

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 16

District Meeting
April 11, 2012

EXHIBIT

III

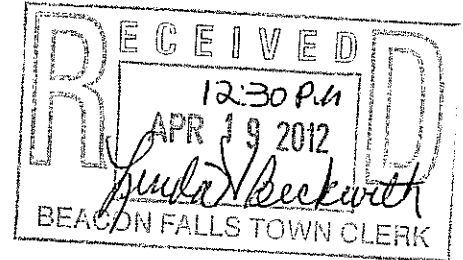
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Beacon Falls...

Priscilla Cretella
Sheryl Feducia
William Fredericks
Wendy Oliveira

Prospect...

Donna Cullen
Robert Hiscox
Nazih Noujaim
Robin Wright



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hugh Potter, Business Manager
Bill Stowell, Budget Consultant
Leigh Barbour, Assistant Business Manager
Bruce Bartmess, Director of Technology

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Priscilla Cretella at 7:15 p.m. at Long River Middle School, Prospect. CT.

DISTRICT MEETING

Wendy Oliveira read the call of the meeting, published in the Waterbury Republican on April 6, 2012.

NOTICE OF
PUBLIC MEETING OF
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #16

The electors and citizens who are qualified to vote in town meetings of the Towns of Beacon Falls and Prospect are hereby notified and warned that a public District meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at Long River Middle School in the Town of Prospect at 7:15 p.m. at which the Regional Board of Education will present a proposed budget of \$37,497,005 for the next fiscal year commencing on July 1, 2012. Any person may recommend the inclusion or deletion of expenditures at such time. After said public hearing, the Board will prepare an annual budget for the next fiscal year, copies of which will be available at least five days before the annual meeting to be held on Monday, May 7, 2012.

Dated at Prospect, Connecticut this 3rd day of April 2012.
Priscilla Cretella, Chairman, Board of Education
Regional School District #16

APPOINT A TEMPORARY SECRETARY AND MODERATOR

A MOTION was made by Wendy Oliveira and SECONDED by Sheryl Feducia to appoint Susan Vaill as secretary for the District Meeting.

ALL IN FAVOR

12-099

A MOTION was made by Donna Cullen and SECONDED by Sheryl Feducia to appoint Priscilla Cretella as moderator of the District Meeting.

ALL IN FAVOR

12-100

Robert Hiscox stated that Mayor Bob Chatfield is unable to attend tonight because he is being inducted into the Connecticut Firefighters Hall of Fame. This is the first budget meeting he has missed since 1977. He reiterated through Mr. Hiscox that he is proud with the work the Board has done and to keep in mind the tough economic times and reduction in grand lists in both towns.

Mrs. Cretella stated that the music position was restored at last night's Special Board meeting and asked Bill Stowell to explain.

Mr. Stowell stated that there were several items noted last night which are:
\$100,000 savings being received from Constellation Energy for electrical use;
\$20,000 savings from health insurance; \$55,386 savings in transportation;
\$34,324 put back into the budget for music, which brings a total savings of \$141,062.

Ms. Cretella stated that it was never the Board's intention to drop the band or any music for the schools. She asked who from the public had signed up to speak.

Donna Lyons of Beacon Falls is the parent of a senior and is concerned with the cuts to Fine Arts and doesn't want other students to be deprived of the courses her son has taken. She wants Woodland to offer the necessary courses for prerequisites for college. She said that budget cuts are painful, and Fine Arts are often viewed as throwaway subjects. Woodland should remain a high diverse school.

Joe Pavlik of Beacon Falls brought an article from the front page of the *Republican American* published on 12/31/11 comparing eight different school regions and percentages of students that obtain college degrees. He said Region 16 placed 7th out of 8 schools: and if Wolcott and Seymour are included, the Region is 9th out of 10. He feels children are being inadequately prepared for the next level and much improvement is needed. He thinks we are not getting proper results for the tax dollars we pay. He submitted copies of the published article to the Board.

Ed Groth of Beacon Falls said in normal times an increase might be acceptable, but both grand lists are down, foreclosures are occurring, and residents are trying to absorb the largest tax increase in history. With recession and poor outlook, the only acceptable budget this year is a flat one. Unfortunately, children get punished by cutting the school budget. Reports by Prospect Republican Town Chair stated 80% of tax dollars taken in goes toward teachers, staff, and benefits. If further cuts are necessary, it's obvious where we should look first.

