

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**March 12, 2012**

*A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 12, 2012 in the Student Commons of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School. Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Peggie Bushey, Joel D'Angelo, Susan Dean, Amy Jacques-Purdy, Jaime Lehane, Karen Perry, Sue Twachtman (arrived at 7:07 PM) and Becky Valenti*

**Members Absent:** *Steven Banaletti, Chet Harris and Jonathan Wintsch*

**Also Present:** *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery and Director of Fiscal Operations, Martha Vaughn, Haddam Selectman Robert Duval, Haddam Board of Finance Chair Deborah Olsen, Haddam Board of Finance Members David Kapitulik, Lucille Silvestrini, Diane Stock, Marjorie DeBold, Harlan Fredericksen and Peter Arsenault (Alternate), Killingworth First Selectwoman Catherine Iino, Killingworth Selectmen Fred Dudek and Louis Annino, Jr., Killingworth Board of Finance Chair John McMahon, and Killingworth Board of Finance Members Hilary Kumnick, Gwenne Celmer, Nancy Gorski, and Mark Williams*

**Visitors:** *3*

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting**

*Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.*

**Joint Meeting of the Haddam and Killingworth Boards of Selectmen, Boards of Finance and Board of Education - Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget 2012-2013**

*Superintendent Thiery presented his Proposed Budget for 2012-2013. An interactive discussion between the three boards followed.*

*Killingworth Board of Finance Chair John McMahon asked for clarification on the transportation budget and expressed a concern over any increase to the budget.*

*Killingworth Board of Finance member Gwenne Celmer said that she felt the .89% increase was refreshingly responsible and reasonable but was concerned that this may result in future compensatory increases. Superintendent Thiery responded that compensatory future increases should not be necessary with the exception of the Capital Fund because there will be years where the Board will need to place more money into that fund. However, he re-iterated that the current set-up of the Capital Fund there is more flexibility in saving and spending.*

*Killingworth Selectman Louis Annino, Jr. asked what the deferred maintenance is in the Capital Fund and Howard Thiery referred to the budget and explained that the projects listed are not prioritized and that there are probably approximately \$400,000 in first priority projects and \$800,000 in second priority projects.*

*Killingworth Board of Finance member Nancy Gorski asked what the Board's reaction has been to the Superintendent's Proposed Budget. Board of Education Chair Karen Perry responded that the Board has really only had a chance to ask questions at the first Board Workshop on March 8, 2012.*

Haddam Board of Finance member Diane Stock stated that she was very happy with the academic focus trends in the budget, but was concerned with the consistency of the transportation costs. Superintendent Thiery responded that Special Education transportation can be difficult to predict because of students being educated out of town, but general education transportation costs are more consistent. Stock also asked about earned interest revenues and why there was no increase over last year's budget. This was explained by there being no anticipation in any increase in interest rates. Stock also wanted to know if the creation of an Advance Placement Chemistry program would require a new teaching position to be created, which Thiery responded that it did not. She also asked about the rationale for changing the guidance position. Thiery responded that it was more a matter of recognizing talent. He didn't want to lose a leadership position, thus by restructuring he was able to recognize the talent of the personnel in that position and retain a leadership position.

Haddam Board of Finance member Harlan Fredericksen expressed a concern that some of the decreases in the budget would result in a "cliff" and Superintendent Thiery responded that it would not.

John McMahon asked if there would be any reductions in personnel due to reductions in district student population. Thiery responded that the student population is not shrinking at any one particular grade level and thus personnel reductions could not be made unless there was a population decrease at one particular level or site. Thiery also assured Mr. McMahon that district enrollment levels were reviewed by the Board monthly.

Haddam Board of Finance Chair Deborah Olsen expressed a concern about the fuel cost projects. Thiery responded that the district uses fuel from a 3-year state contract.

Killingworth First Selectwoman Catherine Iino expressed a concern about the property tax revenue generated to the town of Haddam resulting from STA's buses being located in Haddam. Iino was wondering if there was some method to transfer the property tax benefit from Haddam to Killingworth, proportionately. Iino also discussed staffing changes and effective bargaining with group representatives.

## **Adjournment**

Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa B. Johnson  
Board Clerk

Approval: Susan Dean Date: 4/3/2012  
Susan Dean, Secretary