

MINUTES
Board of Finance
and
Town Council Finance Committee
Business Education Initiative and Board of Education Budget Hearing
February 17, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Elaine Hammers called the Budget Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Trumbull, Connecticut. All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PRESENT

Elaine Hammers, Chairman
William J. Haberlin
Roy Molgard
Thomas Kelly
Ted Chase
Karen A. Egri, Alternate
Vincent DeGennaro, Alternate

ABSENT

Andrew Palo

The Town Council Finance Committee did not have a quorum.

Also present: Maria Pires, Director of Finance; Dr. Gary Cialfi, Superintendent of Schools; Sean O'Keefe, Business Manager, Board of Education; Loretta Chory, Chairman, Board of Education; Michael McGrath, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

Board of Education

Dr. Cialfi presented the 2016-2017 Budget for the Board of Education and highlighted the following:

2016-2017 Budget Priorities

- **Mission** – Meet the educational needs of the students within a challenging and supportive environment that will empower them to become life-long learners.
- **Objective** – College and career readiness for success. Starts with pre-K to elementary school; middle school to high school; high school to higher education and careers.
- **District Goal** drives the budget. This is about the depth of learning and how we get there.
 - Goal is to strengthen achievement particular in the area of writing across curriculum; strengthening the alignment of curriculum and instruction to Core State Standards.
 - Continue the development of Assured Performance Based Assessments, must be able to apply information to real life situations. Writing provides for effective communication.
 - Social and emotional development will also be a factor.

How we are using current funding so far:

- Mental health is at the foundation of school security.
 - Hired additional mental health professions, security officers.
 - Students receiving the help they need to be mentally available for learning.
 - Schools are safe.
- College and career transition counselor at the high school.
- Math and Literacy intervention specialists that afford children the opportunity to achieve higher levels. SATT scores have been higher than ever; over the past 5 years average has been 30 points higher than the previous 5 years.
- Technology integration specialists – 3 added – .5 for each of the 6 elementary schools; 3 more in the new budget so every school will have their own.

The Current Budget

- It is about curriculum, instructions, assessments which includes the following
 - Curriculum – what students must learn
 - Instruction and the required professional development
 - Assessments – progress monitoring during the learning not afterwards
- The goal can be achieved with these resources; it cannot be achieved without these resources.

District- wide curriculum, instruction, and assessment tools.

- Curriculum must align with CT State Core
- Professional development – make sure it is being implemented
- Textbooks and testing materials – assessment tools
- Online subscriptions
- Additional line items

School Based and Pupil Personnel Resources

- Professional development
- Consumable, Workbooks and Texts
- Testing
- Staffing
 - 3.0 Elementary Technology Integration Specialists
 - 1.2 of Incremental F.T.E. (no benefits) Middle School Core Subject Teachers
 - 1.3 of Incremental F.T.E. (no benefits) Trumbull High School Teachers (.4 addition in math; .45 expanding AP in science; .45 expand health to include mental health)
- Resources for Student Safety
 - 8 Assistant Varsity Coaches
 - Additional Security Officer Coverage
 - Phase 2 of Reduced Pay to Play
- SAT Data – reinforces 30 point increase in scores.
- AP Courses – want to expand enrollment; 221 or 93% of the students enrolled in the AP classes achieved a score of 3 4 or 5. These scores are used to predict college success and graduation.

District Accomplishments are based on scientific data. 4 of our schools were cited as being schools of distinction by the Ct State Department. Also received citations from Ct Association of Schools, Tri State Consortium, and New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Efficiencies

- 7 million has been saved in the past two years by moving insurance to a self- insured health and dental plan.
- Infrastructure plan being implements using solar through power purchase agreements and performance contracting.
- Purchase natural gas and save \$800,000.