RECEIVED

APR 19 2012

BEACON FALLS TOWN CLERK

Carrie Sturdevant of Prospect has a son who's a junior at Woodland. Rex Sturdevant stated he has been in band since 5th grade. He's appreciative that band is not on the chopping block. He learned a lot from music theory and explained where it has taken him in performing percussion pieces. The courses have added life skills for him. Removal of Fine Arts and music classes is a first step to a society with no soul.

David Arbachouskas introduced his daughter, Samantha Schwind from Beacon Falls. She is a senior at WRHS and an active member of the music programs since freshman year. She's very shy and music helped her "find her voice". She related that she has developed a confidence she will have her whole life from music. A strong diverse music department is a healthy dynamic to a good school.

Dr. Kim Yannon of Prospect is a parent and a 27-year educator who teaches music in Cheshire. She said it was no surprise how well-spoken the music students are. She is the immediate past president of CT Music Educators' Association. She gave the Board two studies on Fine Arts programs. She thanked the Board for reinstating the music position.

Carla Perugini Erikson of Prospect is thrilled to see all the students that are in attendance. She has four children in Region 16, is a lifelong resident of Prospect, a graduate of Wolcott HS, and former band member. She is a practicing attorney in Prospect. She applauded the Board for their efforts to balance wants and needs of the community and still fill employment contracts and promote safety. She read all the budget minutes and saw all the items they looked at. National Endowment for the Arts has published many articles on music that students in music consistently have higher levels in math, attendance and graduation rates. She talked about Steve Jobs and his biography. She also submitted a letter from WRHS valedictorian of 2009 who is now a junior at Harvard and who took music classes in Region 16.

Catherine Mirabilio of Prospect has attended every budget meeting and appreciates the time given to listen to members of the community. She has made several inquiries as to the budget and has yet to receive answers. She read off several questions which Ms. Cretella stated would be answered for her tomorrow. She would like the Board to consider a motion to reinstate culinary arts to full time.

Jeff Leak of Prospect asked if all members of the Board are staunch advocates of education for all children, thinking of children first, and are working unremittingly for public education including financing, facilities, resources and better education. He said that culinary arts emphasizes work force education, service related math, sanitation, safety, basic food preparation, quality production, and pride in workmanship. Nationwide restaurant industry employs 10% of the workforce. Give the students the experience they want and deserve. Restore the full time culinary arts position in next year's budget.

Brian Ploss of Beacon Falls said many students are being left behind. He knows families that have moved out of the district. He said his son changed districts and was two years behind in learning. He wanted to know what the Board is doing to verify that the district is up to date and students are prepared.

RECEIVED

APR 19 2012

BEACON FALLS TOWN CLERK

Howard Daniels of Beacon Falls said Region 16 has a lot to offer and his only comment is that it's against the law to cut the budget, and his request is to keep the budget at last year's level. He's in real estate business and hasn't seen a raise in 6 years.

Mr. Potter detailed a summary of the 2012-13 proposed budget in a PowerPoint presentation. He turned the meeting over to Bill Stowell, former Business Manager for Region 16 who retired three years ago. Mr. Stowell was asked by Jim Agostine to help the Interim Superintendent with next year's budget. He explained the net changes from last night's Special Board Meeting totaling \$141,062:
 Electricity savings from Constellation Electric of \$100,000,
 Health insurance decrease of 1% in rate from 3.64 to 2.64 of \$20,000,
 Transportation decrease of \$55,386, and
 Music position restored resulting in an increase of \$34,324.

Carla Perugini Erickson asked what the \$200,000 bond payment was for. Mr. Potter responded it is for the Tallmadge Hill property. She also asked about the savings for early teacher retirement. Five teachers have confirmed for a net savings of \$15,000 per teacher.

Jeff Leak asked about unemployment compensation and legal fee increases. Mr. Potter responded that claims and rates have increased. Legal fees have increased due to settlement with non-certified union on pension matter.

Derek Muharem of Prospect is not in favor of cuts to technology amounting to almost \$300,000. He thinks technology is necessary for our students to be successful. He asked if the Board had any plans in place if the proposed budget doesn't pass.

Catherine Mirabilio wants answers to questions she's asked multiple times. She asked what is cost to go to a referendum? Mr. Stowell responded approximately \$6,000, and the Board reimburses the towns for the referendum. The cost has gone up with new voting machines and printing costs for ballots. Ms. Cretella said she would have answers to her questions sent to her tomorrow.

The District Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. – no formal motion was made.

Ms. Cretella thanked everyone for coming and welcomed all to stay for the remainder of the regular Board meeting.

A 15-minute break was taken before resuming the regular meeting.

Wendy Oliveira,

Board Secretary

*These minutes are subject to Board Approval,
 Susan Vaill, Board Clerk*