

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 19, 2013

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 19, 2013 in the Central Office Board Room. Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry, called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM.

Members Present: *Susan Dean, Jeannie Young, Joel D'Angelo, Jamie Lehane, Karen Perry, Sue Twachtman, Becky Valenti, Steven Banaletti, Amy Jacques-Purdy, and Chet Harris*

Members Absent: *Jonathan Wintsch*

Also Present: *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery and Director of Fiscal Operations, Martha Vaughn, and Board Clerk Larissa Johnson*

Visitors: *8*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Discussion of the Superintendent's Proposed 2013-2014 Budget

The Board discussed the Superintendent's Proposed 2013-2014 budget at length.

Board Chair Karen Perry presented a memorandum of suggested budget adjustments. The Board then discussed those items.

The Board discussed funding the Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$190,000 from budget surplus funds at the end of the year. Martha Vaughn stated that there is a projected surplus of \$255,000.

The Board discussed funding Items 720 – Building Improvements and 730 – New Equipment from the Capital Reserve Fund.

The Board also discussed applying Fund 11, approximately \$15,000 towards the Field Maintenance account to offset costs.

Jamie Lehane discussed that the Board and the District should make sure that these building improvements are tracked to ensure that the District is not funding fiscal cliffs by offsetting maintenance costs with capital improvement funds.

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to make modifications to the proposed 2013-2014 budget as presented in Superintendent Thiery's memorandum with the four changes as stated by Martha Vaughn. Motion passed 9-1-0 by the following votes:*

Amy Jacques-Purdy	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>	Jonathan Wintsch	Absent
Becky Valenti	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>	Sue Twachtman	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Chet Harris	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>	Steven Banaletti	YES <u> </u> NO <u>√</u> A <u> </u>
Jamie Lehane	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>	Susan Dean	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Jeannie Young	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>	Karen Perry	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Joel D'Angelo	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>		

Superintendent Thiery discussed the proposed adjustments to the Building Improvements and New Equipment items. He stated that some new equipment items can be pre-bought this year, especially smaller items so that a smaller dent would be put in the Capital Reserve Fund. He also mentioned that he and the Director of Fiscal Operations noticed that there was a double-entry in supplies, which they have corrected. He also mentioned that they can reduce the Property & Liability line item by \$20,000 based on past experience. He said that they can also reduced the Health Insurance Reserve by an additional \$350,000 (in addition to the proposed \$800,000 offset) because they were able to find additional reductions. He also talked about discontinuing the District's membership in the Middlesex Consortium which would save the District approximately \$10,000 and that the District would still be able to host a Career Fair and Leadership Conference as well as maintain relationships with other school districts in Middlesex County without this membership.

Superintendent also stated that there was an opportunity to further reduce the budget by \$11,495 over multiple lines in small amounts based on past expenditure history. For example, a reduction in fees to cover vandalism, advertising and printing, Oil #4 at HKHS, substitute teaching funds, custodial expenses and IT.

The Board also briefly discussed a reduction in the Special Education budget based upon a change in known cases.

Superintendent Thiery also stated that the concern raised at the Community Input meeting regarding the additional funds for Clerical Salaries at HES was in fact a duplicate entry which has been reduced.

The Board tallied up the proposed adjustments to \$1.109 million in reductions, which reflected a 0.63% increase with an overall net budget increase of 0%.

The Board briefly discussed the Health Insurance Reserve Fund and expressed some concern over next year's health insurance performance and acknowledged that next year, the District would not be able to offset health insurance increases with reserve funds.

Joel D'Angelo stated that the District and the Board have spent five months reducing this budget and asked if it is still responsible and innovative for the District?

Superintendent Thiery stated that getting the budget to 0 is a good thing and that he believes it maintains the same philosophy.

The Board discussed some of the proposed changes again, such as the Property & Liability Insurance, the line item for Vandalism, and discussed that most of the changes come from the business office and do not affect programming or teachers.

Board Chair Karen Perry also proposed increasing the Field Trip line for KES by \$1,600 to even it out with other elementary schools' budgeted field trip funds. She also proposed keeping the library at HKHS open additional afternoons than as proposed by Superintendent Thiery's budget at a cost of \$4,000. She also proposed adding a third librarian so that there would be one certified media specialist at each of the three elementary schools at an additional cost of \$55,000.

The Board briefly discussed the removing the portable buildings at the elementary schools and also looking at the teaching staff levels and considering early retirement incentives to level staffing levels with student population.

The Board also discussed Oil #4 and Legal Fees, and possible opportunity to save in legal fees by putting legal services out for bid.

Some members of the Board again expressed concern over not having reserve funds to offset increasing costs.

The Board again briefly discussed teaching staff levels and student population demographics.

The Board discussed the possibility of adding a 3rd library media specialist to Superintendent Thiery's proposed library staffing changes. Dr. Harris of HES and Eric Larson of BES discussed this with the Board, and the Board discussed that although it would be wonderful to have a dedicated certified library media specialist at each elementary school it might not be wise in this current economic situation to add additional personnel.

The Board also discussed that the KES by Location budget should be confirmed and the adjustment for the field trip line should be made.

Steven Banaletti said that he would like to discuss class sizes and Pay to Participate. Jamie Lehane said that these proposals need more time and consideration to be handled with justice than just before the budget deadline. The Board briefly discussed the Pay to Participate proposal and current student/teacher ratios.

*Jaime Lehane **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to accept the budget as discussed barring any changes with the KES by Location Budget.*

Jaime Lehane withdrew his motion.

The Board discussed looking at a Pay to Participate proposal at a later date.

2012-2013 School Calendar Revision Schedule

Superintendent Thiery updated the Board regarding the current status of the calendar and graduation date for HKHS. He stated that the District is scheduled to have 182 student days but he is asking the Board to roll the calendar back to the State minimum of 180 student days, which would be June 24th. The Board discussed this proposal and related scheduling requirements.

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to drop the student days from 182 to 180 with a graduation date of June 24, 2013. Motion passed 10-0-0 by the following votes:*

Amy Jacques-Purdy	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jonathan Wintsch	Absent		
Becky Valenti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Twachtman	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Chet Harris	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Steven Banaletti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Jamie Lehane	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Susan Dean	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Jeannie Young	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Perry	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>				

Adjournment

Board Chair, Karen Perry called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa B. Johnson
Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 5/7/2013
Susan Dean, Secretary