Initially proposed budget increase of 3.18% over the current budget. 3.02% of the increase included salaries and benefits. When you add pay to participate, transportation and curriculum the increase is 3.57%; however, we are going to reduce the number by .39% which gives us 3.18%

Staffing is not a huge issue, but it is significant. TES projected enrollment is going down approximately 65 students. This leads us to believe that we may be reducing by one elementary teacher and the same is true for the paraprofessionals. We have reason to believe that we can reduce two of these positions. The following items are increases:

- Integration specialist at the elementary level, adding 3 will cost \$225,000
- MMS – math/ela/science/soc studies 1.2 will cost \$70,000
- THS Health .45 = \$24,750
- THS AP Science due to increasing AP enrollment .45 \$24,750
- THS AP Math due to increasing AP enrollment .40 \$22,000
- Given the reductions and the additions, the net is a 2.5% increase of \$241,500

The contractual, mandatory and essential expenses total 93.39%; 6.6% is made up of “All Other” categories. These include the following:

- Supplies 2.56%
- Classroom Equipment .46%
- Services professional and technical 1.31%
- Interns .34%
- Building improvements .08%
- District wide support .38%
- All other 1.48%

Per pupil expenditures in Trumbull are \$14,504 and the standard for the DRG B is \$15,044.

Mr. O’Keefe spoke regarding the 2016-2017 Budget Request. He indicated the 3.18% increase represents a budget of \$100,310,295. On January 5, the BOE made adjustments and approved a budget of \$99,333,178, an increase of 2.79% from last year. On February 2, the BOE restored the \$377,117 that had been deducted along with an additional \$22,883. The insurance was also transferred to the Town from the BOE at a cost of \$13,095,501 resulting in a total adjustment of \$12,695,501. The new budget is now \$87,237,766, an increase of \$2,860,613 or 3.39%.

Discussion:

When there is any increase in the number of students, we need to look at the overage and how it affects the class size guideline and then determine if we need an additional teacher.

In proceeding with the insurance transfer, the BOE advised that other municipalities were looking into the state partnership plan. Basically the premiums that were going to be charged would provide for a large savings to the district and to the members. We looked at it and an initial analysis did not show a significant amount of savings but that was based on looking back prior to our Anthem renewal. Once received, we saw that the Anthem renewal would be about \$3million higher.

The BOE met with the state regarding the insurance plan, and were asked to supply a disruption report, which was held up. The unions need to see this report. We ordered the report and we will see if it is a better plan. The BOE was comfortable with what they had heard from other towns to go ahead. The state plan is a rich plan and covers 200,000 insured individuals. We received the disruption report and presented it to the unions on Friday. The BOE feels comfortable that these few disruptions can be worked out. The differences will have to be resolved. If not resolved,

The budget indicates an energy and utility savings of \$145,000, which will be used to offset the lease payments that are a separate line item. Based on performance contracting methodology, if we were to realize additional savings due to the reduction in the price of energy and utilities, those savings would go

towards the lease payments and any further investments. The lease payment is going to be a specific line item; we will transfer savings from electricity and natural gas lines to offset it. In the budget, the savings is used to offset the utilities expense item of \$805,000.

After the transfer of the health insurance, there appears to be 8 assistant coaches for 4 sports. It is really both a female and male assistant coach for each sport. We need the additional coaches for safety issues both before and after the practice. Cross country and swimming are clear cut examples. Right now, you can't say we are in a good place with our coaches.

The position of funding for SROs has always been an important one to Dr. Cialfi.

- Student Resource Officers are part of a safe school philosophy
- To date, safety is at a higher priority
- Must be collaboration with police and the SROs, so the SROs are able to interact with students
- SROs must act as a resource for the student

The difference between the anthem renewal we received last week and the budgeted amount is \$1.3 million higher given the update on the Anthem renewal. Both the state plan and the Anthem renewal are estimates. We don't know what the state plan will cost us – they have not yet published the rates.

The last Anthem renewal took an additional 5 months of data into consideration and those 5 months were higher than the 5 months that dropped off. The estimate was based on the previous 12 months. We would transfer the plan on September 1 and it would renew on July. For 2 months of the fiscal year the Board of Ed would be under the old plan.

Mr. Gary Kunschafft, principal of Daniels Farm School, spoke on the need for Technical Integration Specialists. He indicated that the teachers need to learn the technology prior to teaching the children; learning on the job is not the way to go, since the children pick-up on this right away. The education that teachers receive sets the tone for how much technology is used in the classroom. If teachers are not trained, it isn't used to its fullest or at all. If you don't keep up with technology, the children will lose interest, since they use the technology when they are not in school. Integration Specialists can actually be with you in the classroom showing you how to use the technology for your curriculum. This enables teachers to put their training to use immediately as opposed to off-site training, where there is no resource person to assist the teachers once they are back in their classrooms.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis C. Collier
Board of Finance Clerk