

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Board of Education Special Meeting**  
Approved Minutes of Thursday, January 23, 2025  
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson  
Eugene Marchand, Vice Chairperson  
Mary Kortmann, Secretary  
Emma Eaton  
Courtney Rossignol

Board Members Absent:

Joseph Cleary  
Christina Williams

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools  
Charmaine Bradshaw-Hill, Director of Finance and Operations

**I. Call to Order**

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**II. Salute to the Flag**

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

**III. Audience of Citizens**

There were none

**IV. VOTE: Approve Minutes**

**A. Approve Tabled Updated Minutes of December 12, 2024**

**MOTION: To approve the tabled updated minutes from the meeting of December 12, 2024**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: E. Eaton**

**Result: Motion carries unanimously**

**B. Approve Minutes of January 9, 2025**

**MOTION: To approve the Minutes of January 9, 2025**

**By: C. Rossignol**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion carries unanimously**

## **V. Discussion and Possible VOTE: FY26 Budget**

Dr. Petrone notified the Board that there is a Question and Answer summary, along with the proposed budget, in BoardBook. Future updates in this section will include any additional updates moving forward.

Dr. Petrone and C. Bradshaw-Hill reviewed the updates from the last presentation.

A Technology Applications sheet was distributed to Board members, which included updates to the software list and license information. The device replacement plan was also distributed and reviewed. Additionally, the distribution of technology applications was shared, with all items available on BoardBook for reference. The impact on the budget of these items was discussed. Due to the FCC grant not being approved, Dr. Petrone removed the three proposed additions from the budget book. An updated budget increase/reduction sheet was distributed, along with supplemental details.

C. Bradshaw-Hill distributed all updates for the budget book and walked the Board through the changes.

The Net increase page currently lists the heat and gas price as locked in for 24-25. This should be corrected to reflect 25-26. Additionally, the workers' compensation premium increase and product liability premium are listed as 23-24, but these will be corrected to reflect 25-26.

C. Bradshaw-Hill reviewed the magnet school numbers. Dr. Petrone stated that while the numbers are stabilizing, the associated services provided by magnet schools have not yet stabilized.

There has been a decrease in outplacements from last year, as Dr. Petrone confirmed. Regarding excess cost reimbursement, it may be coming in lower, but Dr. Petrone noted that this has not yet been confirmed. The reimbursement is currently budgeted at 73%. There was discussion around the excess cost reimbursement and the need for more predictable numbers from the state. If 73% turns out to be too optimistic, it may be necessary to consider lowering the estimate to a safer number to avoid a budget shortfall. If a new student is not included in the budget, there will be an update to reflect that. C. Bradshaw-Hill will gather the cost impact for excess cost reimbursement at 70% and 67%.

Special education buses are going out to bid, which will affect the upcoming budget. What is included in the budget now reflects the current rate we are paying, plus a 3% increase. There was discussion about whether the 3% assumption is a reasonable estimate. C. Bradshaw-Hill will calculate the impact of a 4% assumption.

GHR – Health services saw a reduction in non-certified salaries, amounting to a \$37k decrease. However the FTE remains the same. An individual moved to a different location and was replaced with a different level of staff.

CGS – A new program introduced this year, which will continue into next year, is included in this budget. If the budget is reduced, the new program will not be cut due to Special Education needs.

Captain Nathan Hale – The restoration of subsidies for intramural fees, sports, and transportation for athletics has been included in the budget.

High school – Magnet tuition includes the VoAg program and technical schools. The maximum number of students covered is 25, and we are currently paying for 22.

GHR and the high school are using ALEX. The middle school is also using ALEX, but the reduction is due to the use of fewer licenses.

The Mats life cycle was discussed, and it was determined that no other major equipment is needed in the coming year. Consider reallocating this line item toward a different fund.

Dr. Petrone discussed retirements, noting that no retirement notifications have been received yet.

Warehouse – This line item is for allocating funds for items that need to be fixed but are too large for operational expenses and too small for capital. The replacement of the Douglas Smith unit is necessary due to the use of old Freon. Vehicle maintenance was also discussed, and the van has been pulled out of service.

At Tuesday's Council meeting, based on the recommendation from the Finance Committee and the Town Manager, they voted to approve the bond referendum package for some items that would have been included in the capital budget request, including fire alarms and the pager system. While there is no official word yet, the decision was made informally.

Dr. Petrone spoke about the potential for the district to take over the town's IT needs, offering 25 hours per week of support. Any support beyond that would incur additional costs. No additional staff would be required. Currently, the town is using South Windsor for these services. This arrangement could be a win-win for both the town and the district.

Central Office – Regarding health insurance, the consultant at USI is working on numbers to address the needs of both the town and the district. Dates will be provided next week to review their quotes. J. Beausoleil emphasized the importance of ensuring the district receives any credits it is due. C. Bradshaw-Hill informed the board that she is working with the consultants to determine where and when the stop loss credits were applied that were generated last spring from correlating claims. This is all part of the current reconciliation efforts taking place now.

The unemployment cost overage was discussed. C. Bradshaw-Hill explained that the cost is based on averages, while Dr. Petrone confirmed that all claims have been verified.

The budget needs to be submitted to the town by February 10, with a final deadline of February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Hale – The Coventry school district's operating budget is responsible for covering the special education costs for Hale.

Dr. Petrone, regarding Hale, mentioned that he has a meeting scheduled with the commissioner and the Office of Early Childhood. He is hopeful that he will receive an answer to his concern about funding for the current year.

The rate for diesel and heat is locked in, but the fluctuation in usage is estimated. The rates are \$2.78 for diesel and \$2.55 for heat. There was also a discussion on estimates for HVAC.

There was a discussion on the Board budget dates to ensure we meet the recommended submission date to the town. The goal is to have a Board vote on the budget during the February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Additionally, the budget planning dates will be added to every meeting agenda for reference.

## **VI. Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.**

**By: C. Rossignol**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion carries unanimously**

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Respectfully Submitted:

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Tricia Dean

Board Clerk

Approved: January 30, 2025