

**APPROVED/BOARD OF FINANCE MINUTES – BUDGET DELIBERATIONS  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2016**

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A budget deliberations meeting of the Board of Finance was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 in the large conference room in Town Hall at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: David Ulmer, Chairman; Paul Sutherland, Vice Chairman; Marty Heiser; Jessica Mancini; and Mike Raduazzo

Town Officials: Rudy Marconi, First Selectman; Maureen Kozlark, Selectman; Kevin Redmond, Controller; Dr. Karen Baldwin, Superintendent of Schools; Paul Hendrickson, BOE Business Director; Joe Morits, BOE Buildings; Dr. Robert Miller, BOE Technology

BOE Members Present: Karen Sulzinsky; Michael Taylor; Scott Mason; Fran Walton; Tracy O'Connor; James Keidel; Sharon D'Orso; and Douglas Silver  
(9 members 4 female, 5 male attended)

**A G E N D A**

Budget Deliberations - Board of Education Operating and Capital  
General Budget Discussion  
Possible Vote on Board of Education Capital Items

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Mr. Ulmer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Ulmer provided the BOF with the answer to last night's question about tuition revenue (budget line item #44275), saying that the amount provided does include the pre-school. Mr. Ulmer said the BOF would increase that revenue item in the proposed 2016/2017 budget from \$125k to \$140k.

The WPCA revenue (budget line item #44615) will be increased from \$25k to \$30k.

Line Item #	Name	Proposed	Increased/ Decreased To	Net Change
43130	Interest & Lien Fees	\$ 425,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
44103	Building	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 525,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
44230	Special Services	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
44264	Yaniv Gym	\$ 34,000.00	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
44712	Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ (15,000.00)
TOTAL OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO REVENUE AS OF 3/29/2016				\$ 90,000.00
44275	Out of Town Tuition	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
44615	Sewer - Billing	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
TOTAL OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO REVENUE AS OF 3/30/2016				\$ 110,000.00

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATING AND CAPITAL**

**BOE PROPOSED CAPITAL BUDGET**

<b>PROPOSED BOE CAPITAL F/Y 2016-2017</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>	<b>PASSED BY</b>	<b>BOE PROPOSED</b>
<b>BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>		<b>BOS</b>	<b>FOR</b>
<b>PROJECT</b>			<b>RECONSIDERATION</b>
<b>GENERAL DESCRIPTION</b>			
Energy Conservation Measures (3 Year LoA) RHS	\$355,382.00	\$355,382.00	
District Communications/Radio Project	\$453,886.00	\$453,886.00	
Comprehensive Lighting Upgrade & Dimmer Controls	\$91,406.00		
Re-sleeve Main Waste Drain Line (RHS)	\$126,000.00		\$126,000.00
Wireless Network Reliability Project	\$85,000.00		\$85,000.00
Implement Technology Infrastructure Replacement Program	\$285,000.00		\$285,000.00
Media Center - Learning Commons Model Fit-Out	\$90,000.00		
School Security Measure - IP Based Surveillance Cameras	\$65,000.00		
School Security Measure - Security Window Film	\$90,000.00		
School Security Measure - Additional Door Card Access Readers	\$65,000.00		
Asbestos Abatement/Floor Re-tiling at Scotland	\$115,000.00		
Universally Accessible Playground Model	\$119,760.00		
<b>TOTALS:</b>		<b>\$809,268.00</b>	<b>\$496,000.00</b>

Dr. Robert Miller, BOE Technology guru began the discussion with an explanation of the BOS-approved Capital Item – District Communications/Radio Project, which will allow communication with all emergency dispatch.

Mr. Heiser asked if the project is part of the school security plan and was told it was not, that the school security plan is finished and the Connecticut State Police have completed a walk through, spending several hours in each school building, and have given the security measures in place “high marks”.

The capital expenditure of \$355,382.00 that the BOS approved is a continuation of an energy conservation plan with a total incentive of \$92,405.00.

Dr. Baldwin said the BOE wants the BOF to send three capital requests back to the BOS for reconsideration. Mr. Heiser said... “ the BOS is the governing board of the Town... that is usually not how this goes.” Dr. Baldwin said she understood this, has spoken about it with Mr. Marconi who advised her to go to the BOF.

