

Special Minutes of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg.org
Friday, May 11, 2018

In attendance: Janet Morgan, Maryanne Van Aken, Pam Zmek, Carol Ann Brown, Dave Lampart, Mike Devine, John Chapman, George Bauer. Also in attendance were Dr. Anna Cutaia, Julie Luby, Suzi Greene, Mike Rafferty, Kim Culkin, Alex de Sorbo, Karen Sheehan-Wolfe, and reporter Tim Parry.

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Dr. Anna handed out documents to show ideas that were put together by Mr. Arum and Administrators and presented the new increase of 1.928%. The BOE members went over the documents that Mr. Arum prepared for them. She presented the suggestions for budget cuts which include reductions in benefits of \$25K, CABE dues of \$11,839, bleachers of \$25K, all the while adding in new revenue. There is an additional Agriscience grant of \$293,912, and changes to the Special Education and excess cost grant money. Will also reduce the burden to Bethlehem to \$ 1,184,697 and Woodbury to \$1,312,790. The region received more than was anticipated in original budget. The amounts are broken out to the Agriscience tuition grant which is an increase to what we anticipate from grant, funded at 88%, and will be carrying it forward to next year. Revenue credited to region of \$3,727,992, Excess cost share going down also. Mill rate changes from 1.53 in Bethlehem to 1.24 and Woodbury from -0.24 to -0.53. With all of these changes, the region is able to bring the increase down from 2.37% to 1.928%.

John Chapman commented that it will not present a hardship to the building project regarding the bleachers. Should be able to be incorporated within the project as they have come in under project across the board.

Mr. Bauer asked about the CABE membership dues, concerned since we use them for policies. . Will there be an impact? The policy committee is coming to the close of packet 4 of 4, so we can still have small contracts with them to provide some policy consultation if we need to but we also have legal counsel that we could use which is very common. Also to note that after legislative sessions, Pullman and Comley send updates to the region and also have superintendent forums to keep us up to date with new legislation. May revisit in the future.

Ms. Morgan mentioned that the BOE did receive some communication to ask the BOE to look at the HR position again. Ms. Morgan asked the board if anyone wanted to revisit the topic. The BOE unanimously agreed that it was already discussed and there will be no further discussion.

Mr. Devine had a question on the handout – take number from original document and new proposed budget, come up with more \$ than what is shown. Dr. Anna clarified things by advised him to take the difference in the 55% to 65% in excess cost which translates to \$86,934.

Ms. Zmek commented that the three Bethlehem BOE members went to the budget hearing last night. She mentioned that there was some angst in regards to the building project when the numbers were presented. They are anticipating a big jump. Mr. Devine said that the only issue is a reduction budget by 1.23 mill rate on the education and municipal side as a combined total. Ms. Brown mentioned that it was crucial that we bring the amount under 2% and it now has a chance to pass.

Dr. Anna wanted to point out the important message that we reduced the budget amount to under 2% and the towns are receiving more revenue from the State, therefore the Region isn't asking for more from the towns. She also wanted to discuss the Administrator issue as there is some information circulating in the community that is confusing people. When Dr. Anna came on board the region had 12 administrators: 10 unionized and 2 non-union.

We still have 12 administrators. She did not add administration to this region. The difference is that there are now 3 non-union and 9 union members, so it was shifted. We are increasing the amount of teacher leaders in the teacher bargaining unit who are in classrooms all the time. Ms. Morgan went on to mention that it's all in how people are interpreting the information and perhaps not having a proper understanding in regards to the union versus non-union positions is causing confusion. The community needs to get the whole picture which will come out of the DAC committee and consultants that have been hired for the facilities/demographics assessment completed.

Dr. Anna mentioned that even though enrollment is declining, we still have program improvements to make and administrators does not equal a bad thing and doesn't equal less work or other misperceived messages out there. She also touched on the Assistant Principal & Director of Athletics positions questions that have come up. These positions co-lead instructional improvements and one must look at the mandates placed on administrators including having to do staff evaluations.

She also mentioned that there are still 5 central office positions, but certain titles have changed and perhaps showing the organizational chart pre-change and post-change would help.

Dr. Anna clarified what the public has misconstrued as having added new Central Office positions, are in fact district wide positions which belong to buildings. While they may have desks in the Central Office locations, they are working in all 4 schools. These are not Central Office positions.

Ms. Morgan clarified what it means to be silent after the BOE votes to adopt the budget. It does not mean that they cannot discuss the budget. It means that they cannot solicit by way of flyers, cannot spend money. Budget can still be discussed and things clarified, but cannot try to tell someone which way to vote. The BOE can explain or talk about the budget. The region can use the website to remind people that it is budget referendum day and to remind the community to vote.

- A. Ms. Morgan requested a motion to approve and adopt the revised budget. Ms. Van Aken moved that the R14 BOE approve and adopt the revised budget for the fiscal year 2018-19 in the amount of \$33,988,629 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Bauer. Motion carried unanimously 8-0-0.
- B. Ms. Morgan requested a motion for a call to referendum. Ms. Van Aken moved that the R14 BOE schedule and warn the Annual District Meeting for Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 7:00pm in the BOE Room, located at 67 Washington Avenue, Woodbury, CT concerning the 2018-19 budget with said meeting to be adjourned to a referendum on Wednesday, May 23, 2018 from 6:00am to 8:00pm in the Towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury CT, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Lampart. Motion carried unanimously 8-0-0.
- C. Ms. Morgan requested a motion for explanatory text. Ms. Van Aken moved that the Secretary of the Board of Education is authorized, in such official's discretion, to prepare and cause to be printed and distributed explanatory text regarding the 2018-2019 budget referendum scheduled for May 23, 2018, with such explanatory text subject to the review and approval of the District's legal counsel and to be prepared and distributed in accordance with Section 9-369b of the Connecticut General Statutes. Seconded by Mr. Lampart. Motion carried unanimously 8-0-0.

Ms. Morgan request a motion to adjourn. Mr. Chapman moved and seconded by Mr. Bauer. Motion carried unanimously 8-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Schwartz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and larger than the others.

Natascha Z. Schwartz
Regional School District 14 Board Clerk

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Natascha Z. Schwartz, Board Clerk, 5/18/2018