

The Legislative Council Education Committee meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.

**Attendance:**

**Education Committee Members:**

Jeff Capeci, Legislative Council  
George Ferguson, Legislative Council  
Kathy Fetchick, Legislative Council  
Dan Honan, Legislative Council  
Paul Lundquist, Legislative Council  
Dan Wiedemann, Legislative Council

Ron Bienkowski, School Financial Director  
Dr. Gejda, Assistant Superintendent  
Debbie Leidlein, Board of Education Chair  
Dr. Robinson, Superintendent  
Four Members of the Public

**VOTER COMMENTS**

None.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

- Motion made by Mr. Ferguson/second by Mr. Wiedemann and unanimously approved by the committee the minutes of 3/25/2013.

**COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Fetchick informed the committee that the Legislative Council may vote on the budget at its April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Mr. Capeci concurred and added that if there is new information needed he would not be opposed to voting on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2013-14 Board of Education Budget:**

Motion made by Mr. Lundquist/second by Mr. Ferguson to recommend the Board of Education 2013-14 budget as presented by the Board of Finance to the full council.

Discussion:

Ms. Fetchick summarized the BOF suggestions for the reduction of \$750,000 in the BOE request:

\$200,000	Fuel Savings by BOE and BOE Reduction of 1 Security Guard
\$250,000	Building Maintenance
\$150,000	Technology
\$100,000	OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits)
\$50,000	Other

Ms. Fetchick did an analysis of the IT equipment purchases with data used from the BOE budget book:

average yearly expenditure for IT equipment since 2003-04	~\$295,000
average yearly expenditure for IT equipment since 2000-01	~\$355,700
average future expenditure for IT equipment to replace obsolete equipment	\$309,000

BOF suggestion would give the IT equipment line \$398,559.

The group discussed how the budget line item was developed for estimates of the replacement of desktop computers.

Ms. Fetchick asked for an update on the SERV grant. Ms. Robinson reported the following:

It was communicated to the district that the grant be broken up into 4 segments:

- 1) expenditures since 12/14 until the end of the school year
- 2) proposed expenditures for the school year 2013-14
- 3) a list to be submitted at a later date for the school year 2014-15
- 4) a list to be submitted at a later date for the school year 2015-16

For the first 2 segments, the request totaled \$4,185,000. Ms. Robinson has communicated to the three private schools with two being interested in being included in the grant submission. Additions by the private schools will not increase the dollar amount of the grant request – it will have to be accommodated with changes to the original scope. Also, one of the current vendors providing mental health support (Yale) has language and cost in their contract with the school district that is prohibitive according to SERV guidelines. This problem needs to be worked out before resubmitting the grant. Ms. Robinson also communicated that they may not be able to have the professional development days to provide for better transition from 4<sup>th</sup> grade to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The previously proposed grant submission date was supposed to be 4/1 and now is being delayed to next week.

Mr. Bienkowski provided information from the last meeting about the “Nutury” program at the High School. The program currently has 15 children enrolled for a cost of \$875/year – it’s a 2 or 3 day program. Normally, enrollment is closer to 24 children. The concept of increasing the enrollment cost was discussed.

With no more questions, a friendly amendment was made by Mr. Wiedeman/second by Mr. Capeci to reduce the Board of Education budget by \$350,000. Mr. Wiedemann cited the following: remove HS Guidance Counselor, HS Assistant Principal, additional HS staff, and 4 security guards. Mr. Capeci added that SB 1097 could delay implementation of the new teacher evaluation. Dr. Gejda added that SB 1097 may allow districts to stagger implementation for 50% of staff. Amendment failed 4 to 2 (Mr. Wiedemann, Mr. Capeci).

With no more amendments, the vote on main motion passed 4 to 2 (Mr. Wiedemann, Mr. Capeci).

## VOTER COMMENTS

Michelle Assante (16 Wendover Rd) communicated that she doesn’t feel that full day kindergarten is very important to people anymore and it won’t be something that helps pass the budget. She was glad we voted to support the budget as presented but wasn’t sure she could support it. She believes that offering languages at the lower level grades will help. She also said that she doesn’t have the information but that

smaller class sizes at the high school would be helpful too. She would also like communication about revaluation to be made public.

Michelle Ku (28 Platts Hill Rd) also would like information about revaluation made public.

Ms. Fetchick communicated that there was a meeting to discuss the revaluation. The Board of Finance heard a report from Chris Kelsey, Town Tax Assessor. Ms. Fetchick said she would forward the video link.

Revaluation meeting information:

Board of Finance Meeting Minutes (page 1 and attachment A):

[http://www.newtown-ct.gov/Public\\_Documents/NewtownCT\\_FinanceMin/I03E42824.1/BOF 3-13-13 Mins.pdf](http://www.newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/NewtownCT_FinanceMin/I03E42824.1/BOF 3-13-13 Mins.pdf)

Board of Finance Video of Meeting (March 13, 2013 at 17:35):

[http://www.newtown-ct.gov/Public\\_Documents/NewtownCT\\_WebDocs/videoarchivent](http://www.newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/NewtownCT_WebDocs/videoarchivent)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

See above.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion by Mr. Honan/second by Mr. Wiedemann and agreed to unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:10 pm.

Submitted: Kathy Fetchick, LC Education Chair