

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**September 19, 2017**

*A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on September 19, 2017 in the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Student Commons Area. Board of Education Vice Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Kathy Brown, Peter Sonski, Eric Couture, Susan Dean, Maura Wallin, Suzanne Sack, Jeannie Young and Joanne Nesti*

**Members Absent:** *Dan Chase, Sue Twachtman, Joel D'Angelo*

**Also Present:** *Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Holly Hageman, Haddam First Selectwoman, Lizz Milardo, Haddam Board of Finance Chairman, Joseph Centofanti, Haddam Board of Finance Vice Chairman, Harlan Fredericksen, Haddam Board of Finance Members, Marjorie DeBold, David Kapitulik, David Challenger, Robert McGarry, Killingworth Board of Selectwoman, Catherine Iino, Killingworth Selectman, Fred Dudek, Killingworth Selectman, Louis Annino, Jr., Killingworth Board of Finance Chair, Nancy Gorski, Killingworth Board of Finance Members, Gwenne Celmer, Robert Rimmer, Marcel Couture and Board Clerk, Jamie Sciascia*

**Visitors:** *Approximately 7*

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:** *Board of Education Vice Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**Joint Meeting of the Board of Education, Boards of Finance and Haddam and Killingworth Boards of Selectman – Discussion Related to the 2017-2018 Budget:**

*Joanne Nesti updated the Board. She thanked Superintendent Thiery as well as Lizz Milardo and Catherine Iino for putting this meeting together. She also stated that Superintendent Thiery will not be in attendance due to a family emergency.*

*All Boards introduced themselves at the start of the meeting.*

*Joanne Nesti spoke on Superintendent Thiery's email notes for this meeting regarding supplies and materials spending cap, freeze on hiring and overtime, and how we are retaining as many resources as possible. Joanne stated that he explained to hold a meeting with all the Boards when the State's budget gets finalized and stressed the importance of good communication and cooperation from everyone. Joanne did briefly go over how the Strategic Capital Planning Committee is looking at how we manage District resources, how we manage space which could include reconfiguring or eliminating a building.*

*Jeannie Young spoke on behalf of the Board. She reminded everyone that Superintendent Thiery stated not to overreact to the Executive Order that goes into effect on Oct 1, because once a budget passes it will supersede the Executive Order. She also stated that our Finance Director, Martha Vaughn, and/or Superintendent Thiery are not here to answer questions. She stressed the importance of our Community family and children and not to alarm anyone without definite budget numbers.*

*Fred Dudek addressed the Board. He spoke on Teacher's Pensions and asked the Board what they are feeling as far as having no say in budget negotiations.*

*Lizz Milardo addressed the Board. She spoke on Teachers' Pensions, CCM Funding, Budget cuts which include ECS Funding and also spoke on the Governor being very strict on Education Funding. She briefly spoke on how the Governor cut funding from the Town of Haddam \$1.8M and Town of Killingworth about \$2.8M. She stated that right now she is looking at different reduction scenarios like staffing, insurance and utilizing resources because she knows the funds will end soon. Lizz also spoke on the possibility of ECS monies being electronically deposited into the District's account versus sending a paper check which would benefit the Town. She stressed her frustration and said that 162 out of 169 municipalities have to come up with money that they don't have. She would like to look at what measures the District is taking before the budget comes in.*

*Catherine lino addressed the Board. She spoke on the State's budget and inquired about the District's size of cuts, freezes and how much it will eventually save in a year. She also spoke about a possible supplemental tax bill which would need to be addressed by end of October.*

*Gwenne Celmer addressed the Board. She stated she has been on the Board of Finance for 12 years and we need make decisions now so they can be implemented for the 2018-2019 school year. She stated that there will be a certain point that the Towns won't be able to pay any monies even if there is flat budget and/or decrease year to year.*

*Louis Annino, Jr. addressed the Board. He spoke on spending cuts, tracking staff and the District producing targets of \$2M, \$4M, 6M and 9M for our next Joint Board Workshop. He wants to make sure we are all on the same page.*

*Peter Sonski addressed the Board. He spoke on the school supplies that have been ordered keeping in mind that they are just the basic essentials to get everyone through the next few months. He also spoke on how we produced a budget and now the Governor is saying no. No one wants to make drastic decisions until we know what the State budget numbers are.*

*Maura Wallin spoke on behalf of the Board. She spoke on how Superintendent Thiery is tracking everything. Dr. Holly Hageman spoke on behalf of the Board. She spoke on the two teacher salary positions that have not been filled which are included in this year's budget. She addressed the spending cap on supplies which are tracked and could be produced. But she did not have a number for what has been saved so far this year.*

*Suzanne Sack updated the Board. She spoke on how we manage the Capital Fund, where to cut funds, as well as making this meeting a community effort because numbers are high on both sides. She said since we don't know the budget numbers and no one wants to create alarm. She also addressed certain ideas of change if need be. She further stated that the Strategic Capital Planning Committee will hold a meeting in October with scenarios for the Board. Certain areas that can be looked at in the decision making process are things like bus schedules, fiscal assets and insurance. Lastly, she addressed this year's budget increase being significantly lower than previous year and also spoke on cash flow and declining enrollment.*

*Nancy Gorski addressed the Board. She spoke on needing different scenarios from the District for budget cuts. Also, asked what the District is doing now to prepare for the Budget.*

*David Kapitulik addressed the Board. He spoke on ECS Funding and teacher pension money being eliminated.*

*Marjorie DeBold addressed the Board. She inquired whether the SCP meetings are open to the Public which Suzanne Sack confirmed that they are.*

*Susan Dean spoke on behalf of the Board. She spoke on unfunded mandates list, budget affecting education for children and said we need to address our concerns to our Hartford Representatives.*

*Robert Rimmer addressed the Board. He spoke on how District should come up with 80% and Towns should come up with 20% in reaction to any budget cuts from the state.*

*Kathy Brown spoke on behalf of the Board. She clarified with Louis Annino, Jr. for the next Joint Board Meeting the target amounts and the 1.5M reduction figure that he requested be brought to the table to start with.*

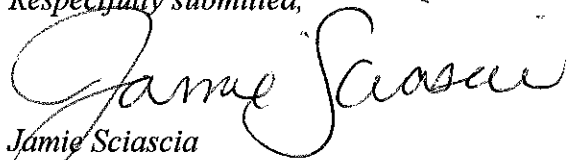
*Suggestions were made from members of the Boards of Finance for Town of Haddam and Killingworth to hold a meeting sooner rather than later to get clearer numbers and scenarios as far as what the District can do for budget cuts. They also requested someone from our Finance Department to be present to confirm numbers. October 3<sup>rd</sup> was mentioned for the next meeting but Joanne Nesti advised that Superintendent Thiery will be Out of the Country. Everyone still suggested holding the next meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. before our regular scheduled Board meeting.*

*Joanne Nesti finished the meeting by stressing the importance that we are all in this together and this is what this meeting was all about.*

**Adjournment**

*Board Vice Chair, Joanne Nesti, called for the meeting to adjourn at 7:20 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,*



*Jamie Sciascia  
Board Clerk*

Approval:  Date: 10/3/17  
Kathy Brown, Secretary