are all options that can be looked into. Dr. DiBacco added the supplemental services such as interventionists and summer school services for children will benefit the district in the long run. Dr. DiBacco continued with ideas and future plans to better the district and make any and all funds received utilized in the best way possible. Mr. Jeanette asked about the new transportation contract and how that is going. Ms. Jones answered she has been working with All Star Transportation along with surrounding towns to reduce the cost by sharing services for outplaced students.

**MOTION:** To adopt the \$32,590,951 budget presented to the Board.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	X	X		
MR. JOHN IZZO				
MR. JOE JEANETTE	X	X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, president		X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS		X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA		X		
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	0	0

#### IV. Discussion and Approval of Alliance Grant and Priority District Application.

**Discussion:** Dr. DiBacco passed out the targets that are requirements for this grant application. Mental health issues were discussed and it was noted these may be added in the grant. We also have a strong need for the attendance problem we have in the district. Mr. Jay Jaffer is the Attendance Officer who is the only person who addresses this problem. There is a need for a liaison for families and the district. Dr. DiBacco said the numbers show we have an attendance problem. These needs are priority and have been added into the grant. He stated there is a very short time frame to get the proposal together and he has been working to get all of the requirements together with the help of Ms. Eileen Ehman.

**MOTION:** To approve the Alliance Grant and Priority District Application.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	1	X		
MR. JOHN IZZO				

MR. JOE JEANETTE		X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, president	2	X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS		X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA		X		
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	0	0

**V. Discussion and Possible Approval of ACES Proposal for Special Education Transportation.**

**Discussion:** Superintendent Merlone pointed out the in the hand-out regarding an agreement between Derby, Seymour, Shelton and Ansonia that would include shared transportation services. The shared transportation will be for out bound student transportation. The savings for Ansonia will be great but exact numbers are not known because the study needs to take place and all participating towns are not yet known. Dr. DiBacco asked the Board to invest \$2000 to give to ACES for the savings of shared transportation services.

**MOTION:** To approve the Proposal for ACES Special Education Transportation.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	1	X		
MR. JOHN IZZO				
MR. JOE JEANETTE		X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, president		X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS	2	X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA		X		
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	0	

**VI. Adjournment.**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:11p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	1	X		
MR. JOHN IZZO				
MR. JOE JEANETTE	2	X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, president		X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS		X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA		X		
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	0	

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson  
Recording Secretary  
Date 01/07/2017