New Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education Meeting
February 21, 2023
7:00 p.m./Multipurpose Room
Antolini School

PRESENT: Superintendent, Mr. Jeff Sousa; Chairman Mr. Karl Hermonat; Mr. Tim Klepps; Mr. Tom Buzzi; Ms. Penny Miller; Mr. Tony Persechino; Ms. Deirdre Tindall; Mr. Travis Bonhomme; Mrs. Kelly O'Dell Longhi; Mrs. Mary Stempien (Zoom); and Mrs Colleen Wipperman, Recording Secretary

School Staff/Guests: Dr. Kelly Carroll; Mrs. Amy Kennedy; Mrs. Heather Mathes, Mr. Michael Lynch and other members of the audience.

A. **CHAIR TO OPEN MEETING:** 7:01

B. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Karl Hermonat asked everyone to join him in a moment of silence in honor of Marcus Rogers and his grandfather, William O'Leary, who tragically lost their lives in a car accident on January 31, 2023.

C. **CHAIR TO SELECT ORDER OF BUSINESS:** None

D. **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION/PUBLIC COMMENT:** No communication to the Board of Education.

PUBLIC COMMENT - Aulay Carlson - Expressed his opinion about moving all students to Antolini School. It is his opinion that if the board makes security upgrades, such as making the existing gate secure with key entry, video, or a guard then they can place doubled doors at school entryways with locks, video and metal detectors.

E. **BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIR'S REPORT -** Karl Hermonat nominated Deirdre Tindall to be part of the curriculum subcommittee.

F. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

1. **LINE ITEM TRANSFER -** Transfer for auditing and bookkeeping purposes so it reads correctly.

2. **2023-2024 BUDGET PRESENTATION -** Roll forward budget, no new programs being brought into NHPS. We are maintaining a level of excellence and those are the main drivers for our increases.

Budget Increase Total - $333,340 - 3.69% Increase
Contractual Increases - $143,830
Employee Benefits - $128,045
Plant Operations - $49,182
Pupil Transportation - $19,620
Pupil Services - $13,618 (offset by IDA & ESSER Grants)
Textbook/Resources/Professional Development $110,000
Remaining decreases - **-$92,354** (One less special ed bus and magnet tuitions)

Preliminary Capital Expenditures for 2023-2024 totaling $104,000
District-Wide - Technology - $49,000
Antolini - $35,000
Bakerville - $10,000
New Hartford - $10,000

Projected decrease in students from 446 to 425, will fluctuate.

Superintendent Jeff Sousa said we will always be looking for additional ways to save money including but not limited to continue utilizing grants. Revisiting enrollment costs for our pre k program by comparing with other local pre k programs to see if we are comparable. Will be getting quotes from other service contractors to help lower costs. The service contracts end at different times. Electronic job postings to avoid posting in newspapers. Personally reaching out to families whose children attend magnet schools to see what they are gaining at magnet schools that they couldn't get at our school. We are competitive. We locked into $3.10 per gallon heating oil. We are terminating our Kelly Services contract and moving forward with Colleen Wipperman as our District Substitute Coordinator.

Superintendent Jeff Sousa will also start looking at replacing oil tanks. Single or double fiberglass tanks next 5 year capital budget.

DISCUSSION before approving budget to present to Board of Finance

Tim Klepps proposed adding additional funds to the budget for an armed security guard in the amount of $75,000. This would be a phased implementation of one armed security guard. That person will roam between the three schools to start the phasing program. Then add one guard every year until we have armed security guards in all three schools. The $75,000 includes benefits, if they choose to take them. The committee asks that a survey be sent to community members and school staff to ask their input. This will help the committee determine whether or not they feel an armed security guard is best for our schools. Survey would go out with board approval by the end of the week. In addition to that, there is a $50,000 grant that the committee may be able to apply for through the State of CT. We would also like to add additional funds to our capital expenditure to add alarms to doors around school, man trap and window film.

Travis Bonhomme expressed concern of spending $75,000 on armed security guards and not using that money to directly help support students and teachers. He mentioned, for example, diving into the SBAC scores to help our children. Asked we also create a subcommittee to look at what would be the smartest way to spend more money in our school district that would directly affect our children's well being and education. Karl Hermonat mentioned the subcommittee was specifically for security purposes not specifically for the armed security guard. The superintendent covers curriculum which is part of the budget. Superintendent Jeff Sousa responded that these are two separate things we are looking at. Focus on education is clear. Minus grant monies, we have almost half a million dollars in supporting education and staff. Deirdre Tindall wanted to make note that we are spending a total of $9,372,689.13 for the 2023-2024 school year on education teachers, students, mental health, infrastructure etc.

MOTION made by Tom Buzzi to add $75,000 to the budget for an armed security guard per recommendation of the subcommittee. Second by Deirdre Tindall.
Aye: Penny Miller, Tim Klepps, Tom Buzzi, Deirdre Tindall
Nay: Mary Stempien, Karl Hermonat, Tony Persechino, Kelly O'Dell Longhi, Travis Bonehomme
MOTION DENIED

The Board agrees to move forward with sending the survey out to the community and staff.

G. ROUTINE BUSINESS

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JANUARY 17, 2023**
   MOTION by Karl Hermonat to amend the minutes, page three, under routine business, 2nd paragraph, to remove the actual quoted comment. It was Mrs. Maroney's intent to not have the comment published. Second by Tony Persechino.
   Aye: Karl Hermonat, Penny Miller, Tony Persechino, Travis Bonhomme, Deirdre Tindall, Tim Klepps, Kelly O'Dell Longhi.
   Abstained: Tom Buzzi and Mary Stempien.
   MOTION PASSES

   MOTION by Karl Hermonat to approve amended minutes of January 17, 2023. Second by Penny Miller.
   Aye: Karl Hermonat, Penny Miller, Tony Persechino, Travis Bonhomme, Deirdre Tindall, Tim Klepps, Kelly O'Dell Longhi.
   Abstained: Tom Buzzi and Mary Stempien.
   MOTION PASSES

2. **PERSONNEL:** A big welcome to Michael Lynch - Director of Student Services and Kellyann Linn-Snowdon, (not present), Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services.

3. **EXPENDITURE REPORT:** None
   MOTION by Penny Miller to approve expenditure report. Second by Tony Persechino.
   UNANIMOUS

H. NEW BUSINESS: None

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. **SECOND READING OF 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR**

   Tom Buzzi suggests leaving the dates as is until closer to election time.
   MOTION by Tim Klepps to approve. Second by Penny Miller.
   UNANIMOUS

J. REPORTS: None

MOTION made by Karl Hermonat to adjourn.
UNANIMOUS

K. ADJOURNMENT 8:55

Respectfully submitted by,

Colleen Wipperman
Recording Secretary.