

BOARD OF FINANCE
FEBRUARY 24, 2010

BUDGET HEARING

Present: Ken Martin; Andy Palo; Bill Crooks; Tom Tesoro; Steve Lupien and alternates Alex Remson; Dana Misner; Perry Molinoff

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Ken Martin.

This is the second budget hearing meeting with the Board of Education.

Energy Savings - Steve Kennedy calculated figures on based on weather conditions. He negotiated better rates this year and we should see some savings. Mr. Crooks is comfortable with Steve's figures.

Interdistrict account – This account was funded by monies received for special ed programs that were offered. This fund is now beginning to dwindle down. We now fund four teachers under this account.

Tesoro asked what is the impact of budget cuts in the curriculum. What cuts would be recommended to the BOE?

Dr. Cialfi stated that when looking at basic skills, budget cuts are obviously going to have an impact on it. It could impact program leaders for elementary, instructional chairs for middle school. The overall rate of progress would be faster if we did not have to contend with budget cuts. Students in preschool would be better prepared for grades 3 – 5; middle school for high school and high school for college. Curriculum Department will be impacted as it will limit the purchase of textbooks and workbooks.

We are looking at digital white boards for middle school level. Having a white board in classrooms clearly makes a difference. They should be in every classroom.

Interns and paraprofessionals could provide cost effective ways to development.

Clubs and activities are also a learning tool for students and need to be supported.

Lupien is concerned about the First Selectman's budget cuts especially for Special Ed. Also deferred maintenance is impossible to catch up with. Board needs some direction as to what you really need to accomplish your job. Can it be done with a 1.4 million dollar cut? We need some justification to be able to help the Board of Education.

Iassogna said the 1.4 million dollar cut will impact staff and programs. There will be cuts across the board...string program in middle schools, TAG program; athletics. Anything below 2.54 will greatly impact us.

Is there a plan for educating the upcoming Special Ed population? Dr. Vespe noted that there is a change in Special Ed. It is not the increase in numbers but the increase in the needs of the students. Autism, ADD and students with medical needs puts demands on the schools. The proposed budget takes this all into account.

ECS money - intend to use \$96,000 for lease payments.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Bokine, Clerk