GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 11, 2025 @ 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, CR 1/HYBRID

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington - Chairperson, Adrian Johnson - Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Dean Antipas, Matthew Shulman, Ian Thomas, Jay Weitlauf (remote), Jennifer White, Michael Whitney (remote)

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Rachael Franco, John Burt, Portia Bordelon, Daniel Gaiewski, Bruce Jones, David McBride, Roscoe Merritt, Juliette Parker, Adam Puccino, Jill Rusk, Jackie Massett, Jean Claude Ambroise (remote)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

II. JOINT MEETING W/TOWN COUNCIL – The Superintendent gave the Town Council an overview of the superintendent's projected FY26 budget.

- John Burt shared the questions he had sent to the Superintendent.
- Portia Bordelon stated that her goal is to make sure our children are closing achievement gaps and that each and every child deserves the equal and fair accessibility and opportunity to education in our district.
- Jennifer White stated the board of education and staff are committed to making sure that what is best for the district will be represented in the budget.
- Daniel Gaiewski brought up the EPS federal grants and EPS state grants which were not in the budget last year. The superintendent stated that our interim business manager stated that it's always part of the revenue source that comes to the town and it helps support education, but that she will check with him for clarification.
- Matthew Shulman stated that there are things that are completely out of our control but the response to which we're responsible for, and it's not just the Board of Education, it's at every level of government.
- Bruce Jones questioned why the Impact Aid money is much more than previous years; it seems to be a very optimistic amount of revenue. Superintendent Austin stated that those were the amounts that were projected and that each year the trend has been that amounts are received over what has been projected. She stated that last year, the town received $6.5 million, which was over the $4 million projected amount.
- Dean Antipas shared his concerns.
- Jackie Massett asked why the schools get Medicaid.
- Jean Claude Ambroise yielded his time.
- David McBride asked if he could receive the FY25 actuals through 6 months; asked about equipment and technology, non-lapsing funds, and open positions.
- Adrian Johnson answered questions that may come up re: new buildings and read a statement.
- Roscoe Merritt asked if there was cross training in the Business Office.

- Jay Weitlauf noted that as discussed at last night's Board meeting, the Board would support adding more paras and special education teachers.
- Juliette Parker noted the need to figure out how to keep staff and asked how many nurses were hired.
- Mike Whitney stated that he is looking forward to presenting the Town Council with an efficient budget that supports the needs of the students.
- Adam Puccino noted that he would like to see numbers.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Washington adjourned the meeting for the Board at 8:09 p.m.