

Neil Chaudhary, Chair  
Dan Amaral  
Phil Carroll  
Tony Filiato, Secretary  
Paul Lundquist, Vice Chair  
Dan Wiedemann



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## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Draft Minutes of the Legislative Council Education Committee Meeting.

The Education Committee met on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, in Council Chambers, Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Lane, Newtown. Chairman Neil Chaudhary called the meeting to order at 8:05 pm.

Present: Mr. Amaral, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Chaudhary, Mr. Filiato, Mr. Lundquist, and Mr. Wiedemann

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Mr. Lundquist moved to accept the minutes of the January 6, 2016 meeting. Mr. Carroll seconded. The motion passed without objection. Mr. Filiato abstained.

At 8:10 p.m. Mr. Chaudhary moved that the committee move into an executive session to discuss security and its attendant costs in the district's schools. Mr. Lundquist seconded. Dr. Erardi, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Bienkowski, Ms. Ku, and Mr. Popano, as well as other Council Members in attendance were invited to join the executive session. The motion passed without objection. The executive session ended at 8:30 p.m.

A discussion was held as to the technology portion of the budget. Mr. Chaudhary noted that the impression had been given that the BOE would be spreading out costs over several years as previously requested and that the presumed figures would be in the \$500,000 per year range. However, the figure presented was \$700,000, which had been reduced to \$650,000 due to a grant being received. This was considered a large increase, especially in light of the fact that the new Sandy Hook school had much of the necessary IT included in the building cost. Some discussion was held on the types of items included or not included in the Sandy Hook build.

The next item discussed was transportation. It was noted that it was understood that the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the All Star contract was being renegotiated toward an extension. Mr. Bienkowski explained that the 5<sup>th</sup> year had a rise in costs and it was hoped that it could be negotiated downward. Mr. Carroll noted that it was the district policy to place all contracts over \$30,000 out to bid and he expected the transportation budget to fall within those guidelines. Further discussion was held on the point that the last time enrollment was at this level was in 1999 and that at that time a 4 tier bus system was in place that required only 24 full size busses. Today there are 42 full size busses. Dr. Erardi and Mr. Alexander explained that bussing is constantly under review and that a review of the tier system would make sense once Sandy Hook comes on line. Further discussion was held concerning the concept of how many bus seats are required in the high school as most seniors drive their own vehicles to and from school whereas the district has contracted enough bus seats as if each student was riding the bus each day. Comments were made regarding the cost of diesel versus gasoline for busses and where excess cost would accrue.

The figures for the sports programs and student activities were reviewed. Mr. Filiato commented that it would also be good to see how much parents were contributing to various activities through their private parent run organizations. Dr. Erardi noted that those figures were being collected.

Mr. Chaudhary led a discussion regarding heating fuel purchase practices, which was deemed relevant particularly due to the conversion of Middle Gate to natural gas next year and Sandy Hook also opening next fall employing gas rather than oil. It was explained that the situation was being monitored and moderated by the fact that the district no longer keeps each fuel tank full, but buys fuel in smaller batches under shorter duration contracts.

Finally, Mr. Lundquist reviewed a chart provided by the BOE that showed decreases in the budget attributable to a decline in enrolment. Mr. Lundquist summarized the chart by opining that a decrease in enrolment does not necessarily lead to a direct decrease in costs.

There was no voter comment.

Mr. Lundquist moved to adjourn at 10:15 pm. Mr. Filiato seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anthony R. Filiato, Esq.  
Legislative Council Education Committee