Joe Morits explained the condition of the main waste drain line at the High School.

Dr. Miller explained the need for the wireless network reliability project.

- A capacity issue with the amount of data
- Density issue – narrow access
- Gaps in coverage
- Band width issue
- Incompatibility of components

All of which make the system current system unreliable. Downtime seriously affects learning.

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	AMOUNT	BOS APPROVED
BOE OPERATING BUDGET	2014-2015	2015-2016	REQUESTED	2016-2017
	\$ 84,902,657.00	\$ 86,078,365.00	\$ 91,378,320.00	\$ 90,999,229.00
PERCENT INCREASE			6.16%	5.72%

Mr. Hendrickson said he anticipates a 2015/2016 budget surplus of about \$270/\$280k.

The first ECR (education cost reimbursement) of \$1.6MM, about 80.8% of costs submitted has been received from the State. Mr. Hendrickson has been advised that the second payment will decrease and the total reimbursement will be about 77% of costs submitted, a little over \$2MM, which will have a break-even effect on the Special Education Budget overrun.

The BOE is under budget on fuel oil costs, \$280k at this time.

Mr. Heiser stated that he asked the BOE for three things:

- Why the BOE is not closing a school.
- 10 year attrition rate – how many people retired
- A breakdown of enrollment and staffing totals for the last ten years.

He expressed his frustration that, to date, he has not received the requested information.

Dr. Baldwin emphasized the BOE's own mandate to educate ALL children, maintain a safe school climate; support teachers in the classroom; and the need for speech, language and occupational therapists.

Mr. Raduazzo noted "risks and opportunities" in elementary school demographics where some classes are within three students of a break point requiring an additional class and others where "condensing" would be appropriate. Where ninety-eight (98) teachers seem to be enough based on enrollment projections, the BOE has requested one hundred and one (101) teachers, at a cost of approximately \$96k per teacher (\$71k salary; \$25k benefits).

Mr. Heiser said he would like to see natural attrition reduce the teacher head count.

Ms. Mancini expressed her skepticism about the need for the requested elementary school supervisors. Mr. Raduazzo echoed Ms. Mancini's concern stating the cost of \$150k per position and noting that there is no clear picture of what the supervisors do.

Dr. Baldwin defended the request stating: the supervisors "fill a critical leadership position that will help to drive improved learning for all kids K/5."

Mr. Ulmer asked about the requested 5.36 para-professionals.

Mr. Sutherland asked Dr. Baldwin her position on the resolution that when K/5 enrollment dropped to 2,000, the BOE would close a school. Dr. Baldwin did not provide a clear answer, but said currently kids are learning in the hallway.

Mr. Ulmer noted that middle school enrollment was projected to go down from 1,277 to 901.

Ms. Mancini asked about redistricting and Ms. Walton said: "the last time we redistricted was 2003/2004." Ms. Mancini: "We have to find balance here. I am as frustrated as Marty (Mr. Heiser) is frustrated."

Mr. Ulmer: "If you don't redistrict, that's not equal if one school has 16 (in a classroom) and another has 22 (in a classroom)."

Mr. Raduazzo asked for an organization chart for the technology department and a report previously present to the BOE by Superintendent Low and Karen Berasi, BOE Director Special Education.

Mr. Ulmer asked for a breakdown of special education students by: IEPs; ELLs (English language learners); and 504s. Dr. Baldwin said she would provide it to him.

Ms. Mancini asked about the achievement level disparity between all students and students with disabilities. Mr. Ulmer noted the gap is approximately 80%/30% and asked what would be a measure of success. Dr. Baldwin responded saying that over three years the BOE wants to see a significant closing of the gap.

Mr. Ulmer said the BOF is concerned that next year the BOE will be asking for more. Dr. Baldwin noted some budget drivers and added: "... this years budget is to shore up cracks in the infrastructure."

Mr. Heiser to Dr. Baldwin: "I appreciate your enthusiasm."

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Raduazzo and seconded by Mr. Sutherland to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Vote 5-0. **Motion APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Rodgers, Recording Secretary