

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman James Stirling, Mr. John Belfonti, Ms. Pat Cardozo, Mr. Matt Giglietti, Mr. John Grabowski and Mr. Joseph Nuzzo (arrived at 5:45 pm).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

Staff members present: Dr. Charles Dumais, Ms. Theresa Lumas, Mr. Scott Cleary, Mr. Shaun DeRosa, Mr. Ernie Goodwin, Ms. Anna Mahon, Dr. Marie McPadden and Mr. Jim Saisa.

Also present: Board members: Ms. Sue Cohen, Ms. Amy Esposito, Mr. Tom Hurley, Ms. Sheila McCreven, Ms. Tracy Russo and Ms. Diane Urbano; other members of the public.

A meeting of the Finance Committee of the Amity Regional Board of Education (BOE) was held on Monday, February 13, 2017 at 5:30 pm in the presentation room at the Amity District Offices. It should be noted that due to an electrical outage at Amity Middle School, Orange campus, the Finance Committee meeting and the BOE meeting, both scheduled for tonight at that location, are being relocated to the presentation room at Amity Regional High School, 25 Newton Road, Woodbridge.

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Stirling called the meeting to order at 5:36 pm.

2. **Discussion and possible action on minutes.**

A. **Finance Committee meeting – January 09, 2017**

Motion by Mr. Grabowski, 2nd by Mr. Giglietti to accept the minutes as submitted.

Vote unanimous (abstention Ms. Cardozo)

Motion carried

B. **Finance Committee meeting – January 23, 2017**

Motion by Ms. Cardozo, 2nd by Mr. Grabowski to accept the minutes as submitted.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

3. **Public Comment**

Mr. Thomas Hurley, Board of Education member from Orange commented on the possible increase in the budget of 12.5 full-time employees (FTE) and the possibility of large state funding cuts as proposed by the Governor of Connecticut.

Mr. Jim Leahy, Vice-Chairman of the Orange Board of Finance (BOF) told the Committee that the Orange BOF met on February 3rd to discuss the budget for the Town of Orange. He read a statement into the record (attachment). The Orange BOF will only support an increase in the budget of the BOE of 0.75%. There were a few questions for Mr. Leahy from the Committee which were answered.

Ms. Derrylyn Gorski, First Selectman of Bethany thanked the Committee for getting the budget below 2%; however, with the proposed budget from the Governor's office, Bethany will be facing a 1.5 million-dollar increase. She again thanked the Committee for their diligence and good stewardship and asked them to continue to be mindful of the difficulties Bethany and the other member towns are facing.

4. **Presentation and discussion of fourth quarter 2016 executive summary review of Amity Pension Fund, Sick and Severance Account and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust** - A written summary is available.

5. Discussion and possible action on proposed 2017-2018 budget

Dr. Dumais commented on the impact of the Governor's proposed budget on municipalities. Some of the formulas for calculating the amount of cost-sharing for education have been proposed to be changed in such a way that will cause a negative impact on the Amity education budgets as well as the municipal budgets of the three member towns.

Mr. Stirling asked the Committee for a motion regarding the Superintendent's proposed budget.

Mr. Belfonti stated that he would like to hear from the member towns before voting.

Motion by Mr. Giglietti, 2nd by Mr. Blake to approve the Superintendent's proposed budget for 2017-2018, gross amount of \$48,769, net amount \$47,546,594.

Discussion regarding the budget followed by all the Committee members. Mr. Belfonti and Ms. Cardozo are in favor of waiting to hear feedback from the member towns before recommending a budget to the Board; Mr. Giglietti stated that he feels the Committee should not recommend a budget to the Board at this time.

Mr. Blake made a motion to table the motion on the budget, 2nd by Mr. Grabowski, recognizing that the hard decisions that need to be made regarding the budget cannot be postponed indefinitely.

Mr. Stirling asked to hear from the Mr. Nuzzo and Mr. Giglietti regarding the budget and the motion on the floor. Mr. Nuzzo stated that he was instructed, as the representative from Orange, to ask for a 0.75% increase in the BOE budget. Mr. Grabowski stated that the Bethany Board of Finance (BOF) will meet on Tuesday, February 14th and that he would like to have information from that Committee before going forward.

There was further discussion among the Committee member; questions regarding any possible adjustments to line items in the budget that could result in cost savings were answered by Dr. Dumais and Ms. Lumas.

Ms. Tracy Russo, member of the BOE, requested permission to speak to the Committee, having arrived after Public Comment and permission was granted. She expressed concern that the Board bylaws will be violated if no recommendation is made to the Board for the budget by March 1st.

Ms. McCreven, member of the BOE stated she had a question regarding Board bylaw 9132.6 which is currently suspended/has one word suspended.

Ms. Cohen, member of the BOE stated that she does not think the Governor's budget will pass as proposed; that said, a budget increase in an amount between 0.75% and 2% seems reasonable and will take care of the Board's responsibilities to Amity schools.

Ms. Urbano, member of the BOE, feels that there will be much financial trouble in Connecticut in the coming years and that is good reason to make cuts and have the budget increase land between 0.75% and 2%.

Ms. Esposito, member of the BOE, is in favor of the budget as proposed with the 2% increase; she feels that the Governor's proposals are extreme and will not pass.

Mr. Stirling called the question to table.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

6. Discussion of monthly financial statements**7. Director of Finance and Administration –approved transfers under \$3,000****8. Other****A. Planned budget presentation to member town Boards of Finance**

Budget presentations are as follows: Bethany Tuesday, February 14, 2017; Orange, February 27th, 2017; Woodbridge, Thursday, February 16, 2017.

B. Aesop update

Ms. Lumas gave the Committee an update regarding details about the Aesop program per her memo attached. No action is required by the Committee as a recommendation in favor of this new funding request to the BOE at the January meeting.

9. Adjourn

Motion by Ms. Cardozo, 2nd by Mr. Grabowski to adjourn at 5:31 pm.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk